

2022/23



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# OUTRIGHT

Speak out on children's rights

## RESOURCES FOR FACILITATORS WORKING WITH CHILDREN

Hand in paw with Paddington<sup>™</sup>, learn how strong health systems protect all children's right to the best possible health. And be inspired to speak out for change.



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## HELLO AND WELCOME TO OUTRIGHT!

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We're so delighted and grateful you're joining us to raise awareness of the importance of strong health systems, to protect all children's right to the best possible health.

UNICEF has worked with governments and partners around the world since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, supporting the health systems that children and their families depend on (see p7).

We've seen unprecedented disruption to life-saving health services. This has put children's lives and futures at risk. But now the world has a once-in-a-generation chance to learn from the pandemic, strengthen health systems and protect children's futures.

By taking part in OutRight, the UK Committee for UNICEF (UNICEF UK)'s annual youth campaign, this year children will develop their knowledge of health, global healthcare systems, and how these relate to their rights.

We want to empower and inspire children to think about and share their views on children's rights in their local communities and more widely too, with the support of our campaign champions – Paddington Bear and Cel Spellman.

If your school is working towards UNICEF UK Silver or Gold Rights Respecting Schools Award, or sustaining your Gold Award, all the activities in the pack will help you achieve the outcomes in strand C, which focuses on participation, empowerment and action. [If you're interested in becoming a Rights Respecting School, you can find out more here.](#)

Like last year, we'll be in touch with regular emails sharing updates, learning activities and opportunities to take action. We'll be hosting workshops again on Microsoft Teams so you can ask questions and share ideas.

Do get in touch if you have questions or would like to share the progress your group is making. We can't wait to find out how you get on!

Thank you so much for championing the campaign and empowering children to use their voices.

All the best,



**Jess Bool**  
Strategic Lead  
Youth Engagement



**Frances Bestley**  
Director  
Rights Respecting Schools Award





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3.



## STILL TO COME

We'll email you regularly to update you with everything you need, including:

- All learning activities
- Campaign actions
- Invitations to join our online events



## GET YOUR OUTRIGHT CERTIFICATE

Take our key campaign actions, share evidence that you've joined in, and take our feedback survey at the end to get your school or organisation's **OutRight 2022/23 certificate**.

If you're working towards a **Silver or Gold Rights Respecting Schools Award**, you can use the OutRight certificate as evidence of Strand C achievements.

Contact us:  
[outright@unicef.org.uk](mailto:outright@unicef.org.uk)





# INTRODUCTION TO OUTRIGHT

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## EXPLAINING OUTRIGHT TO COLLEAGUES AND CHILDREN

During the pandemic, many children have felt that their voices and views weren't being heard by decision-makers.

Despite its huge challenges, the COVID-19 pandemic has shown us ways we need to strengthen health systems around the world. Investing in health systems is smart. The stronger our systems are, the easier it is for us to access the care we need and stay well. OutRight is a great way for us, as adult allies, to show children that their voices do matter. Every year we work hard to empower children to speak out about the importance of children's rights. This year we'll explore how having strong health systems protects all children's right to the best possible health.

Through the activities and resources we'll be sharing, children will have the opportunity to:

- Develop their knowledge and understanding of children's rights, health and health systems, and the links between these topics
- Learn about their right to voice their views, and for them to be heard and taken seriously
- Use their voices to raise awareness and share their work with decision-makers

We'll share useful links in regular emails, but please do get in touch with any questions in the meantime at [outright@unicef.org.uk](mailto:outright@unicef.org.uk)

Actor and presenter Cel Spellman has recorded a great welcome video and we've put together a short PowerPoint presentation that should be useful in helping you to start a conversation about OutRight with the children you work with. You can download both from here:

[unicef.uk/outright-resources](https://unicef.uk/outright-resources)



### Hand in paw with Paddington

Paddington's kindness, tolerance and openness to other cultures make him the perfect champion for children.

