

Junior Cycle CSPE and SPHE Video Workshop

What is this resource?

This resource was developed by the Ombudsman for Children's Office. It is designed to raise awareness of children's rights and the Ombudsman for Children's Office to children in Junior Cycle. It contains a video presentation and accompanying notes for the teacher. The video is presented by a member of the Participation and Rights Education team. It's extremely easy to use!

What can it be used for?

This resource can be used by CSPE and SPHE teachers. It has links to both curricula. The video can be played in class and paused for the students to carry out the activities. The integrated activities can run across a number of lessons. It can also be assigned as a home learning tool and includes activities that can be used at home to allow for blended learning arrangements.

What do I need?

This resource is a video workshop, so you will need a computer and projector with speakers or an interactive white board so the presentation can be played to the class. You can contact education@oco.ie for rights stickers and we can post them to your school. You can download a rights poster from the [OCO website](#). Some of the activities require specific materials outlined below:

- **Activity 1 The Exclusion Game:** requires sticky dots in 3 different colours and a bag of sweets (adapted from [NYCI activity](#)).
- **Activity 2 Rights during COVID-19:** requires child friendly list of all [articles under the UNCRC](#), iPads or cameras to film news report, or computer to write short blog, option to use resources in the Wellbeing Toolkit.
- **Activity 3 You have the Right to be Heard:** requires flipchart paper and markers (adapted from [NYCI activity](#)).
- **Activity 4 Direct Division:** requires watching the OCO video [Direct Division](#). You may want to read this helpful guide on [how to handle sensitive topics](#) in the classroom.
- **Activity 5 Get the Message Out:** requires art materials, optional rights stickers and posters ([adapted from Amnesty International UK activity](#)).
- **Activity 6 Who wants to be the Ombudsman:** requires you to explain the [SMART methodology](#), (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound).

How to use this resource?

The video workshop is accompanied by these teacher notes. The video is presented by a member of the Participation and Rights Education team. The notes indicate where the video is to be paused to allow for class or homework activities and outlines how to facilitate the activities. The activities are optional but extremely useful to support the students' learning. You can use this resource over a series of classes in order to facilitate all of the activities or you can choose which you feel would be most suitable for your students.

Curriculum and Links and Integration

The following section outlines the curriculum links to Junior cycle CSPE, SHPE and the COVID-19 Wellbeing Toolkit. The CSPE links outline the development of key skills, concepts and the topical issues covered. The SHPE links outline the module, topic, aim of the topic and learning outcomes for first to third year. Finally, this presentation can be linked to the COVID-19 Wellbeing Toolkit.

CSPE Curriculum Links

Development of key skills: Identification/Awareness Skills, communication skills, action skills

Concepts: Rights and Responsibilities, Human Dignity, Interdependence, Law

Topical issues covered: Human rights, respect, needs and wants, UNCRC, equality, stereotyping, basic needs, discrimination, United Nations, refugees, asylum seekers, local/national/global, Ombudsman for Children, protection, rights, justice.

SPHE Curriculum Links Year 1

Lesson: Knowing my rights as a child

Module: Belonging and Integrating, Express yourself, Self-management and a sense of purpose, Emotional health, Personal safety.

Topic: Appreciating difference, Learning to listen, Teamwork, Respecting my feelings and the feelings of others, Looking after myself.

Aim of Topic: To help the students to recognise and value their own gifts and talents and those of others. To enable the students to develop skills for expressing their own opinions and asking constructive question. To help the students to develop skills for listening to others. To develop awareness of the importance of sensitivity to the opinions of others. To help the students to identify the advantages of good teamwork and the challenge of being an effective team member. To help the students to be conscious of their own emotional responses and the feelings of others. To help the students to be conscious of their own emotional responses and the feelings of others. To explore with the students, procedures for protecting their personal safety and security and appropriate responses when such safety and security are threatened.

