

A WORLD FIT FOR CHILDREN

CHILDREN ARE THE FUTURE



"LIFE'S ASPIRATIONS COME
IN THE GUISE OF CHILDREN."

:: RABINDRANATH TAGORE ::



IN 2002, THE
UNITED NATIONS
ADOPTED A
RESOLUTION CALLED
"A WORLD FIT FOR
CHILDREN."

SGI-USA has created this
exhibit to illustrate some of
the points in the resolution
and to create dialogue
about the rights of children
throughout the world.

We hope that people of all
ages can learn from this
exhibit and from one
another. Together we can
foster safe, healthy, and
happy children—the
leaders of tomorrow.



THE UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND

UNICEF is a

global champion for children's rights. It is the only international organization working specifically for children and children's rights.

UNICEF makes a lasting difference in the lives of children and their families by working with communities and influencing governments in more than 160 countries.

UNICEF works to ensure children's rights to health and nutrition; education; emergency relief; protection; and water and sanitation.

UNICEF depends on voluntary contributions from governments and individuals, and fundraising, including the sale of greeting cards and other merchandise.

UNICEF is a driving force for people throughout the world working to ensure a better future for children.



Carol Bellamy, executive director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)



Food and supplies are delivered at an orphanage run by UNICEF in Liberia.



Orphans being transported to a UNICEF orphanage in Sierra Leone.



Children getting a checkup at a UNICEF medical clinic in Afghanistan.



THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

- 1924 • The Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child contains basic protections for children.
- 1948 • The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights includes special care and assistance for children.
- 1953 • The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is made a permanent part of the United Nations
- 1959 • The United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child is adopted.
- 1989 • The Convention on the Rights of the Child, the most widely accepted human rights treaty in history, is adopted unanimously by the United Nations General Assembly.
- 1990 • UNICEF sponsors The World Summit for Children, the first global meeting dedicated to improving children's lives.
- 2000 • The UN Millennium Development Goals specify targets related to children, including achieving universal primary education.
- 2002 • The Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Children is convened to review progress since 1990 and re-energize the global commitment to children's rights.

"I wish all adults would have a great heart that they will always understand the children."

:: Cynthia Barreda Vilchez, Age 9, Peru ::



THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

**"Life's aspirations come
in the guise of children."**

:: Rabindranath Tagore ::

The Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989, is an international human rights treaty that places children at the center of the quest for the universal application of human rights.

The Convention is the most universally accepted human rights instrument in history—it has been ratified by every country in the world except two: Somalia and the United States.

The Convention spells out the basic human rights that children everywhere—without discrimination—have: the right to survival; to develop to the fullest; to protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation; and to participate fully in family, cultural and social life.

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

**"Children are at the heart of one
and every Millennium
Development Goal, beginning
with the battle against poverty."**

:: Hilde F. Johnson, Minister of International
Development, Norway ::

In 2002 the United Nations issued a Millennium Declaration, setting out the hopes of member nations for a peaceful world with a decent standard of living for all.

The Millennium Development goals are to:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Reduce child mortality
- Improve maternal health
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Develop a global partnership for development

A WORLD FIT FOR CHILDREN

A WORLD FIT FOR CHILDREN

**"Together we will build a world in
which all girls and boys can enjoy
childhood – a time of play and
learning, in which they are loved,
respected and cherished..."**

:: UN Resolution S-2772, May 2002 ::

In 2002 more than 7,000 people participated in the Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Children. The nations of the world committed themselves to a series of goals to improve the situation of children and young people.

Some 180 nations adopted the document, "A World Fit for Children."

The new agenda for—and with—the world's children, included 21 specific goals and targets for the next decade. The agenda focused on four key priorities:

- promoting healthy lives;
- providing quality education for all;
- protecting children against abuse, exploitation and violence;
- combating HIV/AIDS.