He's not afraid to stand up for things he believes in, so is the perfect character to front OutRight and help children discover more about their rights.

[Read more here](#) about why Paddington left his home in Peru to start a new life in London.

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## GET STARTED WITH YOUR LEARNING ACTIVITIES

As always, OutRight activities will help children develop their knowledge of an issue and how it relates to their rights, encouraging them to use their voices along the way.

We've created a combination of video, PowerPoint and PDF resources to help you facilitate an engaging, empowering journey of work, whether you're delivering online or face-to-face. We know from your feedback that this mix is useful as the need to keep learning settings flexible continues.

We'll send you, or the person who signed up to OutRight, regular emails with links to each new set of materials. Each will include a guide for you, ready-to-present slides and activities outlined so you can use them however works best for you.

We also plan to hold a live session for children and young people, around World Children's Day, to inspire and encourage children to use their voices on this important issue.



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### World Children's Day

World Children's Day is a day by children, for children. It's a moment every year for us to celebrate the adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. What better way to mark the day than with OutRight activities that inspire children to speak out for their rights?

Could children you work with take the lead and:

- Plan a Takeover Day where they're in charge
- Share the work they've created and what they've learned
- Let other children know what they can do to speak up
- Think about how they can amplify their voices, maybe by involving the local press, Member of Parliament (MP), Member of Scottish Parliament (MSP), Member of the Northern Ireland Assembly (MLA), or member of the Welsh Assembly (AM), parents, local businesses, school governors or other local decision-makers?

Please record and share content on the day if you can, and let us know if you hear from your local MP, MSP, MLA or AM – we can offer support with this if you'd like.

### Flexible for you

The activities we've put together build on one another to develop children's understanding of their rights. But they're designed to adapt to your setting and the children you're working with, and integrate easily with other activities you might be doing around rights, global citizenship or the Sustainable Development Goals.