Learning Outcomes: Have further developed their group work and communication skills. Have learned and practised the skills of listening and self-expression. Be more aware of the need to be sensitive to the opinions of others. Have a greater awareness of the importance of teamwork. Have a heightened awareness of common emotions and associated words used to express them. Have explored their own emotional responses, and those of others around them. Have examined ways of keeping safe. Be aware of appropriate responses to a variety of threats to personal safety.

SPHE Curriculum Links Year 2

Lesson: Knowing my rights as a child

Module: Belonging and integrating, Communication, Emotional health, Personal safety.

Topic: Group work, Assertive communication, Self – confidence, Feeling threatened.

Aim of topic: To enable the students to further develop their skills for working in groups. To promote the development of skills for assertive communication. To explore the use of assertive communication when dealing with people in authority. To develop skills for promoting a sense of well-being in others. To enable the students to explore the range of risks for young people: at home, in school, and in the wider community. To help the students to identify strategies for promoting security and safety, and sources of crisis support.

Learning outcomes: Have further enhanced their group work skills. Have practised skills for assertive communication. Have enhanced their skills for promoting their own self-esteem and the self-esteem of others. Be aware of their responsibilities for their own safety and the safety of others.

SPHE Curriculum Links Year 3

Lesson: Knowing my rights as a child

Module: Communications, Emotional health, Personal safety

Topic: Learning to communicate, Communication in situations of conflict, Feelings and moods, Recognising unsafe situations, Help agencies

Aim of topic: To promote the development of a variety of skills for open, honest and sensitive communication. To help the students to develop skills for self-reflection and self-evaluation To promote skills for negotiation, to promote the development of skills for expressing feelings appropriately. To enable the students to identify situations in which their safety might be compromised, be able to recognise situations in which their personal safety might be threatened. To promote an awareness of help agencies and to help the students develop skills for obtaining access to these if appropriate.

Learning outcomes: Have practised skills of self-reflection and self-evaluation. Understand some of the ways in which individuals and groups respond to conflict. Have further developed skills for expressing feelings. Have a knowledge of help agencies and how to contact them.

Wellbeing after Covid-19

In this presentation we invite students to express their views on what COVID19 was like for them and how their rights were affected. This linked to the Wellbeing Toolkit for post primary schools, available here: www.gov.ie/en/publication/0722b-wellbeing-resources/#wellbeing-toolkits-for-schools

We urge teacher to use the student voice notebook page 42 and how it relates to Article 12 of the UNCRC, the voice of the child. It may provide valuable information to the teacher about their strengths and needs which is helpful in selecting strategies to support the young person.

Teacher Notes to accompany video workshop

Segment 1: Children's rights and the role of the OCO

This presentation was developed by the Participation and Education Unit in the Ombudsman for Children's Office. It is about Children's Rights and the role of the Ombudsman for Children's Office.

Segment 2: Learning Goals

Learning Goals from this presentation:

- To understand the role of the Ombudsman for Children's office
- To learn about children's rights and the UNCRC
- To know how the OCO protects and promotes children's rights.

Segment 3: What does the word mean Ombudsman mean?

It is a Swedish word, and it can be split into two parts. 'Ombuds' means defender of rights. 'Man' stands for mankind or everyone. Dr Niall Muldoon became the Ombudsman for Children in Ireland in 2015. The photo of is of Niall being welcomed to his new job by the President Michael D Higgins.

Pause presentation

Copy and paste the link to watch the OCO video: <https://www.oco.ie/about-us/>

Return to presentation

Segment 4: What is the role of the OCO?

The OCO has two main roles:

- to promote the rights and welfare of children and living in Ireland
- to deal with complaints made by or for children about the actions of public services.

Children don't have to be Irish to get help from the OCO – if they live in Ireland the OCO can help them. Public services will be explained in more detail later on, but in order to understand what children can complain about they need to know what their rights are first.

Segment 5: What are children's rights?

Children's Rights are all the things that you need to survive and develop to be the BEST person you can be.

