



**Learning Circles Children's Rights - June 2015
Selection of 21 remarkable
Letters to UNICEF**

Individual assignment – peer learning – in peerScholar

**Oukba Ibnu Nafiaa, Morocco,
student 1, Abla (17):**

Hay molay smail,

ASSA,MOROCCO

20/05/2015

UNICEF, USA

Dear UNICEF President,

Hi, my name is Abla. I am 17 years old. I live in Assa, which is a small town in the south of Morocco. In this project, I have learnt many information and expand my knowledge about the rights of children. But, when people don't give the children their rights, there will be a lot of problems, which have negative effects on every child in the world.

I am writing this letter to tell you about the right to say one's own opinion. Every child has the right to say his or her opinion, but the responsible people in each country have to take it into consideration. As we can see that a lot of children have different problems and illnesses due to the lack of expressing their opinions and views. They are deprived the right to express themselves. Imagine if all countries give the right to children to voice their thoughts, beliefs, and problems. There will be less problems that face our children in the world. I have chosen to talk about this right to be added among the children's rights because I see many children all over the world are lacking this right. For me, if you express your opinion, then you participate in the change of your world.

Yours sincerely,

Abla

**Oukba Ibnu Nafiaa, Morocco,
student 3, Mahjouba (16):**

Assa –zag Marocco

21/05/2015

UNICEF

Dear sir/madame,

My name is Mahjouba. I am a student in Oukba Ibnu Nafiaa High School. I am 16 years old.

My favourite school subject is Maths. My hobby is drawing.

Learning Circle Children's Rights taught me a lot of positive things from the challenges and the topics. I did learn how to search about a project. It taught me how to write and learn from my mistakes. It taught me how to do an interview and a lot of things, because that was the best project I have ever had the chance to participate in.

The children right that I want to talk about is « to be curious ». I would like to add this right to your menu if you want with all my respect. I think the curiosity is so necessary for the children to build an advanced society and to give the kids an occasion to discover themselves. Also, to know how to search about some good things to add to their mind, and to ask and talk. I am sure that you are wondering how we can make this real. I respond that adult people must give children a large space to know their needs, and to know why this thing is right or wrong. We can encourage kids to ask by giving them a time of free expression and listening to their ideas, needs and their suggestions. It is necessary to give them some orientations from time to time but carefully and with wiseness. To be curious is the best right to be added to the children rights menu. So, I wish you are persuasive with my opinion.

With all my respect,

Mahjouba

**OLE- club, school "7 keys", Russia,
student 1, Alexandra:**

My name's Alexandra. I'm a student (Grade 7) from Russia, school "7 keys".

I've been learning English for more than 5 years and it helps me to discover the world around. Last year I started working within international projects and it let me make new friends from different countries and learn a lot about the other countries with the help of my new friends and project partners.

Learning Circle was one of the project I started this year. It was really hard to work so serious discussing all the Children's Rights, making posters, interviewing people and students from the schools of my city and analyzing military conflicts and wars in the world. Due to the project tasks and project partners I've learnt a lot. The most important thing is to know the own rights and now I can share my knowlndge with peers not just at school or in my city but even visiting other countries. Now I feel more confident and experienced!

When I was asked to think of a new right for children, I didn't really need much time for it. I consider that the most important right for children is "The Right for a Childhood". I strongly believe that all the children must be happy in their childhood having all the necessary things for discovering the world by playing. Parents shouldn't prohibit them doing their first steps in communication and in learning about the world around. Nowadays many parents try to organize their child's life up to their own wishes, ambitions and rules, modern conditions and life circumstances. "The Right for a Childhood" will let children to keep warm memories and carry them from generation to generation. Everybody knows that at the age of five /seven children go to school, they get older and older every next year and become more and more responsible for their own actions and behavior that can be right, positive and legal just in case of having a really a happy childhood.

And for the conclusion I want to say - that's why let's give our future generation a happy childhood! Children need it...

With gratitude,

Alexandra

**OLE- club, school "7 keys", Russia,
student 2, Tatiana:**

I'm Tatiana. I'm from Chelyabinsk city, Russia. My school is a unique place, where we have not just lessons but also collaborate with many countries. I've already joined many project video conferences, publish my articles in an international magazine and join some youth exchanges in the USA and India. I'm just the seventh grader but I understand people should live in peace in the world.

The project Learning Circle is a great opportunity to feel the world around with native speakers' eyes. I've read the partners pages with interest. I've got the information about the life styles in the project countries. Also with "Learning Circle" I worked for a long time and very carefully, this project gave me a lot, now I know a lot about child labour and children's rights. Moreover, I researched about wars, it was so difficult for me, but it was very useful, and now I know - people, who can stop the war, give children the right for a happy childhood! Do once and think twice ...

I guess this "Right of a Piece of Advice" certainly should be included into the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Some parents don't take into account their children's opinion, because adults think their children are too young to tell them something worthwhile. But I'm sure that kids are not yet spoiled with the world and adults have to take into account their views. Kids are just kids; they can't lie or hurt people who love them and take a good care of them. Children should have the right to speak out.

When the child decides to give an instructive advice, please, don't interrupt him/her... just listen to it carefully with no extra questions. Unfortunately often we can hear the follow dialogue "Daddy, do you know that trees are alive and they're like all the human beings on the Planet? They can hear us..." And in reply children can hear: "Stop it! What a silly idea! It is not the truth." Please, remember - children are wiser than adults.

