

Introduction



SECTION 1



YouthLaw
Free legal help throughout Aotearoa

**SETTING THE
SCENE & CREATING
A SAFE SPACE**

INTRODUCTION



1

WHO IS YOUTHLAW AOTEAROA?

Everyone needs a little help sometimes. That includes children and young people. Whether it's help finding out about rights and responsibilities, help to have their voice heard or a point in the right direction in terms of support services available to them, we are here to make sure children and young people get a fair go.

YouthLaw Aotearoa is a free community law centre for children and young people nationwide. We provide free legal services to anyone under 25 years old who is unable to access legal help elsewhere, or those acting on their behalf. We're a registered charity and we're part of the [nation-wide community law centre network](#).

We provide the following core services:

- [Legal information](#)
- [Legal education](#)
- [Legal advice, assistance and from time to time representation \(legal services\)](#)

UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (UNCROC) & THE YOUTH LAW 101 EDUCATION PACK

This education pack brings together important information about UNCROC and its relationship to local laws here in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

We know that sometimes having access to the law and understanding it can be a bit intimidating. That's why we have created a resource that breaks down some important information so that young people/rangatahi might feel more empowered to exercise their rights.

The pack has 6 sections:

1. Setting the Scene & Creating a Safe Space
2. UNCROC & Youth Rights
3. Discrimination
4. Street Law: Your Rights & Talking to Police
5. Street Law: Your Rights & Police Searches
6. The Low-down on Lawyers

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) is powerful – it tells us that ALL children/tamariki and young people/rangatahi have rights. Having rights means that children are entitled to things that will help them develop to their fullest potential.

UNCROC can be separated into four main sections:

SURVIVAL RIGHTS

These cover the basic rights you need to live, such as ensuring that you have adequate shelter,

INTRODUCTION



1

nutrition, access to medical services and a decent standard of living.

For example, Article 27 states that every child has the right to an adequate standard of living and that if your parents aren't able to provide this standard of living for you then the Government should provide assistance.

DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

These are rights to help you develop mentally and socially, such as the right to education, cultural activities, access to information about yourself, the freedom to express yourself, and freedom of religion.

PROTECTION RIGHTS

These include the rights to be safeguarded against physical, sexual and emotional abuse, exploitation, torture and unfair treatment in the criminal justice system.

For example, Article 19 puts an obligation on the Government to protect children from physical or mental harm, injury, abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation.

PARTICIPATION RIGHTS

These rights give you the freedom to be involved and have your voice heard. Adults in public life should listen to what you think and take your views into account when making decisions about you.

Article 12 of the Convention gives children the right to express their views freely in matters which affect them. For instance, if you have been suspended at school you have a right to be present at the Board of Trustees meeting and be heard before they make decisions about you.

It also means that adults and governments have responsibilities to make sure that the rights of all children are accessible to children and their families.

Governments are assessed every five years by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva. The Committee checks up on the country's record of children's rights and then makes recommendations to governments on how to improve the lives of children in their country.

Now, why are we telling you so much about UNCROC? Well, UNCROC is important because this international law has an impact on New Zealand domestic law that relates to children and young people. So whether we're talking about the law as it applies to school, work or in the community - UNCROC has helped shape rights and legal protections for young people. Cool eh?!

For more information, you can check out the UNICEF summary page:

http://www.unescoentre.ulster.ac.uk/pdfs/pdfs_uncrc/uncrc_summary_version.pdf

WHO IS THE EDUCATION PACK FOR?

Youth Law 101 can be used by anyone who wants to get a group of young people together to explore youth rights and learn more about the law.

INTRODUCTION

1



Whether you're a high school student facilitator, a youth worker or a teacher we hope you'll find some useful tools to support you to engage with young people and help them to learn about the law.

The activities in this pack are suitable for young people aged between 13 and 19, although they can be adapted for groups of any age. You do not need to complete all the activities at the same time. Some activities in this pack are quite physically active – please adapt them if needed.

