

ACTIVITY 7:

HOW CAN I HELP MAKE THE WORLD'S HEALTH SYSTEMS BETTER FOR CHILDREN'S HEALTH?

AIM: Children explore CRC Articles 12 and 13 and explore how they can use their own voices to be part of healthcare advocacy and healthcare systems strengthening, and to help ensure children's rights are recognised.

Preparation:

- If possible, coordinate the timing of this activity to coincide with your school or organisation's celebration of World Children's Day (which is on 20 November).
- Identify potential community health leaders to invite to an assembly.

Facilitator materials and resources:

- Activity 7 presentation

Participant materials:

- Pen and paper

Tips for those working in Early Years settings:

- Invite a healthcare worker to come talk about what they do and why it's an important job for protecting children's rights.

Facilitator introduction

Making health systems stronger around the world is a big challenge, but it's a problem that we can't ignore. It's also a problem that we must all work on together – both adults and children. Richer countries must also help poorer countries achieve this.

CRC Article 12 says: Children have the right to give their opinions freely on issues that affect them. Adults should listen and take children seriously. Likewise, Article 13 tells us: Children have the right to share freely with others what they learn, think and feel, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way unless it harms other people.

The voices of children are just as important as the voices of adults in calling for change on important issues. In this session we'll look at the power of young voices in calling for change to make health systems stronger, and we'll use our own voices to call on adults to ask them how they'll fulfil their responsibilities to make the health systems we rely on stronger to ensure the best possible health for children.



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PART 1: WARM-UP – RHYTHM

1. Explain that to begin this activity, you're going to work together to create a rhythm. Invite children to come together in a circle.
2. One child will start the rhythm by picking a sound they can make using their body or any item available nearby (like clapping, snapping, stomping, or tapping a pencil on the desk). Invite all the children in the circle to follow the same rhythm for a few rounds.
3. Once everyone in the circle is in sync to the rhythm, invite the child to the left of the first sound maker to introduce a new sound into the circle. Invite all the children in the circle (besides the original sound maker) to copy the rhythm for another few rounds. The first sound maker will continue to make their original sound.
4. Work your way around the full circle with each child adding a new sound to the rhythm in their turn until every child is contributing their own sound to the rhythm. For a variation, you (or another child) can act as a conductor instructing the group to speed up the rhythm, go more slowly, make the sound louder, or make the sound quieter. Eventually conduct the rhythm to stop.
5. Complete a quick debrief, guiding the children to recognise that we were together able to make a beautiful sound when we each did our part.

PART 2: MEET YOUTH ADVOCATES (ARTICLES 12 AND 13)

1. Using the activity 7 presentation, ask the children what they remember about CRC Articles 12 and 13. Both of these articles remind children that they have the right to use their own voices to freely share their own opinions with others, in any way that they want to as long as it doesn't harm anyone else – and adults should take these opinions seriously.
2. Briefly introduce the profiles of the youth advocates using the bios in the Activity 7 Presentation, explaining that each of these are young people who care about health systems and healthcare rights for children and are doing what they can to strengthen health systems and advocate with adults for the best healthcare for all children.
3. While strengthening health systems is a very big job and has many different parts, it's important that everyone – including children – does what they can do to use their voice to help change this issue. Just like it took everyone's unique sound working together to create the rhythm we made in the warm-up, it takes everyone's unique skill and voice to influence the big changes we need to see around the world to strengthen health systems.

PART 3: INVITE A COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE LEADER(S) TO SHARE

If possible, complete the assembly portion of this activity to take place in conjunction with your school or organisation's celebration of World Children's Day. Celebrate the day with us in an online event on 18 November 2022, you'll receive details by email to get your free ticket.

1. As a group, create a list of people from the health system whom you might like to invite to share thoughts with your group as part of a session or a larger assembly. This could be a youth advocate, healthcare worker in your community or in a remote location (who could join via video conference), or someone in another role, like a government official working on health systems strengthening or advocating for everyone to have equitable access to healthcare.
2. Together, decide the best person or people from your list to invite, and make a plan for how you'll invite them. If more than one person agrees, you could create a panel in assembly to present their views to the children.
3. Engage the children in planning the details for the assembly speaker or panel in conjunction with a celebration of World Children's Day if possible.
4. In preparation for the event, invite children to use their journalism skills to create a list of questions that they think would be important for the guest speaker or panel to answer. Allow children to vote on which questions would be most important to include and create a final list. If there are other classes or groups participating in the assembly, have each group select their own top question to ask.
5. On the day of the assembly, invite students from each group or class to ask the question prepared by their section. Be sure that one of the questions presented covers the topic of, "What role can children play in this important work that you do?" Children can also be involved in running the assembly session from start to finish.

Optional: Poster Project

In advance of World Children's Day and the healthcare worker assembly, ask children to create posters depicting the text of the key rights and key advocacy messages linked to healthcare and health systems. Use these posters to decorate the assembly room.