There is a short story that can be a great example of my idea. One day someone asked a little boy about the meaning of Real Love and his answer was "Yesterday I gave my sweater to one girl, she wore it, but it was me who felt so warm". I really think children should have the right to be taken into account, to be heard, who knows what a kind of wise idea can be made with their kindness, sincerity and trust

Kid's soul is a universe full of secrets.

**Paul A. Fisher school, Canada,
student 10, Sarah (11):**

May 13, 2015

Dear UNICEF,

Hello and how are you? My name is Sarah and I am eleven. I live in Burlington, Ontario and go to Paul A. Fisher School. In class, we have been learning about children's rights for social studies. We have been learning what the children's rights are, doing writing assignments on why children's rights are so important and reading on how children are being used by their age, or how the children rights are being ignored. I am writing to you because I think there should be a new children's right. The right to choose your gender.

Through this unit, we have learned many things from children being used because of their age to being locked in an unsafe building. To start off the unit, we read a couple different topics on how the children's rights are being ignored. One topic was children are forced to be soldiers. On the children's right website UNICEF made, 'Article Six' says the right to be alive. When children are forced to be soldiers, the right to be alive isn't being followed. Another topic was children were getting paid less because they were children. The owner of the tobacco field hired children because they didn't want to pay the adults because they need to be paid more due to them being older. Those are only two out of the five topics we read in this unit. Then, we chose a war to write to the government to ask them to help the children in those countries. We offered ways to help the children in hopes that something will be done. Finally, to finish off the unit, we are writing a letter to you to offer a new children's right. That is what we learned in the children's right unit.

I think that all children should have the right to choose their gender. One reason this should be a children's right is because children shouldn't be told that the sex they were born, is the gender they are. Females in general should have the right to be in the "boys" section. Males in general should have the right to choose clothes for themselves in the "girls" section. Another reason this should be a children's right is kids shouldn't be told who they are. They should be told their rights, not they were born female and have to be a girl. If this right was to be made, children will have the freedom to choose their gender. If you are wondering, you would know that the right is being followed, by being in the schools, you would see if they wear different clothes that are from the "boys" section on females. Or even males wear clothes from the "girls" section. If the right isn't being followed, you couldn't do anything. My final reason is, I was in 'Target' and a little girl was picking clothes out for herself. If this child was in the wrong country, she would get punished. This right is similar to the law, be calm when with a police. You can just say that in hopes that the person will be calm. In conclusion, if this right were to be made and followed, children won't have to be told how to live their life. No child should be told that the sex they were born, is the gender they have to be a choose clothes from that section.

In conclusion, I hope you make a children's right that is the right to choose your gender. I think this will bright some kid's life because they want to wear "boys" clothes or "girls" clothes. Children have the right to be alive, and no child who wants to be told how to live their life. I hope that children in other countries will be able to choose their gender and be told the laws of the world and their rights.

Sincerely,

Sarah, 11

**Paul A. Fisher school, Canada,
student 12, Yassi (11):**

May 11,2015

Dear UNICEF,

Hi my name is Yassi and I am eleven years old. I live in Burlington, Ontario, Canada which is near Toronto. I was born in England then moved to Canada to help my grandparents which were leaving in Canada. I knew a bit about the Iraq Civil War because my dad was born near there. I'm writing to you about children's rights. I live in a country where there are rights for kids like being able to go to school and being able to be a girl. My class has been talking about children's rights for about three months and I have been enjoying learning about children's rights and how other people live. So do you enjoy learning about how other people live?

Most of the stuff that I have learned from this unit was fun, but when it came to learning about the war it was sad and unhappy and made me realize how grateful I am to live in such a great free country, Canada, do you feel the same about where you live? I felt that the main idea throughout the unit was about kids and how we should be able to live happy and live free. I am happy to say that I learned a lot from this unit. Like how people lived and what they had to do to stay safe and what they are doing that is not making them safe, like fighting in the war in Iraq, Russia, Congo and many more, and working in tobacco factories. Kids should have rights so they can be free and be the person they want to be that is why children's rights are so important.

Children's rights are important like not working in tobacco factories or mines but all the problems with the kids is because the kids can not do things adults can do. Those children's rights are important but all the children's rights lead up to being a kid. Being a kid should not be a punishment it should be fun, like being able to go outside, having fun, going to school, having an education. All this leads up to being a kid and kids should not be fighting in the war and trying not to stand on landmines, kids should be able to play and be kids. Kids would be happy, cheerful if you just let them be kids and be who they want to be and if this right does not work the children will stay unsafe. That is why I think we should have the right to be a kid.

I know that I am asking for a lot and it may take a long time but think about if your kids were endangered 24/7 and they had to work in dangerous places. What if you lost your kid that was trying to help you earn money. People can come together to make these rights stand so you can save the kids that are dying every day. Just think about it.

In conclusion I think that kids should be able to be kids and be free. The reason why I think this right is so important is because it would make the kids more safe and not feel like their life is in danger. I hope to see kids running around outside playing games having fun. It would take many years before this would be up and running but kids will be happy and have smiles on their faces which would make everyone feel good.