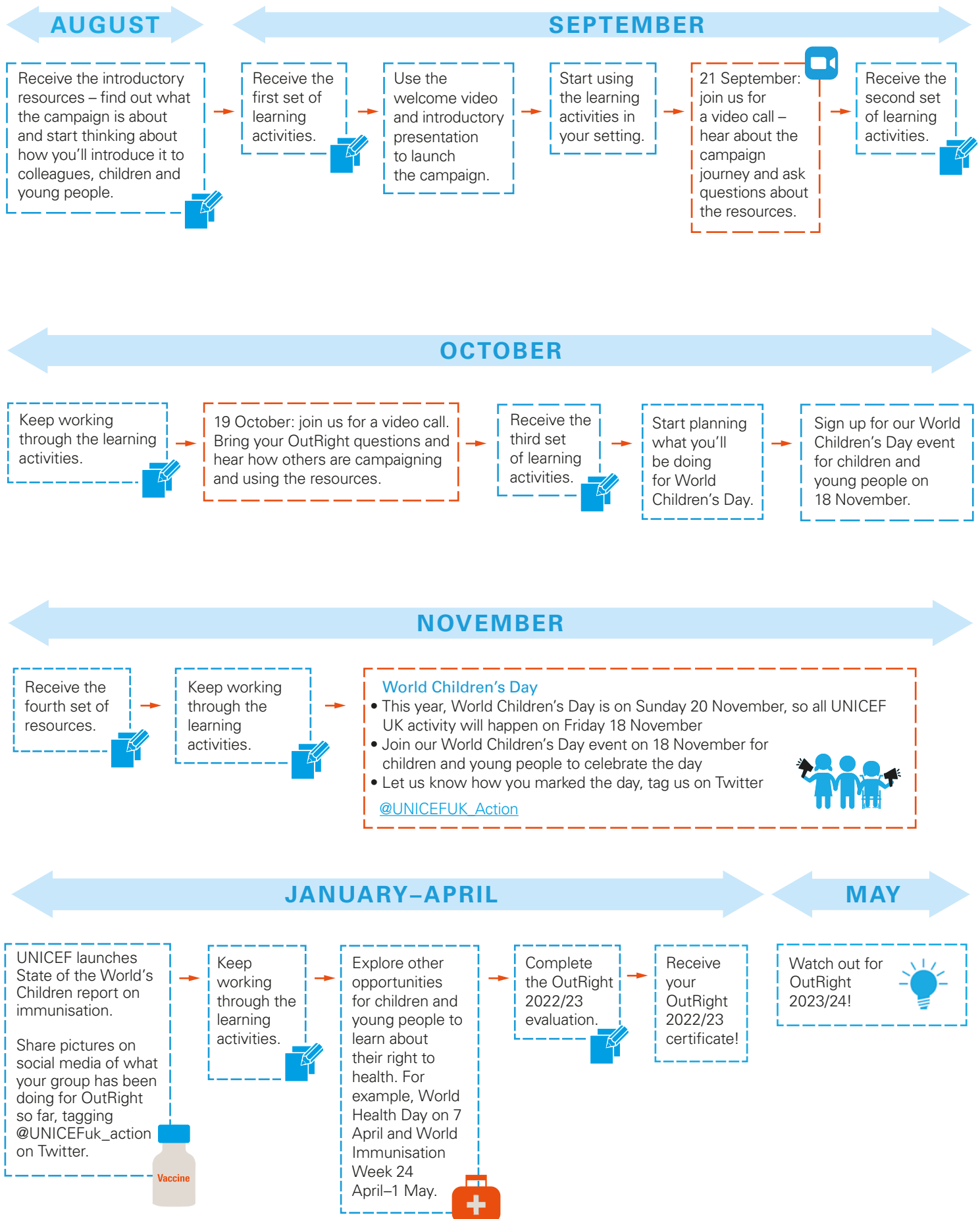
The PowerPoint resources each come with facilitators' notes to use alongside them. They can be presented by you or an older young person on a whiteboard, or shared directly with children learning individually or remotely.

As with Article of the Week resources for Rights Respecting Schools ([unicef.uk/AoW](https://www.unicef.uk/AoW)), there's no expectation that you'll complete every activity to the letter – they're tools for you to use in any way that works for you.



# TIMELINE

**THIS SUGGESTED TIMELINE CAN HELP YOU STRUCTURE YOUR CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES**



# BACKGROUND READING

Article 24 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) says: **all children are entitled to the best healthcare possible**, and they should have information about how to stay safe and healthy.



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**The COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented disruption to life-saving health services for children across the world, including in the UK. However, the lowest-income countries are facing the steepest challenges, with health systems being pushed to breaking point. This is putting children's lives and futures at risk.**

UNICEF has been working with governments and partners around the world since the start of the pandemic. Together we're supporting the delivery of millions of COVID-19 vaccines and ensuring health systems can continue to support children and their families, beyond the COVID-19 response. However, more support is urgently needed to uphold children's right to health.

As the UK Government responds to the global pandemic, it has a once in a generation opportunity to strengthen health systems and protect children's futures.

Strengthening health systems is how we fight the pandemic now and protect children's lives in the future against the disruption that can be caused by a variety of crises. If we get it right, the COVID-19 response is an opportunity to create long lasting and sustainable change for the world's children.

The pandemic, conflict and crises around the world have disrupted children's access to immunisation, putting their futures at risk. It is critical that every child can access the life-saving health services they need now, and throughout any future crises.

Through this year's OutRight campaign, UNICEF UK will provide resources to support the children you work with to understand how strong health systems can protect all children's right to the best possible health, and speak out on the topic. The CRC underpins the resources, rooting the learning in the relevant articles, which cover children's rights to health, to have their views respected, to use their voice, to education, and to not be discriminated against.



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## WHAT ARE HEALTH SYSTEMS?