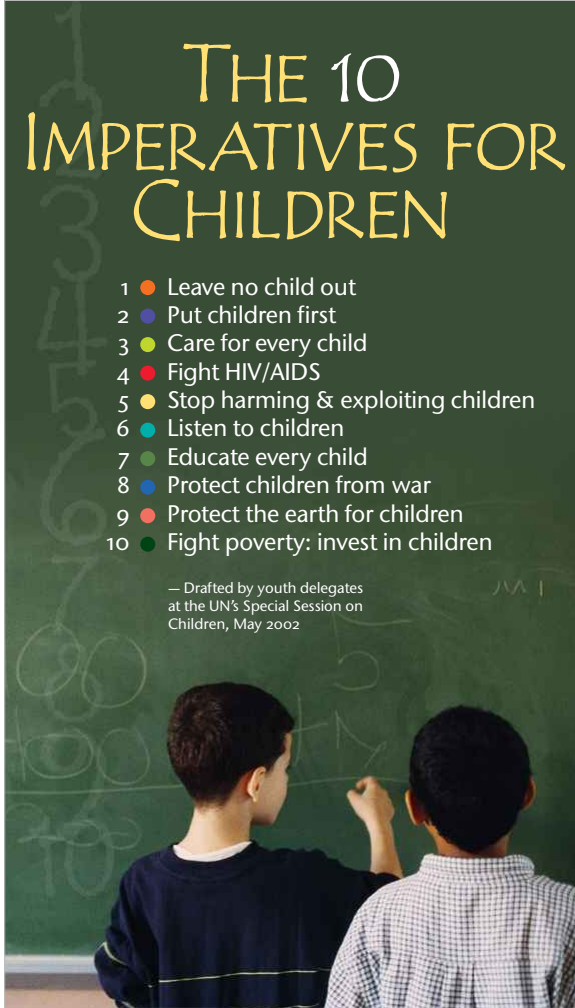
The document called upon all of us to join in a global movement to build a world fit for children.



THE 10 IMPERATIVES FOR CHILDREN

- 1 ● Leave no child out
- 2 ● Put children first
- 3 ● Care for every child
- 4 ● Fight HIV/AIDS
- 5 ● Stop harming & exploiting children
- 6 ● Listen to children
- 7 ● Educate every child
- 8 ● Protect children from war
- 9 ● Protect the earth for children
- 10 ● Fight poverty: invest in children

— Drafted by youth delegates
at the UN's Special Session on
Children, May 2002



CHILD DELEGATES TO UN SPECIAL SESSION

The 2002 United Nations Special Session on Children was unique—the first time children were official delegates to such a session.

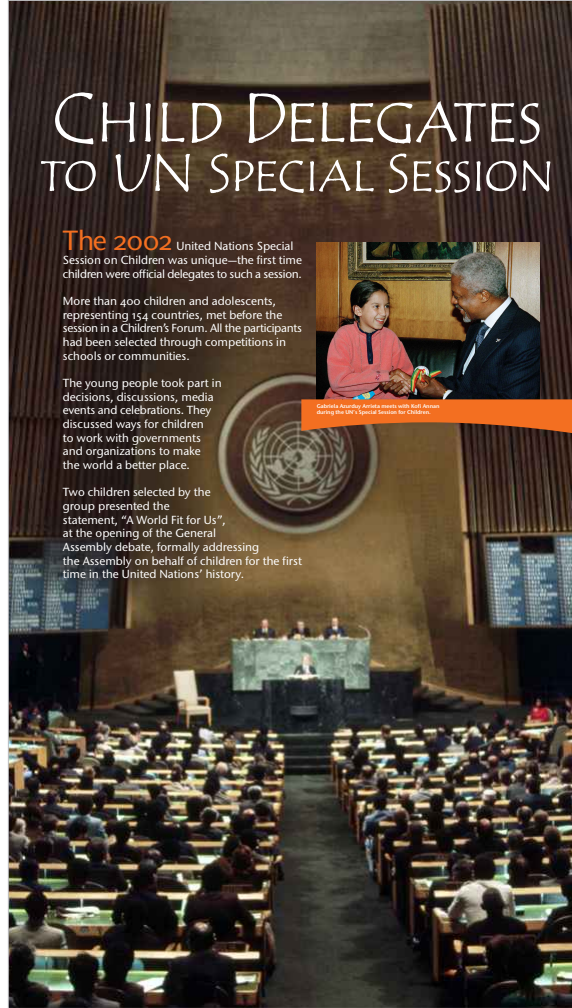
More than 400 children and adolescents, representing 154 countries, met before the session in a Children's Forum. All the participants had been selected through competitions in schools or communities.

The young people took part in decisions, discussions, media events and celebrations. They discussed ways for children to work with governments and organizations to make the world a better place.

Two children selected by the group presented the statement, "A World Fit for Us", at the opening of the General Assembly debate, formally addressing the Assembly on behalf of children for the first time in the United Nations' history.