Sincerely,

Yassi

**Paul A. Fisher school, Canada,
student 13, Lily (12):**

Dear UNICEF,

Hello, my name is Lily. I grew up in Burlington ON Canada and I am 12 years old in grade six at Paul A Fisher. I live with two of my three parents and my sister and my half brother. I am the oldest of three siblings, so I've been the first of all three of us to learn about all of the children's rights. As a class we have been talking about children's rights, different wars in the world that are causing children troubles. Children all around the world should know that they have rights and they should be followed. They shouldn't have to go through that sad life which they do.

Children all around the world are going through different things that aren't very fun. For example children in Ukraine are losing their parents to bombs and in other places children are having early pregnancy or being child soldiers. Also children are working in tobacco fields and getting sick from the tobacco going into their skin. Even though one of our rights allows us to get jobs, does that really mean they should be losing their lives over getting money for their family or getting so very sick from the job? Some people read our rights differently. Children can find more work in some countries because people think they can pay children less for a job that adults should be doing.

Every child all around the world should be able to be kids while they're still young. Children aren't young forever, we should have the right to be a kid and have fun while we still can. Children shouldn't have to work 24/7. Children in other places get jobs because their family hardly has enough money to get breakfast and children get jobs to save their family, while taking a risk that they may lose their lives just to save their family.

In school children's rights has become a great, challenging unit and interesting subject to learn new things. For example one of the things we learnt about was wars all around the world that are affecting children. One war that my right would work well with my children's right is the war in Ukraine. The war in Ukraine is killing so many children and their parents. When everyone in Ukraine's parents are dying, children are forced to find food for themselves and somewhere to sleep. There are so many wars that are affecting children. The wars are the things that really stood out for me.

My new right would be that children that need it most shouldn't be forced to grow up, we should have fun without any obvious consequences. They should have more fun and they shouldn't have to worry about when their next meal will be and if the money they made will buy them at least one meal. Kids with poverty shouldn't have to live the life they have, kids shouldn't have all the pressure on them just to save their family. Children are the making of the next generation. What children have in their childhood is all they are going to expect for themselves in the future. For example a child could be one to change the world, but all they expect for their future is what they grew up with. That child could change the hearts of many but they don't know what the world has for them. We need to give that child and other children all over the world a better and happier future.

Children will be children, but when it comes time to be an adult they will know that they don't have to live in poverty and they can make a change. They will have had a happy background and story to start a good life on. Kids will grow up when they notice that they can have a good time.

Sincerely,

Lily

**Paul A. Fisher school, Canada,
student 17, Carmen (11):**

Monday, May, 13, 2015

Dear Unicef,

Hello, My name is Carmen. I am in grade 6. I live in Burlington, Ontario, Canada. I go to Paul. A. Fisher school. I have no siblings and I live with my two parents. After school I do activities like karate, swimming, dance (jazz) and I used to do Girl Guides. I walk to school alone and sometimes I go to school with a friend. I have lived in Canada for around 8 years, and I have been in Burlington for around 6 years. I was born in Canada but i'm half Estonian. Most of my family is born is Estonia, except for my cousin and me. I'm writing this letter because I want to tell you about the children's rights. In class we have been talking about Children's Rights. We have been doing this for a several weeks. We have been doing lots of projects and learning about children's rights. In our projects we had to search for what Canada has been doing about it. We are doing this because we want to learn about Children's rights, and how we can help the children.

The big idea of what we learned was that children in other countries don't meet their needs, while we in Canada are wanting more needs. One of our projects that we did was that we had to learn about Children in one war. After we learned about a war we had to write a letter to Stephen Harper (Canada's prime minister). Some of the wars that the class chose from were Syrian Revolution, Russian Revolution, Democrat Of Cargo and War in Iraq. The project that I did was Boko Haram. Another project that we had to do was a Political Comic. We had to make a picture of Children who don't have some needs. Some children did not have access to fresh water, food, Education, family, or to be a child. One of our last projects was that we had to read an article. One article that I did was that Children who have to work in tobacco fields because their parents can't afford money. Working in tobacco fields affects the children's health. Some health conditions that take on with working in tobacco fields are like throwing up after. Kids in other countries are having troubles finding their needs. If they don't find there needs than they will die.

Children have a lot of needs. They need water, food, air, shelter, and many more. They should have one more right. The right that I think should be a children right is to have friends or someone who they can talk to. Every child should have friends. Friends do a lot of things like, they can help you if you are hurt, or they can play with you if you're bored. If someone needs to talk to someone and they are not comfortable talking to their friends than they have no one to talk to. If this child right soon does not become a child right then children will have no one to be with. Because some children do not have any parents and they are not comfortable talking to their guardians. Children should have the right to have someone to talk to without being scared.

In this letter I am trying to get across that children in countries are having a really hard time like finding there needs. Also the children have no one to talk to. In Canada most people have friends or someone who they trust and they can talk to. If you add this one need to the children's rights than children who don't have anyone to talk to will have someone who will love them. People will start looking out for those children and help them out. I hope you will add this child right, and then children will have someone to talk to. If you do add this soon then children will not have to be scared to talk to someone about something that happened. They will be able to talk to someone freely and not be scared. I hope you will read this letter and make the new child right as soon as possible.

Regards,
Carmen

**OSG De Meergronden, The Netherlands,
student 21, Lovell:**

Dear UNICEF,

Hello I will start with a short introduction of myself. My name is Lovell and I live in The Netherlands.