Segment 6: Children's rights are human rights

Human rights are those rights which you need to live as human beings – basic standards without which people cannot live and develop fully and be safe from harm. This means that:

1. You are born with children's rights
2. Children's rights apply to all children; it doesn't matter if you are black or white or disabled or Muslim or Christian or gay or straight - all children have all their rights!
3. No one can take your rights away from you except under specific circumstances. For example, you can lose your liberty and freedom if you are convicted of a crime and go to prison
4. All of your rights are important! It's not just enough to have water and food, you need to be able to play and express yourself!

Differentiation or extension: Explore in more detail Human Rights

*Teachers - These terms may be appropriate for children in year 3 of the Junior Cycle.

Human rights are:

- inherent to the human person: a person does not have to do anything to have them

- inalienable: cannot be given or taken away except under specified circumstances, for example, liberty in respect of criminal offences
- universal: apply to all humans
- indivisible, interrelated and interdependent: this means that all human rights are treated as a whole, cannot be separated from each other and rely on each other. The achievement or denial of any one right will impact on the achievement or denial of any other right. For example, the right to freedom of assembly will affect the right to express your culture.

Segment 7: UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Children are often the most vulnerable members of our society. All over the world there are children who are denied their rights. Therefore, the United Nations established the rights of children in the UN Convention on the rights of the child (UNCRC).

This is a document that is an international agreement on children's rights that the UN agreed in 1989. The UNCRC is a list of rights that every child under 18 has. The Convention has 54 articles made up of 42 rights. The rights can be categorised into four groups.

1. Survival - Every child has the right to be alive and to have their basic needs met. These needs are food, water, shelter, healthcare, a name and a nationality.
 2. Development - Every child has the right to reach their full potential. This means they have the right to education and the right to develop their talents and abilities.
 3. Protection - Every child has the right to feel safe, to be protected from harm and to be cared for. The UNCRC also recognises that there are children in the world that need special protection, such as refugee children, because they live in very difficult circumstances.
 4. Participation - Every child has the right to be involved in decisions that are made about them and to express themselves freely.
- It also explains how adults and governments must work together to make sure all children can enjoy all their rights.
 - When a country has promised to apply the laws of the agreement we say it has ratified the agreement.
 - Ireland ratified the UNCRC in 1992. This means that the Irish Government recognises that children have special rights and promises to protect these rights and make these rights real

Pause presentation

Segment 8: UNCRC video

Click on the link to watch the [video about the UNCRC](#).

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Segment 9: General Principles

The four general principles of the Convention are considered necessary for the achievement of all other children's rights.

- Article 2 Non-Discrimination: Remember ALL children have rights no matter who they are, what colour their skin is, who they love – whatever! There are laws in Ireland called Equality acts to make sure children are not discriminated against. You may have learned about these already in the CSPE syllabus. For example: The majority of Irish schools can no longer refuse a child a place based on their religion.
- Article 3 is also known as the best interest principle this means that it's the child's right that when adults make decisions about them they think about what is best for the child. They

should think about how their decisions affect children. For example: In family court, judges must make decisions while considering what is in the child's best interest.

- Article 6 is the child's right to life survival and development. This is, of course, one of the most basic rights in the Convention. You have the right to grow into an adult – so that's why we give you vaccinations, make sure you eat healthy and exercise!
- Article 12 is possibly, in recent times at least, one of the most often quoted rights of the child. It's the child's right to express their views and for their views to be taken into account when decisions are being made that affect them. This right doesn't mean adults need to always do what the child says but it does mean they should ask and consider the child's views as it is important. The child has the right to express their opinions and use their voice. For many children views can be expressed through play or art or other means and it is up to adults to make sure these methods are available to them and can be understood. For example: The Irish Secondary-Level Students Union gives support to student councils and is also a platform for students to express their views on issues about education.

Pause for activities!

Note to teacher: What follows are three activities that relate to the four general principles outlined above. You can do all or a mixture depending on your class.