Calvinia Awarwa (left) talks with Bill Clinton during the UN's Special Session for Children.



IMPERATIVE NUMBER ONE



LEAVE NO CHILD OUT

Every girl and boy is born free and equal, with dignity and rights. All forms of discrimination affecting children must end.

Children are discriminated against in large and small ways all over the world. They and their human rights are often ignored. Basic efforts on behalf of children—in education, health care, and ending child poverty—often come last. In many parts of the world, girls are particular targets of discrimination. Children with special needs require special services.

• **What can you do** to ensure the fair and equal treatment of children in your community?

"Whole groups of children are being denied a future because of the color of their skin, their physical/intellectual characteristics, their ancestry and their gender."

— Zuhay Sayeed —



THE NUMBERS

- 90 percent of domestic workers, the largest group of child workers in the world, are girls between 12 and 17 years old.
- There are between 120 million and 150 million children and young people with disabilities in the world. **It is estimated that less than 2 percent of them go to school.**
- In Japan, by law, **children born out of wedlock only inherit half** of what children born to married couples receive.
- In Bulgaria, 42% of the Roma, a minority subjected to racism, prejudice and rejection, have not completed basic education. In Bosnia and Herzegovina **up to 80% of Roma children are not enrolled in school.**

VIETNAMESE BOY LOSES HAND AND LEG



VIETNAM



When Phan Van Rot was 14 years old he walked down to the stream near his house in the village of Quet Thang in Viet Nam to check his family's fish traps. He noticed a strange object in the water. Rot picked it up to look at it more closely and it exploded in his hand. It was a cluster bomb, left in the area by US Navy attacks many years ago.

The bomb took off Rot's left hand above the wrist and his

left leg below the knee. He also had many internal injuries, and his family didn't expect him to live. An international charity provided funds for Rot to be treated at a local hospital, and will make sure that he gets the treatment he needs, and a new hand and leg.

Rot's family is very poor, and though he will have treatment and artificial limbs, it will take a lot of courage and perseverance for him to succeed in his new life.

IMPERATIVE NUMBER TWO

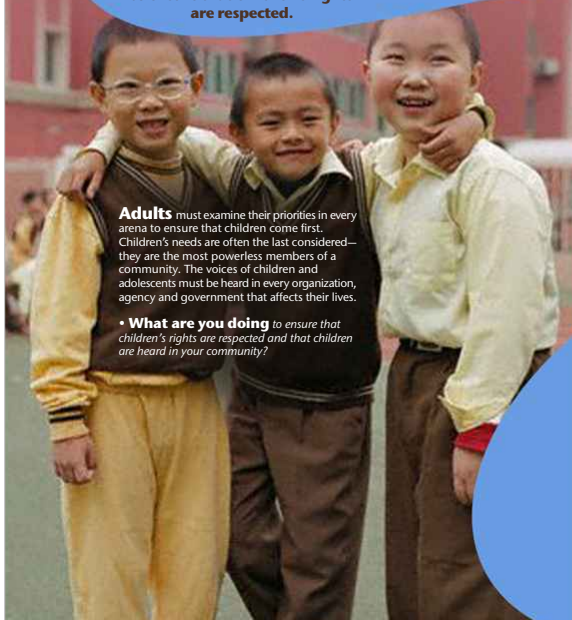


PUT CHILDREN FIRST

It is all of our responsibility—from governments to children themselves—to ensure that children's rights are respected.

Adults must examine their priorities in every arena to ensure that children come first. Children's needs are often the last considered—they are the most powerless members of a community. The voices of children and adolescents must be heard in every organization, agency and government that affects their lives.

• **What are you doing** to ensure that children's rights are respected and that children are heard in your community?



THE NUMBERS

- **At the UN Special Session on Children** in 2000 more than 400 children from 154 nations attended the Children's Forum, where they explored ways to expand children's rights.
- Voices of Youth, a UNICEF sponsored Internet discussion site, **has reached thousands of young people** in more than 180 countries.
- Almost half of Iraq's total population is children under 18. **The war in Iraq puts children at particular risk.** UNICEF's key priorities in Iraq are the recovery of basic health services and the immediate opening of classrooms.

"When I approach a child, he inspires in me two sentiments; tenderness for what he is, and respect for what he may become."

— Louis Pasteur —

KID POWER EVERYWHERE



BOLIVIA

Gabriela Azurduy Arrieta, 13, from Bolivia, was one of two delegates to the 2002 United Nations Special Session on Children selected to deliver a message to the General Assembly. It was the first time that children had addressed a formal session of the United Nations.