I came up with an idea to increase the children rights. There are several rights but I think it's better to make even more. So therefore I've been sitting for days thinking of what I would do. Give children the right to play more or to make them work. That kind of things. But suddenly I knew what I had to do. I saw last week in the newspaper that your health very important is and that people should do more sports. The average of people who sport is not so many. Those people became lazy because of the internet and technology. They forget what's important in life. So I thought it would be a great idea to create a right where children can sport in a fun way so they don't get bored. This may sound a little stupid, but think about it. In some cases children may not enjoy their sport they are doing. Their parents refuse it to do it and they become lazy. Or maybe not lazy but the children get less confident. Or some children are forced to do a sport that they don't want to do. By innovating this right children don't have to worry about what they want to do. They may choose what they want to do. Their health is in the hands of them and their parents.

I think that this will motivate many people all over the world to be more active in life. They will believe in their selves, get more confident and most important, they experience the feeling of being free. When children are down, they can throw their feelings out. You can be yourself.

I hope you will think about it.

Yours Faithfully,

Lovell from the Netherlands.

**Comenius College Hilversum, The Netherlands,
student 21, Caro, Lucy & Iris (16):**

Unicef 'Call for Papers'
125 Maiden Lane, 11th Floor
New York, NY 10038
The United States of America

Regarding: Our own children's right and our evaluation on the project

17-05-2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

First, a brief introduction of ourselves: We are three sixteen- year old girls living in The Netherlands. We all go to the Comenius College in Hilversum, a city near Amsterdam. We are good friends, we often work together on school assignments and like to watch movies and play our instruments together.

Now we are going to write about our own invented children's right and about our experiences of the lessons from the 'Learning circle'

Luckily, children have a lot of rights. Every child has them, so every child should be able to live in a save environment and receive the love and care they need. However, we think there is one right that should be added to the list of children's rights. We think children should have the right to practise their hobbies and to discover, explore and develop their talents. By practising a hobby, like playing an instrument, we think you grow as a person. You learn things you do not learn in school everyday, by doing something you love to do. According to the children's rights we learned, children are not allowed to do hard labour. But we think children should also have the right to spare time, during which they can practice a hobby or sport. We have experienced growing spiritually and an increase of our ability to think in a creative way, because were we live, we can have extracurricular activities. We have the chance to explore our talents and interests. In our opinion, this makes us better persons. We learn to think in a different way and we have the chance to see what kind of things we can learn, do and become in our live. For example, by playing different instruments, you may decide to become a professional pianist. All because of our hobbies, sports, or other extracurricular activities we practice.

We found the English lessons where wrote and talked about the projects of the Learning Circle very fun and educative. We really liked the theme 'children's rights', because these rights are so important for all the children around the world, including us. We learned in these lessons how many children's rights there are, and why they are so important for us.

In the lessons we also got time to think about how we would handle our next projects, and to start and prepare them. During the process, we were allowed to use all our creativity, and that made the process even more fun.

There were several assignments, and we enjoyed every one of them because they were fun, not too difficult, and very educative.

In the lessons we weren't only busy making our projects, but we also watched movies about the children's rights. Furthermore we got time to watch the work of other schools so would compare them to our projects, and to criticize them.

We learned about children's rights, we were free to be creative, and to achieve a good result we had to collaborate a lot with each other, and all these things made the process even more enjoyable!

We want to thank our teacher and all the managers of the Learning Circle for this wonderful time of learning, working on our collaborative skills and developing our creativity!

We hope that you enjoyed reading our letter and agree with our thoughts on children's rights!

Yours faithfully,

Caro, Lucy & Iris

**'t Atrium, The Netherlands,
student 6, Julie (14):**

Hello, my name is Julie! (but my full name is Julie Marie)

I live in an average-sized town called Amersfoort – in the Netherlands. I've been living on this planet for fourteen years now, and of course hope to live a little longer J. My future profession is still uncertain, as I am still trying to figure out my life. HA. No, I am not that serious. Every day I am obliged to go to The Atrium, a small school for smart people. I study bilingual education because I like it ("Two languages, double the fun!" – yeah right..). Furthermore I love reading books (PRETTY LITTLE LIARS IS LIFE) and having fun with my three closest friends. I live with my happily married parents and my lovely sarcastic sister. I hope you know me enough by now because I am not telling you more (hèhè..)

So, what did I learn during the Learning Cycle process? It's mostly the fact that being able to live in the Netherlands is a great thing. Children can learn at school without struggles about money and they can get a profession of choice when they are older. The healthcare is great – elders are taken good care of and injured people are healed. Work isn't so hard to find either, that's why most inhabitants have a good income. In comparison to other countries, The Netherlands doesn't have much problems like war, money and government. In conclusion, I'd like to say that life is great here.

If I would have to make up a right for children, I'd make it about protection. A lot of children aren't protected enough and generations are being destroyed because of this. This is because adults don't really seem to think about the next generation because they are too occupied by their own lives. War makes this worse. And the worst thing is it that every day, children are affected by this issue. This of course is awful. Now back to my first subject, the right that I wanted to apply. That rule is that children should be protected from war in a safe environment where nobody can be hurt. Maybe the world could improve by removing war from the next generation, because they aren't affected by it. I don't know if this theory is correct but we could at least try it. I hope you liked my letter to you from The Netherlands!