Activity 1: Rights in the time of COVID-19

Aim: Many children's rights were effected during the lockdown, this exercise aims to examine what rights were impacted and why they were impacted. The exercise and following reflection is meant to promote discussion, there are no right or wrong answers, the children can come to their own conclusions and reflect on their own experiences of lockdown.

Time: 15 minutes (but can be extended by using the Wellbeing Toolkit listed above).

Materials: Child friendly list of all [articles under the UNCRC](#), iPads or cameras to film news report, or computer to write short blog, option to use resources in the Wellbeing Toolkit.

Instructions: What rights were affected during COVID19? Divide the class into groups to do a short news report or interview classmate or write a short blog about what rights were affected

Reflection and issues for discussion: Explain to your class that rights are balanced against a lot of things including public health. Remind the class about the General Principles outlined above and in the video. The General Principles highlight the inherent right to survival and development. In the early days of the lockdown the Government decided that that it was in children's best interest to survive, therefore the decision was made to close schools. The best interest principle is included in the General Principles and it must be applied in all matters that effect children. After the initial phase of lockdown the Government has committed to keeping children in school.

- Is the Government applying the best interest principle again?
- What do you think about the Government's application of the best interest principle?
- Do you think that the Government applied the other General Principles?
- What about Article 12, the right to have a say? Has the Government applied this?
- If you were in Government would you have done anything differently?

Activity 2: The Exclusion Game

Aim: To enable participants to experience exclusion and explore the right to be included and encouraging empathy and solidarity with others.

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: sticky dots in 3 different colours. Please note this game should also adhere to social distance guidelines. It is not suitable to use in small spaces.

Instructions:

- Divide participants into three groups. Place a dot on the forehead

of each participant: Red for one group, Green for another and Blue for the third.

- Tell participants that Greens have all the power. Give them chairs to sit on and sweets. Tell the Reds that have to stand together with their noses touching one wall and not to look around or talk.
- Tell Blues that they must do exactly what the Greens say. You can give Greens some suggestions for instruction such as hop on one leg, do press ups, make animal noises, pretend to be elephants.
- Repeat with Blues being the ones having all the power, Reds doing exactly what the Blues following Blues instructions and Greens with their noses against a wall.
- Repeat with Reds having all the power, Greens having to do exactly what the Reds say and Blues with their noses against the wall.
- Bring the group back together in a circle. Ask all participants to remove the dots from their head and to shake out their arms and legs taking deep breaths.

Reflection and issues for discussion: It is important to ensure participants shake out any anger built up in the game and have the opportunity to discuss how the game made them feel.

- How did each participant feel at each stage of the game?
- What right did they feel was taken away from them?
- What other groups in Ireland experience exclusion?
- In what ways are people excluded and how does it affect them?

Activity at home: Should you need to incorporate blend at and home learning you could assign your class homework to imagine that they a youth leader forming a new youth club for people under the age of 18. The youth club needs to be inclusive of all children, ask them to develop a charter or agreement for new club group based on the rights and inclusion of children from a wide variety of backgrounds.

Activity 3: You have the right to be heard

Aim: To highlight the right of children to have their say and to express their views and the importance for children's views to be taken into account when decisions are being made that affect them. This right doesn't mean that adults need to always do what the child says, but it does mean they should ask for and consider the child's views. Children must be able to form a view on the matter at hand and be given enough information to help them do so. The child's age and understanding of the situation must be taken into account when their views are considered and weight attached to them.

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Flipchart paper and markers

Instructions:

- Form a number of approximately equal sized groups and give each group a sheet of flipchart paper and a marker.
- Give them the task of creating a set of rules for reaching decisions in the student council. They can be as imaginative as they like.
- Tell them they have 15 minutes to make the list. After one minute, inform them there is to be no more talking but that they have to continue making their rules.
- When the 15 minutes are up, choose one of the groups and read out their rules. Tell the group that you have decided this will be the way decisions are made from now on.
- Ignore the rules of the other group.
- Now explain that participants can talk again.