Health systems are made up of the people, organisations and resources that look after everyone's health.

People like doctors, midwives, dentists, community health workers, psychiatrists and occupational therapists rely on the places they work, like hospitals, clinics, GP surgeries and more, to provide care. The equipment these professionals use, and the medicines they prescribe for us, are all part of health systems too.

Alongside all this, campaigns that provide us with accurate and reliable information about our health and healthcare services are important too. These might use things like posters, leaflets and TV ads to help us make healthy choices and seek care and advice when we need it.



## WHAT MAKES A HEALTH SYSTEM STRONG?

A strong health system has people who are trained and paid well. It has safe, reliable infrastructure like buildings, transport, equipment and information systems with data about everyone who needs care. It also has enough medicines and funding to function well.

Strong health systems are also accessible to all, which means that wherever people are living, they should have services nearby that look after their needs.

## WHY DO HEALTH SYSTEMS NEED STRENGTHENING?

Half of the world's population goes without access to the healthcare they need, according to the World Health Organization.

Strengthening health systems is an important way we can protect children's lives now and in the future.



## CHILDREN IN THE UK

Every child has the right to the best possible health, as article 24 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) says.

The COVID-19 pandemic turned the lives of children across the world upside down. For children here in the UK, schools and play spaces were closed, exams cancelled and loved ones separated. The risks to children's health, wellbeing and futures have been profound:

- Education: a third of education was lost between March 2020 and April 2021 alone.
- Nutrition: more children in the UK faced food insecurity as job losses took their toll on family finances.
- Health systems were stretched, meaning children now have less access to healthcare and other essential services.
- Protection: thousands of children faced a greater risk of abuse in their homes and online.
- Participation: across the board, the voices of children and young people have been absent from decisions made about their lives.

For some children, the right support and resources have made the situation manageable. For others, the effects of the pandemic will cast a long shadow over their lives.

The fragile situation that many children and young people live in has been exposed. Hundreds of thousands of children who rely on school, health and social systems and the support of the voluntary sector suddenly lost that protection. And many are still going without it, as these systems remain weakened.

Nearly 1 in 4 children report a long-term health condition or disability, and many have seen their care postponed or disrupted during the pandemic due to staff shortages and redeployment.

Globally, children are experiencing an unprecedented health crisis caused by a combination of reduced services, delayed access to healthcare, loss of healthy choices and activities, and exposure to greater risks.

This could mean we're storing up health problems for this generation in the coming years – and a serious threat to children's right to the best possible health – unless we take action urgently.

We've seen where weaknesses in our systems are affecting families around the world, and we must take the chance now to strengthen them.

## SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN

We believe children should feel safe and supported to talk about any issue that affects their lives. Health issues can be upsetting for families, so it's possible that during your conversations about health, a child you're working with may raise issues that give you cause for concern, for example if they're dealing with health issues at home.

It's important that you follow your safeguarding procedure if this does happen. And that you look after your own wellbeing too, if any sensitive conversations leave you feeling in need of support.

**Childline** is a service provided by the NSPCC that includes a 24-hour helpline for children (under 18) on **0800 1111**. Full details on the support and information it offers can be found at: [childline.org.uk](https://www.childline.org.uk)

For children who might be helping to look after family members with health issues, the **Carers Trust** has this useful page on finding local support: [carers.org](https://www.carers.org)

For adults having a hard time emotionally, **Samaritans** provides a 24-hour confidential listening service on **116 123** or you can email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

# HOW CAN CHILDREN USE THEIR VOICES?

Under the CRC, governments are duty-bearers who must fulfil the obligations set out in the convention so that the rights of children and young people are met. As rights holders, it's important that children and young people are supported to speak out on the issues that affect them, and are heard by key decision-makers at every level.

While duty-bearers hold the responsibility of making sure rights are met, children and young people can promote their rights as well, for example by raising their voices to ask for change, including through the activities in this pack.