Greetings,

Julie

T2b

**'t Atrium, The Netherlands,
student 7, Anouk (14):**

UNICEF 2015

Hello,

My name is Anouk. I am already 14 years old and I live in Amersfoort/ Hoogland in the Netherlands. I go to school in Amersfoort as well and my school is named 't Atrium. I am a TTO student which means that I have approximately 60 % of my subjects in English. This doesn't mean that I am speaking English fluently and Grammatical correct but I'll understand it very well and have more knowledge. To go to my school is approximately 20 minutes of cycling which is not very much.

I have 1 little brother and he is 13 years old and 1 big sister and she is almost 17 years old. I have a dog at home called Lola and a rabbit called Speedy. My hobbies are horse-riding, fitness, playing football, shopping and much more. Sporting is just a part of my life, I really do love it and I can't live without.

Hoogland is the most beautiful village of the Netherlands in my opinion. There are a lot of parties and a lot of my friends live here as well. I really like to live in a village because of all the space and of course the farmers and farmhouses.

I've learned a lot of things with the learning circle. What I think was the most interesting was about the water. Because we here in the Netherlands are used to have so much water and we are not afraid of losing it and being thirsty as well. But thinking about the people living in the desert is really scary because water is just the most important element you need in life, without water you can not really survive. But not having water is almost the same as not having clean water, because drinking dirty water is almost as dangerous as not even drinking. You can become so ill that you will die of the water. This is maybe a bigger problem than no water.

What I have learned in the lesson was more about water but I think that a rule for equality is very important and for being safe as a child even more. Because being grown as a child in a situation with violence from parents or people in the same city is the worst you can get. So if you are in a dangerous situation from war or something else you need to go to a special school with people who will take care of you. Especially when there is war they need to be safe and play the whole day instead of hiding away for bullets or bombs and being afraid of losing family and friends, or even their own life. The place where the children can go to is also in their own country because there you will still have your own life style and more people with your religion. But what is maybe the most important reason why it should be in their own country is because there are more children who need to deal with those problems as well which makes it easier to talk about. That's why this is my child right and this really need to change.

Yours sincerely

Anouk (T2b)

**Kennedy Public School, Canada,
student 1, Curtis (13):**

Dear UNICEF,

I am writing to address your call for papers on an extra article for the Childrens' rights. This is to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

I live in the biggest city in Canada, Toronto. It is a beautiful city with so much to do. But even here we have poverty. There are homeless people downtown but not really in our area. In downtown, there is the CN Tower so there are a lot of homeless people there because a lot of people go and visit there. So when I do go downtown I see them and I want to help them. Our school does a lot of things to help others like food drives, dance-a-thon, and fundraising. We are a lucky school. Also, we do garbage clean-ups on Earth days.

During my time on the wiki, I learned a lot about child labour, lack of food, and lack of fresh water in other countries. It surprised me how much people were in poverty and how much children work in factories about 16 hours a day. I also learned that 215 million children are in child labour. That's astonishing. If children work in labour, they won't get an education. That means they will be stuck in labour forever because if you don't get an education, you probably won't get a job that pays more because most jobs require education to get. Also, many children have parents that are sick so their parents can't work because they are sick so the children are basically forced to work or they can't survive because their parents can't work to earn money so the children can't survive without the money to buy food. That is why there are so many child labourers in the world; mostly because of the parents of the children are sick.

I think the Convention on the Rights of a Child are very inclusive. But I think they could add two new rights to this convention. I think children should have the right not to be bullied anywhere and that they do not have to inherit the debt their parents had. Kids are bullied everywhere all over the world and some kids are scared to tell their parents or teacher because they are scared they will get bullied even more. Also, if the kids have to inherit their parents debt, they won't gain money in their early years of work. If they get a bad job and their parents debt is really high, they might have to be returning money to the debtor all their life.

Thank you for reading my letter and I hope you respect and understand my opinion. I hope you will make this right true and I hope the children around the world benefit from this new right.

Sincerely,

Curtis

**Kennedy Public School, Canada,
student 10, Jeremy (13):**

Dear UNICEF,

I am writing to bring up an idea on an extra article for the 54 children's rights. This is to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the UN convention on the rights of the child. I respect the fact that UNICEF has created such thoughtful children's rights, but there could be some more interesting rights added. After all, it has been 25 years ever since the children's rights were created.

I'm a grade seven student who lives in the biggest city in Canada, Toronto. It is an amazing city, but even here there is poverty. I've recently turned thirteen, and throughout the thirteen years of my life I've seen a lot of poverty in Canada. In my particular area I don't see as much poverty as downtown, but I still see poverty here, some small, and some big. People in poverty are willing to do anything for money, so I always feel bad when I see them, especially since I didn't do anything to get so much. I am lucky to be able to go to a school that is able to participate in things like fundraisers, food drives, and other activities to help people in our community. I'm glad that we're able to help children and people who don't even have simple rights, like the right to have nutritious food.

