



## CHILDREN'S BILL OF RIGHTS

*Every child shall be entitled to and enjoy all the rights set forth in this Declaration, without exception and without distinction or discrimination on account of race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or income or class status.*

### **WE BELIEVE...**

In the value of all children as contributors to the foundation of humanity. As a community based nonprofit center, we provide exceptional early childhood education by nurturing the unique potential of every child in active partnership with parents and families.

Young children, by reason of their physical immaturity and vulnerability, and precisely because they are the future generation, need special safeguards and care.

Teachers have a moral duty and noble obligation to provide their children the best they have to give.

Interest-initiated learning including open-ended creative and imaginative play, exploration of the environment, hands-on experiential learning, and interaction with caring adults, in a safe and stable setting is the best model for early childhood education.

Teachers should respect and strengthen a young child's natural ability and desire to learn.

Play that children can control is central to the physical, social, emotional, psychological, and intellectual growth of a young child - contributing to their language development, social skills, and problem solving capacities that lays a foundation for later academic learning.

Each child shall be given opportunities to enable him/her to develop physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, morally, and socially in a healthy and normal manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity. The best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration.

Young children have the right to be cared for and nurtured all day and everyday by dedicated staff members who are educated early childhood professionals.

Children whose rights have been respected and protected grow into adults who respect the rights of others.

**CHILDREN HAVE...**

The right to be treated as important human beings, with unique feelings, ideas and desires.

The right to a sense of security and belonging derived from a loving and nurturing environment which shelters them from harm.

The right to personhood, respect, and the development of positive self-esteem in an environment in which they are treated with consideration and courtesy by adults, as well as by other children.

The right to have and express their emotions without their feelings being labeled as “bad”, “wrong” or “unwanted”.

The right to form their own opinions and express their views without judgment and ridicule.

The right to privacy.

The right to their own identity.

The right to a loving and supportive relationship with teachers, caregivers and other people in their lives in a happy and stable early childhood school environment.

The right to continuing care and guidance from staff where they can be educated in mind, nourished in spirit, and developed in body, in an environment of unconditional love.

The right to be taught, according to their developmental levels, to understand values, to assume responsibility for their actions, and to cope with the just consequences of their choices.

The right to an education that prepares them for a positive role in society by developing their personal potential.

The right to be taught and cared for in a spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and harmony.

The right to a diverse environment and freedom of creative expression. Children have the right to have many different things, people, and ideas in their environment. Children have the right NOT to have their creativity stifled.

The right to an education that aims to develop each child's personality, talents, and mental and physical abilities to the fullest extent. Education should foster respect for a child's family, for the child's own cultural identity, language and values, as well as for the cultural background and values of others.

### **PRINCIPLES IN UNDERSTANDING THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN...**

Children's needs must be individually and developmentally understood, taking into consideration where they are developmentally (not just chronologically), their temperaments, personalities, and family relationships.

All rights and needs apply to every child without any discrimination by race, culture, religion, gender, class, ability or age.

Rights must also take into account the fact that every child is unique and has special needs according to his or her individual age, character and developmental stage. These needs change as the child grows.

Children with special needs have the right to have their special needs met.

Children, as they grow and develop, need to complete the developmental tasks that are a priority at each stage of their lives. They need to have the opportunities, at certain optimal developmental periods, to learn such things as language, social skills, cognitive skills, and fine-motor skills. If the optimal stage is missed, they need special help to try to make it up.

Rights and responsibilities and children's participation: children's rights are often paired with children's responsibilities, but rights are not earned by fulfilling responsibilities. Rights are inherent. We cannot refuse to give a child something that is his or her right because we disapprove of certain behavior.

Rights are reciprocal: what children should learn is that rights are part of a pattern of human relationships. Everyone has rights, and we need to respect these, and to negotiate when rights conflict.

Age and capacity: children have the right to have their decisions taken into account, according to their age and maturity, but they should not be burdened with responsibilities and expectations that are beyond their capability.