"We are children whose voices are not being heard: it is time we are taken into account," Gabriela said. "We are united by our struggle to

make the world a better place for all. You call us the future, but we are also the present."

Children all over the world, despite many difficulties, are taking charge of their own lives, creating networks, and influencing policy.

IMPERATIVE NUMBER THREE



CARE FOR EVERY CHILD

Medical knowledge

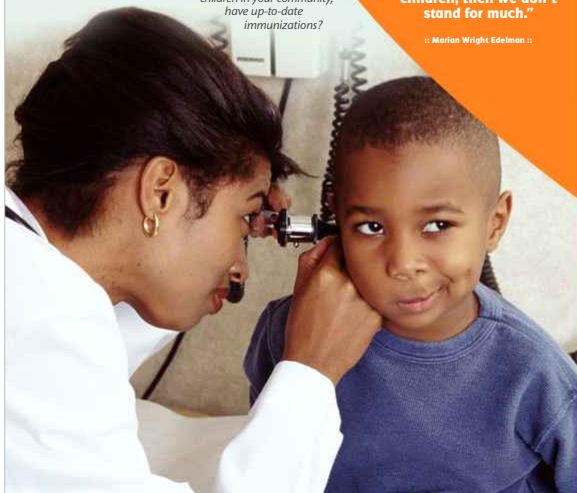
has advanced to the point that no child needs to suffer or die from common childhood diseases. There is enough money and food on the planet to feed or provide supplements to every child. Yet every year, over 10 million children under the age of five die from readily preventable and treatable illnesses such as dehydration as a result of diarrhea, acute respiratory infection, measles, and malaria. In half of the cases, illness is complicated by malnutrition. Accidents kill or seriously injure large numbers of children in both wealthy and poor nations.

- **Do your children,** and other children in your community, have up-to-date immunizations?

We can ensure that every child has the best possible start in life—good health, proper nutrition, and a safe environment.

"If we don't stand up for children, then we don't stand for much."

— Marion Wright Edelman —



THE NUMBERS

- In India 47% of children under 5 are classified as underweight.
- Half of all deaths from whooping cough, a third of all cases of polio and a quarter of all deaths from measles occur in children under one year old.
- More than half of child deaths are associated with malnutrition which weakens the body's resistance to illness
- Diarrhea kills over 1 million children every year through dehydration and malnutrition. About 1 in every 200 children who contract diarrhea will die from it.

RYAN WORKS FOR CLEAN WATER IN AFRICA



CANADA

Ryan Hreljac lives in Canada. He was 6 years old when his teacher told his class about people in Africa who had a hard time getting clean water and access to wells. Without clean water, people, especially children, can get sick and sometimes die.

Ryan asked his parents for extra chores so that he could earn money to dig wells in Africa. Soon he discovered that one well cost \$2,000, but he wasn't discouraged. He began to make speeches

and helped to raise more and more money. His organization, RyansWell.com eventually helped to raise nearly a million dollars.

Ryan says, "I have learned that every child needs certain things if they are going to be healthy and happy no matter where they live. Kids need clean water and sanitation, they need enough food to eat, they need to be able to go to school, and they need a chance to play and have fun. That way they can help out in the world too."



IMPERATIVE NUMBER FOUR



FIGHT HIV/AIDS

We must protect children and their families from the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS.

People who live in wealthy nations often don't know about the horrifying impact that HIV/AIDS is having throughout the world. The statistics listed here are only a small

indication of the

worldwide effects of this scourge. Complicated by misinformation and discrimination, AIDS impacts children everywhere.

While there are now many drugs on the market that effectively control AIDS, few of these are available or affordable in poor countries. Africa has 70 percent of the adults, and 80 percent of the children in the world who are living with HIV/AIDS, but the disease is also out of control in many other parts of the world.

A UN report says "Low visibility of the disease is no guarantee that it is not spreading."

• **Do the children in your life have accurate information on how AIDS is transmitted?**



THE NUMBERS

- **Two million children live with AIDS** and over 15 million have been orphaned by AIDS, most of them in sub-Saharan Africa.
- One third of the 2 million children living with HIV were **infected through breastfeeding**.
- Fourteen million children under the age of 15 have **lost one or both parents to AIDS**. By 2010, this number is expected to exceed 25 million.
- **One in four people between 15 and 49** in Southern Africa is living with HIV.