OutRight empowers children to speak out about their rights, inspiring them to stand up for their own rights and those of other children, both here in the UK and around the world, and strengthening their knowledge and understanding of children's rights.

For further information on the CRC, see the video produced by Queen's University Belfast and the child-friendly version of the CRC designed by UNICEF UK:

[unicef.uk/QUB-CRC](https://unicef.uk/QUB-CRC)

[unicef.uk/child-uncrc](https://unicef.uk/child-uncrc)



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## SHARE WHAT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ARE DOING FOR OUTRIGHT

We're always really excited to see and hear how you and the children you work with get involved with our campaigns! It really helps us to fulfill our mission to promote children's voices. There are lots of ways to do this:

- You can e-mail us at [outright@unicef.org.uk](mailto:outright@unicef.org.uk)
- If your policies permit you to do so, record consent and then share photos and posts on social media, tagging [@UNICEFUK](https://twitter.com/UNICEFUK) [action](https://twitter.com/outrightuk) on Twitter



OutRight resources, including guidance on image consent, can be found at [unicef.uk/outright-resources](https://unicef.uk/outright-resources)

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# WHAT IS CAMPAIGNING?

Campaigning, activism, advocacy, speaking up, using your voice, protesting, raising awareness and creating change...

**Together, we can achieve the change** we want in our local communities, our country and across the world.



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**IN ONE SENTENCE: CAMPAIGNING IS ABOUT TAKING SPECIFIC AND ORGANISED ACTIONS (LIKE TAKING PART IN OUTRIGHT!) TO BRING ABOUT POSITIVE CHANGE ON AN ISSUE, AND INFLUENCE THOSE IN POWER TO ACT.**

## WHY CAMPAIGN?

Children have an important role to play in campaigning to create change. Their voices matter and they have the right to say what they think.

Campaigning on issues that affect them can make a real difference to people in the UK and around the world. By signing petitions, making videos, writing blogs and speaking to representatives and decision-makers (like an MP or councillor), and the media, children can show those in power just how much they care about children's rights here and around the world.

## SPREAD THE WORD

Word of mouth is a very powerful tool: why not try one of these effective actions?

- **Tell five others:** Challenge the children you work with to tell five others about what they've learned through OutRight and how it affects everyone. Telling cousins, siblings or friends who go to different schools or live in different areas is a great way to raise awareness.
- **Present your work:** Create a short presentation about the work you're doing in your school/organisation to share with other schools or youth groups in your area. Your group could even invite local businesses, local councillors or your local decision-makers too.

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**RESPECT FOR  
CHILDREN'S VIEWS**

### UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: Article 12

Every child has the right to say what they think in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.



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# CONTACTING DECISION-MAKERS

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## Members of Parliament

The UK is split into 650 areas, or constituencies. Each constituency is represented by a Member of Parliament (MP). An MP's job is to represent the people in their constituency (constituents) in Parliament on both national and local issues.

## Members of the Scottish Parliament, Northern Ireland Assembly and Welsh Assembly

If you're in Scotland, Northern Ireland or Wales, then your group should also contact your Member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP), Member of the Northern Ireland Assembly (MLA) or Member of the Welsh Assembly (AM). Many issues affecting children's rights are devolved, which means that the respective governments can change policies and take action themselves.

## Local councillors

Your group can also contact the local decision-makers who represent you at your local council. Local councillors are elected to represent their communities on a range of local issues and can play an important role in ensuring services (things like healthcare, education, policing, transport) support you and your local community.