During my time on a wiki, I spent a lot of time looking at different views on child labour and child rights from countries all around the world. I was surprised at how many children were being denied of their rights around the world. Also, they aren't just being denied of simple rights, they are being denied some really serious rights just for doing some small mistakes, like the right to live. Also, when they are denied of the right to live, they don't just get killed immediately, they get punished, tortured, beaten, the owner does anything and everything they can do make sure the child feels terrible before they are killed. All because of one small mistake. My life feels hard, but after looking at other children's lives, mine doesn't even seem close to children who have to work everyday, eat barely anything, have no friends, and get beaten. I can't imagine how terrible it would be to live in their shoes. I learned about how many girls in different countries aren't allowed to get education, and I learned about Malala Yousafzai, who tried to stand up for them. A lot of girls in my school are lucky that they are able to go to school, instead of having to do chores and housework all day. I already knew that there was some child labour around the world, but I didn't know about the excessive amount of child labour that there actually is. Even some big companies like Adidas use child labour in other countries!

Children's rights were a huge step in the right direction, but children in many developing countries, such as Bangladesh, Sudan, etc, are still being exploited and earn very little money for all of their work. I think the Convention on the Rights of the Child are very inclusive. They seem to think of everything. But I think another right could be included along with the other rights. The right to not be judged by other people and to be respected in a fair manner. In other words, all children should be treated with a fair amount of respect, and should not be discriminated whether if they are rich or poor. Also, they shouldn't be treated in such terrible ways, and they shouldn't have to work in such horrible conditions. They shouldn't be excluded just because they are different. They haven't done anything wrong, and other children haven't done anything right to get the life that they have right now, some were just lucky to be born into a good family, while others were not so lucky to have to work all day and not have education. It isn't fair to treat someone with less respect, especially since they didn't do anything wrong to lose the respect of other people.

Thank you for listening, I hope you understand and respect my decision about the children's rights, and take my thoughts into consideration.

Sincerely, Jeremy

**Kennedy Public School, Canada,
student 17, Colby (13):**

Dear UNICEF,

I am writing to address your call for papers on an extra article for the Children's rights. This is to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This is also for the Children's Rights website that my school (Kennedy Public School) is participating in.

My name is Colby. I live in the biggest city in Canada, which is Toronto. To be more precise, I live in Scarborough, Ontario. I was born here. Scarborough is a very nice district. There are many kind and caring people. But, there are also mean and nasty people that force children to work. There are some homeless people in this municipality. They are what makes me feel very lucky to be living the life I have. I have a home, friends and family who care about me, food, water, and much more. The school that I attend is great. We have many wonderful teachers that are so kind. Our school barely has bullying and every student is very friendly. Each teacher has a different teaching method which I find very exciting. As a result, each student gets taught new things in many new ways! Our school also helps with many issues. For example, we have food drives for the people in poor countries. And, we have fundraisers to make money for great causes. Our school also has many extra curricular activities such as sports teams. We are a lucky school.

While I worked on the "Children's Right's" wiki, I have learned many new things that I didn't know before. Also, I learned more information about a topic that I roughly had an idea about. I will start with what I learned from challenge one and progress through. In challenge one, the class learned about how people around the world didn't have access to clean water, food, and proper health care. I never really realized that this was a problem. But, it is a problem and it has to be stopped. There are so many people in poor countries that don't have food or clean drinking water. I learned that I am really lucky to have clean water, food, and proper health care. Challenge two was based on child labour and the right to education. I knew only a bit information about child labour before I read the web page. I didn't know that so many children around the world had to work instead of going to school. Getting an education is key for having a successful life. Instead of having an education, these children have to work all day in a packed factory for very little pay. Their future is going to be very hard because they do not have the education they need in order to have a successful life. This made me feel very fortunate to be me. I can go to school, learn, and get a proper education. Challenge three was about the right to grow up safe and about how children should grow up in a safe environment and place. Before I was on challenge three, I didn't even think this was a situation. I thought children were always safe. Why? Well, mainly the fact that they were "children" made me think this way. But I was wrong. I was very wrong. Children in many countries are in danger. Their parents might abuse them for being troublemakers, this puts them in danger. Their country might be at war. For example, children in Egypt were in danger due to the revolution in 2011. This challenge taught me that I am extremely lucky to be living in a safe country where there are barely any conflicts.

The right that I am adding is not a new right. It is an additional piece added to a right that has already been established. I feel like this right is missing a part or the creator of this right did not think of this. In addition to "Article 17 (You have the right to get information that is important to your well-being, from radio, news-paper, books, computers and other sources. Adults should make sure that the information you are getting is not harmful, and help you find and understand the information you need.)" I am adding the right to access technology. The children all over the world should be allowed to have access to any sort of technology. With this, they can get information that is important to their well-being. Why should UNICEF add this? Well, the future is all about technology.

Even the present is full of technology. There are iPhones, iPads, computers, e-mailing, text messaging, television, the internet and much more! Like I said earlier, the future is based on technology. So, if children nowadays do not have access to technology, they will not know how it works. If they do not know how it works, they will not be successful in the future. As a result, they will not live a good life as an adult. If children do get their hands on some tech, then they would know how it operates and have a successful life as an adult.

Thank you for reading my report. I hope you support what I wrote above. I wish that this letter was not difficult to understand. I truly believe that children should have the right to the access technology as they will have a much more successful future ahead of them because they would know how it works! I hope you consider and accept my personal opinion of the part I am adding to article 17. Thank you for reading!