"My friend with AIDS is still my friend."

— **Xolani Nkosi** —

SOUTH AFRICAN BOY INSPIRES OTHERS



SOUTH AFRICA

Xolani Nkosi was born with HIV in South Africa, where more than 70,000 children are born HIV-positive every year. Gail Johnson, a volunteer at an AIDS center, fell in love with the wide-eyed two year old Zulu boy. She arranged to become his foster mother.

When Johnson tried to send Nkosi to primary school, some parents opposed his enrollment because he was HIV-positive. Johnson complained publicly and won her case. Nkosi went to school.

Nkosi fought against his disease and for other children. He became a national figure in the campaign to help people to understand AIDS. In July 2000 Nkosi addressed delegates at the international AIDS conference in Durban. "Please help people with AIDS," he said. "Support them, love them, care for them."

Nkosi died on June 1, 2001. He was 12 years old, and a national hero.

IMPERATIVE NUMBER FIVE



STOP HARMING & EXPLOITING CHILDREN

There are so many ways that children are harmed and exploited throughout the world that it can seem overwhelming. All around us children are being abused and neglected. Yet there is always something that you can do to help, often in your own community. Even seemingly small things—offering child care for a stressed-out friend or volunteering in a youth group—can have big results.

Violence and abuse must be stopped now. The sexual and economic exploitation of children must end.

• **Look for** the Rugmark label on rugs. It certifies that child labor was not used in the manufacture of the carpet.

• **If you** know or suspect a child has been abused, neglected, or exploited, contact an appropriate agency right away.



THE NUMBERS

- **More than 1 million children worldwide** are living in detention as a result of being in conflict with the law.
- **246 million children work**, with about 180 million engaged in the worst forms of child labor.
- **Two million children are exploited** through prostitution and pornography
- **Forty million children** below the age of 15 suffer from abuse and neglect.

"We are guilty of many errors and many faults, but our worst crime is abandoning our children... To them we cannot answer 'Tomorrow.' Their name is 'Today.'"

— Gabriel Mistral —



PAKISTAN

IQBAL'S STORY



When Iqbal Masih was four years old he went to work in a filthy carpet factory in Pakistan. As he grew older, he was chained to a loom and worked twelve hours a day, six days a week.

In 1993, when Iqbal was ten years old, he went to a meeting sponsored by the Bonded Labor Liberation Front. There he learned that children had rights. He spoke about his suffering, and his speech was printed in the local paper.

Iqbal went to school and became a leader. He traveled and made speeches. He taught other children about their rights, and helped to free many thousands of children from bonded labor.

His dream was to grow up to become a lawyer. But his activities made him a target of the carpet industry. In 1995, when he was twelve years old, Iqbal was assassinated while riding his bike.

IMPERATIVE NUMBER SIX



LISTEN TO CHILDREN

Respect the rights of children and young people to express themselves and to participate in making the decisions that affect them.

Today's children are the leaders and citizens of tomorrow. Yet children's voices are missing from most of the bodies that make decisions that affect their lives. It is critical that children's views be sought out and considered, from the highest levels of government to the daily functions of family life.

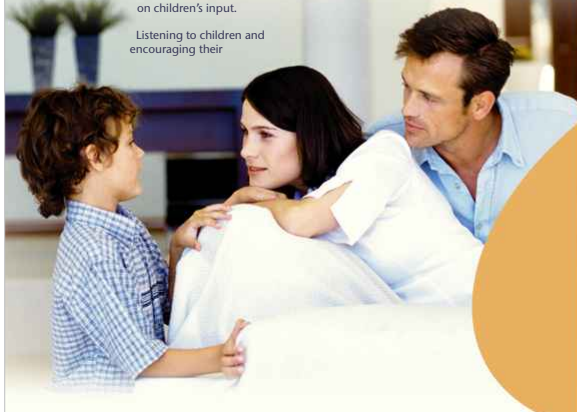
Listening is only one step; adults should also take action based on children's input.

Listening to children and encouraging their

participation in decision-making helps to give them the experience they need to lead effectively and contribute responsibly as adults.

- **Are there** children on the governing councils of the schools, churches, and other organizations with which you are involved?

- **How much** do children participate in your family's decisions, large and small?