STAYING SAFE WHILE DELIVERING THE PROGRAMME

It's awesome that you've decided to work with young people to grow their knowledge of the law. Before you get started, here are a few tips to help keep the facilitators AND the participants safe.

THE DOS:

- Prepare! Get your fellow facilitators together to read, discuss & prep for the workshop session you're going to deliver at least a few days before
- Be energetic & positive
- Listen to & encourage discussion. To make sure everyone has the chance to be heard, you can use a 'talking stick' (like a koosh ball or soft toy)...
- Use the group agreement to maintain a safe space of respectful communication
- Have a team of at least 2 facilitators (if possible) delivering to any one group
- Encourage participants to download the YouthLaw App!
- Call YouthLaw Aotearoa any time you have a question or query about content – we're happy to help

THE DON'TS:

- Give legal advice – In most cases this has to be left to lawyers. Encourage young people to call YouthLaw or their local Community Law Centre for free & confidential advice
- Allow one or more participants to be overly negative or pick on others – having a team of facilitators can help to keep the space safe
- If someone talks about something personal, thank them for sharing and redirect the group back to the activity
- If you're ever unsure, check out the information on our website and rest assured that YouthLaw Aotearoa is here to answer young people's legal questions

Most importantly, the aim is to have fun while learning about Youth Rights & the Law. If you've got any questions about this resource or if you're a young person with a legal question, please call the team @ YouthLaw Aotearoa.

If someone shares information that makes you think that they may be in an unsafe situation or will soon be in an unsafe situation, tell a trusted adult straight away.

INTRODUCTION

Facilitator Notes



1

ACTIVITY 1

ACTIVITY NAME: Group Agreement

TIME: 20 mins

AIM: To establish group expectations and boundaries

LEARNING OUTCOME:

1. Participants will negotiate and create a group 'agreement' which sets out expectations on how to behave and treat others during the programme.
2. Participants will express their views on how they think the group should run.

RESOURCES + PREP:

1. Youth Law 101 DVD – Clip number 1
2. Photocopy enough Group Agreement Sheets for each group
3. Something to write with - Pens, felt tip pens, colouring pencils etc.
4. Four Facilitators (if possible)

FACILITATION TIPS:

- Encourage participation by all members of the group by having at least one student facilitator per small group.
- Ask the group to identify what is important to them. If it is the idea of the group (i.e. not using phone during the session, not speaking over others) then they are more likely to stick to the agreed rules.
- Welcome ideas, and if any 'questionable' ideas are offered, try to turn it around and make it relevant to the discussion.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Break the class/group into four small groups.
2. Explain the role of an agreement or contract:
For example, "an agreement sets out a series of rules which we must all negotiate and agree upon, just like a contract you might have at work".
3. Explain that each small group will share their ideas with the whole group. Everyone will then agree on a group agreement for the whole group or class.
4. Ask each group to brainstorm their ideas for a group agreement.
5. This process may need to be guided. Facilitators can point them towards concepts such as:
 - Respect
 - Staying positive
 - Everyone participates
 - Asking questions
 - No cell phones

INTRODUCTION

Facilitator Notes



1

| ACTIVITY 1 |

- No gang colours
 - No harmful language directed towards each other or others
 - No put downs
 - Letting people have a say and not talking over them
 - Punctuality
6. Ask each group to share their contract terms with the larger group. Invite one facilitator or participant to record the group agreement for the whole class or group. If any class or group members want to challenge or expand, this is the time to do it: Everyone must agree for it to be binding.
 7. Once the whole group has finalised the terms of the contract, announce that for the duration of each session, this will be the contract you all abide by!

DISCUSSION POINTS:

- Explain that it is important to observe these so that everyone feels safe. These are the contract terms of the group.
- Keep in mind that in future, you have the right to negotiate contracts so that you as well as the other person (like an employer/boss) are happy with the agreement.

GROUP AGREEMENT