## HOW DO WE FIND OUT WHO THEY ARE AND GET IN TOUCH?

Once your group has decided the most appropriate level of representative to contact, they can find and contact your MP, MSP, AM, MLA and local councillors in two easy steps:

- 1 To find out who your representatives are, search by your school or organisation's postcode on these sites:**
  - MPs – [unicef.uk/FindMP](https://www.unicef.uk/FindMP)
  - MSPs – [unicef.uk/FindYourMSP](https://www.unicef.uk/FindYourMSP)
  - AMs – [unicef.uk/FindYourAM](https://www.unicef.uk/FindYourAM)
  - MLAs – [unicef.uk/FindYourMLA](https://www.unicef.uk/FindYourMLA)
  - Local councillors – [unicef.uk/Councillors](https://www.unicef.uk/Councillors) or visit your local council's website, which is easily done through any search engine.

## 2 Your group can then decide how it wants to contact your local decision-maker.

Why not invite them to see the work you've been doing or send them a letter or email to highlight the work the group has been doing?

Although members of your group may not be able to vote yet, it's your local representatives' job to listen to what young constituents have to say and address the concerns they raise. Decision-makers are often really impressed and inspired when they see young people seeking to make the world a better place.

**Before you contact your local decision-maker, it's important for the group to think carefully about what it's asking for:**

- Politicians like it when people come to them with a clear plan of action for what they would like them to do. It's great to be passionate about an issue but your group also needs to have an idea of what the solution to the problem could be and how the decision-maker can help achieve that solution.
- For example, your group might want your local decision-maker to raise an issue with a government minister or speak in a debate. Or your group might want a politician to spark a particular change – this could mean actively seeking to change the law, shift their personal views, or adapt their political party's approach to an issue.

Try using the OutRight media guide and templates. You can also learn more about how to engage political decision-makers here: [unicef.uk/YouthAdvocacyToolkit](https://www.unicef.uk/YouthAdvocacyToolkit)





## CONTACTING YOUR DECISION-MAKER

### Step 1: Write a letter or email to your decision-maker explaining your request.

Your group might want to invite them to visit your school/organisation and see the work you've been doing in person, or via video call. As part of this, the group should include why this issue or visit is important. The group should make it clear that your organisation/school is in the constituency. It's also really helpful to try and make the request as local as possible – remember, it's the decision-maker's job to represent the concerns of local people. It might also be a good idea to mention the ages of the group, or class year; children have powerful voices and decision-makers are often encouraged to hear from them. Remember, when your group contacts your local decision-makers, it's always best to address them respectfully, using their title and surname rather than first name.

### Step 2: Arranging the meeting.

Decision-makers are often very busy and receive a lot of emails, calls and letters so the group might have to wait a little while for a response. If your group hasn't heard back within three weeks, you might want to call their office to follow up and arrange a time for the visit or meeting.

### Step 3: Meeting your decision-maker.

Help the group prepare in advance so you all have a clear plan of how you want the visit or meeting to go. It's also important to remember to be personal and polite – explain clearly why the group feels strongly about this issue and, even if the group disagrees with your decision-maker's approach, it is important to remain calm so group members can explain their position clearly and ensure their voices are heard. If the group asks the decision-maker questions about their work and their views too, this might help build a good relationship. Make sure to thank them for their time at the end of the visit or meeting. The group might want to take a picture with the decision-maker and use this to remind them of the actions they may have promised to take. If it's an online meeting, the group could take a screenshot, with permission.



### Who has the power to change the issue you're campaigning on?

The UK Government has the power to put children's rights at the heart of all its work. Your group can share its views with the Government to help make sure that children's voices are listened to and acted upon. By meeting their local MP, MSP, MLA or AM and expressing their concerns about issues that affect them, children can help us build support to ensure the Government prioritises children's rights here in the UK and around the world.

### TOP TIPS

- MPs like to receive invitations in plenty of time, so planning is key.
- A visit or meeting will usually take place on a Friday: before the pandemic that's when MPs would go back to their local areas. Whether they visit in-person, or over a video call, your group can tell them personally what issues are important to them.
- Ask your MP to continue to support the group's campaign by speaking about it in a debate in Parliament, or by asking a question of the Prime Minister and relevant Ministers.



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