THE NUMBERS

- **UNICEF supports 23 weekly programs** on Radio Mozambique, in 12 local languages, all written and produced by 27 children. Program topics range from children's rights to HIV/AIDS.
- In Madagascar in 2004, 90 school children presented an action plan to the National Assembly. One student said that the experience "made me forget that I am poor because... **at least someone has listened to me.**"
- In a 2001 UNICEF survey, adolescents said that they want to participate in decision-making processes concerning their lives. 86.7% of adolescent boys and 89.6% of adolescent girls **want more say in family decisions.**

"The first duty of love is to listen."

— Paul Tillich —

KENYAN GIRL SPEAKS TO UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY



KENYA

Jennifer Jadwero, a 14-year-old Kenyan girl, addressed the UN Special Session on Children in 2002. She talked about the many different kinds of discrimination against girl children.

Jennifer described how she started a club in her school. She asked both boys and girls to work together against violence. Jennifer said, "The problem of gender-based discrimination is not just a matter of a few bad boys and men... but is a problem of our society's social make-up.

So to find a solution to the problem, both girls and boys, women and men, must work together."

Jennifer said, "If one child is told, and that child tells another child, the message can be spread rapidly."

Jennifer was invited to speak at a conference on violence against women, and has now helped to start clubs around the world.



IMPERATIVE NUMBER SEVEN



EDUCATE EVERY CHILD

Every child—all girls and boys—must be allowed to learn.

Children are born eager to learn. All too often they do not have access to education. Today, more than 110 million school-age children worldwide, mostly girls, are not going to school and millions more are receiving poor quality education.

A quality, basic education is every child's fundamental right. Children from families without money are entitled to an education. Girls are entitled to an education. So are children who must work, children of ethnic minorities, children with disabilities, and children affected by violence, conflict or HIV/AIDS.

• **Do you support or volunteer in your local schools?**

• **How are you helping your school-age children to enjoy their school years and stay in school?**



THE NUMBERS

- More than 15 percent of poor girls between seven and 18 have **never been to school of any kind.**
- Infants born to mothers with no formal education are **twice as likely to die before their first birthday** than are babies born to mothers with post-primary school education.
- One million children and adolescents aged 12 to 17 are still unable to read and write. More than 121 million children **never see the inside of a classroom.**

"Education is not filling a bucket but lighting a fire."

— William Butler Yeats —

MAKKA GOES TO SCHOOL



SUDAN

Makka Adoum Daoud, is an 11-year-old girl. She and her mother escaped

from war in the Sudan, and now live in a crowded refugee camp in Chad. More than 8,200 Sudanese refugees, the majority women and children, live here in a hot desert.

But the children have classrooms—made of wood frames and plastic sheets. They sit on the bare floor using school supplies

donated by UNICEF. Nobody complains—they are happy to be able to go to school.

For Makka, school is very important: "My mother did not go to school," she says. "She was going after the cattle. Now with these terrible events, she has lost her cattle and she has nothing left. If she had been to school, she would not have lost her knowledge. That's why I want to go to school and learn how to read and write."

IMPERATIVE NUMBER EIGHT



PROTECT CHILDREN FROM WAR

Millions of children are witnesses, combatants, or victims of warfare every year. Hundreds of thousands lose parents or other family members. Even when they are not directly involved, children suffer from the effects of war.

After the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, a clinical psychologist said, "Among the symptoms manifested by children are nightmares, difficulty in concentrating, depression and a sense of hopelessness about the future." Everywhere in the world, children worry about war, conflict and violence.

• **Do you** talk to the children in your life about their fears?

No child should experience the horrors of armed conflict

"When our consciences grow so tender that we will act to prevent human misery rather than avenge it?"

— Eleanor Roosevelt —



THE NUMBERS

- At any one time, 300,000 children under the age of 18 are **serving as child soldiers**.
- Since 1990, more than **2 million children have been killed in wars**, 6 million have been seriously injured and more than 22 million have been driven from their homes.
- In Cambodia children account for up to 50% of landmine casualties. In Somalia **more than 55% of landmine victims are children**.
- Sixteen of the world's 20 poorest countries** have suffered a major civil war in the past 15 years.

ZLATA'S DIARY



BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA

Zlata Filipovic was 11 years old when civil war began in Bosnia. She kept a diary from 1991 to 1993.

Zlata wrote about her life in a city without food, electricity or water, and worst of all, the death of her best friend in a bomb attack. One day she wrote, "War has crossed out the day and replaced it with horror, and now horrors are unfolding instead of days."