Sincerely,

Colby

**Carmel College Salland 2, The Netherlands,
student 21, Claire (13):**

Dear Sir/Madam of the UNICEF committee,

My name is Claire and I am 13 years old. My hometown is Heeten, a small town in the east of the Netherlands. I go to the Carmel College Salland school, and I am very glad I can go to school. The sports I practice are hockey and tennis, I like those sports a lot and I practice them four times a week. I am very happy about the fact that I know that there are always people who can and will help me if my health is in danger. So, I am very happy that I am living in the Netherlands because the government is taking care of the child rights. But there is also need for change.

I have learned that there are enough Child Rights, but not all of them work well. There is a right against child labour for example, but we all know that there is still child labour in this world. I understand that if you make a right against child labour, you can not just think it will stop. In the convention on the Rights of the Child there is an article about this issue. This article says that States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. It also says that State Parties themselves may decide what the minimum age for working is. I think this is not good, because some countries abuse of the fact that they can decide the minimum age by themselves. They will set the minimum age very low so the children can still work.

So I think that we should change this right and set one minimum age for all states. I think an appropriate age is sixteen year old.

In my opinion there is also a right missing in the convention. And I want to add one, because it is a very important right, that has to do with education. In the convention article 28 and 29 are about education. But what is missing here is education for children in disaster areas. For example take Nepal, a terrible earthquake with several aftershocks, the children there have lost their home and their school. But I think in the time they have nothing, they still need to be educated. Because they don't know how long they will be in this insecure living area, they need to get educated after about a week if the conditions are good enough to teach.

So I would really appreciate if you could propose that all the states declare the following: State Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that every child in a disaster area will get education as soon as possible (at least after seven days) if the conditions are good enough.

I hope that you will also inform the Secretary-General because I think this is a very important message. It would be really nice to hear from you very soon.

Yours faithfully,

Claire

**Carmel College Salland 2, The Netherlands,
student 22, Inge (14):**

Unicef
mailbox 67
2270 AB Voorburg

18-05-2015

Dear sir/madame,

I am Inge and I am 14 years old. I come from Holland and in Holland there is a village that is called Luttenberg and that's where I live. I live with my parents and two brothers on a farm with cows. I go to school, practise Handball, work as nanny and go out with my friends. Handball is my favourite sport. I practise Handball four times a week and one real game but sometimes more. My team is very nice and it's called B1. And now about my school. My school is called Carmel College Salland and that's in the village Raalte. Conclusion I have a great youth and some people don't have all this. This letter is about that.

I do a project with my school. That project is called Learning Circles. Learning Circles is an eye opener. They let you do assignments and the assignments tell you something about the world. These things include how water is wasted and that some people don't have enough money to care about themselves. The best eye opener is that some people don't want to go to school because they must to make money. Now I start figure out how I can do better things for the world. An example: first I showered 15 minutes and now I shower in 7 minutes. I do the same thing but now I do it faster I also don't spend time on doing nothing under the shower. These things are better for the world and for my skin. Everyone must to do this and we will have a lot of spare water. This is the reason why everyone must do this project, you learn a lot about the world and the people who live there. You keep trying to do things better and you also learn English with it.

My new child right is that children need to develop as good as possible. The children don't want a bad youth. They want to be happy and with a lot of self-confidence, that's for a good start of a life. For the best youth you mustn't give the problems of the parents to the children. You also don't need a computer game but a good neighbourhood where it's safe and you can play with your friends or neighbours. This childright is good for the world because some children don't want to go home because the parents are fighting or they don't let them be themselves. And then they leave home and become a homeless child or they don't want to go home but they must to go home and they are deep depressive. That's horrible. When this is happening it's not good for the child but it also haunts you the rest of your life and it hurts you.

Yours sincerely,

Inge

**Carmel College Salland 2, The Netherlands,
student 29, Roxan (14):**

Hello sir/madam,

I'm Roxan, I am 14 years old and I live in the Netherlands. I play Volleyball and I love to sing and dance. My school is called: Carmel College Salland and stands in Raalte. I'm in the second class of athenaeum+ this class is called AP2A3. I have a father of 50 a mother of 49 and a sister of 16. They called Erik, Rian and Manon. We all like to travel to countries we never been to. My parents think that it is very good to travel because we see that we have it great here and to see other cultures so we except the other people and understand them better.

I've learned a lot of things during the project but I also really liked doing it. I've learned how some children fight for their own rights and that they don't even have them, what for me is actually really normal. I was really surprised of what they all did for people all in the country. I also realized during the project that we take things for granted, like fresh water and good medical help. I have travelled to different lands in my life but I never realized that there are so many countries who do not have good water or have a good doctor. But I also was happy about one thing, we try to help the people as much as possible and with this project we are really look to the problems.

I think there are a lot of good right's but there is still missing a really important right, the right to being yourself if your gay, straight, bisexual, transgender, dark, white etc. People still judge other people on how they are, by their looks, by their behavior or by on which sex they fall. I find that that should not happen anymore because you cannot change those things because you are born like that. A gay can be very smart and kind but a straight person can be less smart and less kind so you see that they are also just people. We all want to be excepted and we all want to be loved and I think that no matter who or what you are you should get that. An old philosopher said that a person strives to be the best form he or she can be, and that do all people. We are all the same and we are all different, if you look on the inside you see that everybody got bones and muscles etc. But some people have a dark skin and some a white skin and so on. Also the inside of a person in the same and different, we all want to be loved to get respect and be happy but some people are sportier or musicale then others.

