

Children's Hearings Your Rights

Did you know that you have the right to:

- **Bring a representative, legal representative (a lawyer), advocate or friend in to the Hearing with you.**
- **Speak to the Panel Members on your own.**
- **Ask for the Hearing to stop for a while so you can have a break to speak to your representative.**
- **Ask for the Hearing to be continued to another date if you need more information or time to prepare.**
- **Appeal against the decision of the Children's Hearing within 21 days from your Hearing.**
- **Call another Children's Hearing after 3 months from today.**
- **Complain if you are not happy with how you have been treated.**

If you'd like to make a complaint about the Reporter or a member of SCRA staff, you can do this through the Locality Reporter Manager.

If you'd like to make a complaint about a Panel Member, you can do this through your local council or you can speak to the Locality Reporter Manager.

For more information on the Children's Hearings System, please visit www.scra.gov.uk. Your Reporter should be able to help you with any questions.

You can also speak to a solicitor (a lawyer) who will be able to help you. You will qualify for Legal Aid through the Scottish Legal Aid Board, which means you won't have to pay for the lawyer.

You can speak to a Children's Rights Officer. Your local Social Work Department should be able to help you with this.

The Scottish Child Law Centre provides free legal advice to children and young people. You can contact them under 18's freephone number on **0800 328 8970**, email enquiries@sclc.org.uk, or visit their website at www.sclc.org.uk.

Young Scot also has a free information and enquiries service. You can contact them by emailing info@youngscot.org, or by calling the Young Scot InfoLine on freephone **0808 801 0338**.

Your rights are protected under law by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which means no one can take your rights away from you. The Convention applies to all children. No child should be treated unfairly or discriminated against on any basis.

Some of these rights include:

- Children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, physically or mentally.
- When adults make decisions, they should be made in the best interests of the child. Adults must think about how their decisions will affect children.
- Children have the right to say what they think should happen and have their opinions taken into account.
- Children have the right to get and share information, as long as the information is not damaging to them or others.
- Children have the right to live with their parent(s), unless it isn't safe for them. Children whose parents do not live together have the right to stay in contact with both parents, unless this might hurt the child.
- Children have the right to care and protection if they are adopted or in foster care.
- Children who are looked after by their local authorities, have the right to have these living arrangements looked at regularly to see if they are the most appropriate. Their care and treatment should always be based on "the best interests of the child".

You can find out more about your rights at www.sccyp.org.uk or www.unicef.org