"It looks to me," she wrote, "as though these politics mean Serbs, Croats and Muslims. But they are all people. They are all the same."

Zlata and her family escaped to safety in Paris in 1992. Her diary has been published in 20 languages. Zlata and her parents started a charity to help the victims of the Bosnian war, especially the children of Sarajevo.

IMPERATIVE NUMBER NINE



PROTECT THE EARTH FOR CHILDREN

Safeguard the environment at global, national and local levels.

Air and water pollution, overpopulation, global warming, the disposal of hazardous waste, acid rain and the destruction of the rain forest threaten us all.

There is no such thing as a local problem—environmental issues affect everyone. Interconnections are evident in the natural world. We must face environmental issues and look for solutions.

“We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.”

:: Native American Proverb ::

Children are the primary victims of many of the effects of the deterioration of the natural environment. They will also have to deal with every problem that we do not solve.

• **Do you** and your children recycle, conserve energy and water, use public transportation, walk or ride your bike? What other earth-friendly things can you do?



THE NUMBERS

- **Nearly two million children** every year die from water-borne diseases. Another two million die of acute respiratory infections resulting from air pollution.
- **One-third of global disease** can be attributed to environmental risk factors. Over 40% of diseases caused by environmental factors affect children under five years of age.
- **In a UNICEF survey, 26% of children polled in Europe and Asia** would like their country to be a place in which there is no pollution. Environmental issues such as poor lighting and high levels of traffic were cited by 20 per cent of European and Central Asian children who feel unsafe in their neighborhoods.

NATIVE YOUTH IS ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST



ALASKA



When Verner Wilson, an Alaska Yup'ik Native, was 15 years old he attended a meeting sponsored by the National Wildlife Fund. The meeting inspired him to become an environmental activist. He is also determined to preserve his culture.

Verner is soft-spoken, but passionate. He makes speeches, writes newspaper editorials and letters, and has started an environmental

youth group in his hometown, a small, coastal community where fishing is a way of life. Verner cares deeply about issues like toxins in subsistence foods, pesticides, and farmed fish. He sees these issues as threatening his Native way of life.

Verner was nominated for a statewide "Spirit of Youth" award for his efforts.

IMPERATIVE NUMBER TEN



FIGHT POVERTY: INVEST IN CHILDREN

Invest in services that benefit
the poorest children and
their families.

Children are the chief victims of poverty all over the world. Even in wealthy countries poor children lack basic health and educational resources. In some countries, many children live on the streets, begging, selling goods—or themselves.

Investing in children pays large dividends.

- **Do you donate** time or money to a favorite charity that provides services to poor children?

- **Can you influence** policy in favor of poor children in your community?

THE NUMBERS

- A child born today in the developing world has a **4 out of 10 chance of living in extreme poverty.**
- **Malnutrition in children under two causes permanent and irreversible damage** on the body and mind. Babies who are poor and malnourished are more likely to contract respiratory infections, diarrhea, and measles.
- Less than 50% of the population in 18 countries uses improved drinking water sources. **Children are particularly susceptible to water-borne diseases.**

**"What shall I give my
children who are poor?
Who are adjudged the
leastwise of the land..."**

:: Gwendolyn Brooks ::



PERU

AMERICAN TEENS WORK WITH CHILDREN IN PERU



Vanessa Burton is 16 and a busy volunteer in her hometown of Atlanta, Georgia. She conducts church tutorials, teaches preschool children with challenges, and serves food at homeless shelters on Saturday mornings.

Vanessa had never been on an airplane before she and her group, from CARE Corps Teens, took off for a rural valley outside Lima, Peru. Vanessa helped to harvest

artichokes, tried weaving on a wooden loom, and taught children about hand washing and recycling. She and her friends worked with shovels and pickaxes to help villagers bring clean water to their homes.

"It's given me a new respect for hardworking people," Vanessa said.

MOVING

INTO THE FUTURE

"WE WILL LEAD A GLOBAL MOVEMENT
FOR CHILDREN THAT CREATES AN UNSTOPPABLE
MOMENTUM FOR CHANGE..."

:: Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1990 ::

It is the obligation of every person to
insure that all children are raised in what the
United Nations has called the "spirit of peace,
dignity, tolerance, freedom, and equality."

When each of us takes responsibility
to create change, our efforts
are like ripples in a pond
that can radiate out to
the whole world.

What can you do?