In brief, there are a lot very good right's but the children's right that still has to come is the right to be really you without judging by others. We all want to be loved and respected and we are also just people. This right isn't only for kids actually it is for everybody. Let everybody just be themselves the world would be a whole better then for everybody. I hope that you will think about this new right.

yours faithfully:

Roxan

**Sir Ernest MacMillan, Canada,
student 10, Thajaani:**

15/05/2015

*United Nations
760 United Nations Plaza
New York City, New York
10017
United States*

Dear Secretary General

Mr. Ban Ki-Moon,

Hello Mr. Ban Ki-Moon. My name is Thajaani a 7th grader at Sir Ernest MacMillan Senior Public School. I live in Toronto, Canada. I am writing this letter to you because in our class we are learning about children's rights and we have to write a letter to the United Nation. In our class we understand how important it is to have all of those rights and how important is for our daily life. Most kids don't have all of these rights and I am very thankful to have it. So let me get right to the point. I have read the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and I thought it was amazing! But I would strongly believe that you (as the United Nations) have to change it a tiny bit.

As you know it's been 25 years since the United Nations written the UN convention of the rights of a child. Time has changed so I think you need to change something up. I think that there should be a new article. Article 55 should say "Children should not be brainwashed by bad influence". This is an article that I think there should be on the UN Convention because these days there are really bad influencing stuff like; movies, songs etc. You probably know what I'm talking about. There are so many different social media that people all over the world use; like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, etc. These can affect the children all around the world. If you are asking me how it affects the children, I will tell you. People like their friends, bullies and other people who don't care about them might tell each other to use drug and alcohol, sext, cyber bully or blackmail, etc. And since they want to be a part of the group or gang they will do whatever to join. No one wants an innocent kid ruining their life because of social media or they got brainwashed by bad influence. You know that the children are the future of the world. We don't or I should say I don't want the future world to be in a horrible condition. So I hope you understand and add Article 55 to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Have a great day and thank you very much for reading my letter.

Sincerely,

Thajaani

**Sir Ernest MacMillan, Canada,
student 5, Andre:**

149 Huntmill Blvd
Toronto Ontario M1W 2Y2
Tuesday May 19, 2015

United Nations
760 United Nations Plaza
New York City, New York
10017
United States

Dear Secretary Ban Ki-moon,

My name is Andre and I am from a school called Sir Ernest Macmillan Sr Ps. I have been doing alot of projects in this learning circles and it has been very fun and for our final project, we had to write a letter persuading you to amend or change a right for children. I have noticed on the charter, that there is one article that should be amended, article 6, "All children have the right to life. Governments should ensure that children survive and develop healthily". But I think you should Combine article 6 with article 24, because a child can have a life, but if they don't have a good one to live, then what is the point? Children should have the right to good quality health care, to clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment.

I strongly believe that you should combine them because they are the two main things that a child needs to have a great life, stay healthy, and develop. Rich countries should also help them achieve this because if a poorer country doesn't have all the supplies, food and water for a good healthcare, the country won't be able to help the children in need. The reason why this is important is because the children of the countries in poverty will feel like they are trapped inside a terrible life of nothing. They'll be hungry, thirsty and in need of medical attention. Children are the future of these countries and if they aren't alive, then what will become of the country in the future?

In conclusion, I might just be a small child from Toronto, but you should enforce this right because everyone should be able to live a great life no matter where they're from. I won't waste anymore of your time but take this into consideration.

Sincerely,

Andre

**Adma International School, Lebanon,
student 2, Mikella:**

To Whom It May Concern,

I have been asked to come up with a new right for children but how is that possible when even the most basic rights are being ignored? How can I say that we must address key concepts in bringing children in third world regions into the 21st century through technology when 26 years after the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was signed these facts remain: 40 million children below the age of 15 suffer from abuse and neglect; approximately 27 million people are currently enslaved in the human trafficking trade around the world; more than 300,000 children under the age of 18 are being exploited as child soldiers in armed conflicts worldwide; armed conflict has killed 2 million children, disabled 4 to 5 million, left 12 million homeless, and orphaned more than 1 million in the past decade; there are approximately 246 million child laborers worldwide.

Every single day thousands of children die when it could be preventable. Instead of making new rights for children we must first address the unimaginable horrors children are facing right now and the only way to do that is to educate students, especially the privileged, around the world on the current situation millions of children are exposed to worldwide.

We are growing into a narcissistic generation with no compassion for those less fortunate. This is not solely our fault; it is the responsibility of parents and educators to instill in us a sense of responsibility towards people of all cultures and creed. If this is not addressed then the future of the rights of the child will be practically nonexistent. We are the future leaders and makers of policy and, for now, we are only concerned with immediate gratification. We may make future amendments and ratifications to current policies on the Convention on the Rights of the Child but deep down it will not be truly felt nor seriously implemented. We are media oriented and sadly we know more about the Kardashians than we do about children being sold into the slave trade. Nothing will change if we are not educated. Therefore, the only suggestion I can make is that a new course of study is introduced into the educational system whereby it is compulsory to learn about the misery that is taking place around the world and how we can change it. Teach us how to make a change and how to feel responsible and you might find that the rights of the child will no longer be ignored.

Sincerely,

Mikella