Reflection and issues for discussion:

- Ask what happened during the game
- How were decisions reached?
- How did participants feel when their views were taken or not taken into account?

- Are young people listened to generally?
- Who is best at listening and taking young people's views into account?
- Why is it important to listen to children and young people? How does it make them feel?
- What opportunities are there for young people in Ireland to give their opinions?
- Whose responsibility is it to make sure that this happens?
- Can children themselves do anything to ensure that their right to be listened to is upheld?

Segment 10: How does the OCO promote and protect children's rights?

- The Office runs education workshops for schools and youth organisations so that children can learn about their rights and the UNCRC.
- The OCO talk to children and listen to them and highlight their concerns.
- We give advice to the government on policy and laws affecting children.
- We encourage public organisations to promote children's rights in the work that they do
- The office takes complaints made by or on behalf of children about the actions of public services.
- The OCO use the media, social media, reports and public speaking to communicate and help people understand the OCO's views on issues relating to children's rights.
- The OCO also carries out research to get a better understanding of issues that are important in children's lives.

Segment 11: Raising Awareness of Children's Rights

We raise awareness of children's rights in a few ways:

- We have a website that provides children with information about their rights. This is called [It's Your Right www.oco.ie/itsyourright](http://www.oco.ie/itsyourright)
- There is a video game on It's your Right called Rights Runner, it's a fun way to test yourself on what you have learned about children's rights!
- We hold workshops for groups of children that visit the office. We also go out to groups of children that may find it hard to visit the office, such as children in hospital.
- It is important that we talk to and listen to children that are often not heard to highlight issues that affect them.

Activity 4: Direct Division, why it is important to hear from children?

Aim: The OCO has a statutory obligation to listen to the opinions and experiences of children. Additionally, it is a child's right to have a say on matters that affect them under Article 12 of the UNCRC. This exercise should emphasise the importance to hear from children who have experience of a situation, as they are experts in their own lives. This activity also aims to raise awareness about the realities of children living in Direct Provision.

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Watch short film [Direct Division](#). Students can also read the [report](#) and view the [art gallery](#) should they chose. *Please note* – This topic can be upsetting and could have a direct impact on pupils, who might be or have experience of living or have lived in Direct Provision or who might be connected to someone who has. Acknowledge this with the group and ensure they have a choice about whether or not they wish to do the activity and that there is someone people can speak with if they are upset. Before delivering the workshop, make sure you read this helpful guide on [how to handle sensitive topics](#) in the classroom. The discussions you have with your class need to be handled sensitively and with consideration given to participants' backgrounds and experiences.

Instructions: Play the short film, if you have time allow your class to view the art gallery and read the report. Please discuss the issues raised using the following questions as a guide:

- Choose three adjectives to describe your thoughts and feelings, based on what you heard in the film.

- What did you find most surprising about the film? Did you learn anything?
- Why do you think that it is important for the OCO to speak directly to children?

Segment 12: Complaints and Investigations

The OCO takes complaints made by, or on behalf of children against public services. Public services are delivered by organisations that are funded by the government. Some examples include schools, health services, hospitals, Tusla, or government departments. The Office looks into complaints about services for children paid for by the Government like schools or hospitals or family supports. The OCO provide a free, independent and impartial service. Impartial means that the OCO does not take sides. They want to find out what has happened and, if necessary, how it can be fixed.

Segment 13: Emily's Case Study

Emily was a 6-year-old wheelchair user. She had grown out of her old wheelchair and needed a new one. Emily's mother had tried to get a new wheelchair from the HSE but was told again and again that there was no money to buy one. When the OCO contacted the HSE they told us that the demand for things like wheelchairs far exceeds the budget available. In Emily's area there were 132 children waiting for wheelchairs and other essential equipment. Although Emily was high priority there was still not enough money to buy her new chair. After we got involved Emily got her new wheelchair as the HSE made savings in other areas. This was good news for Emily but there were still other children waiting to long for equipment. From this case study you can see it is important that people or children make complaints to the OCO because if they don't know about a problem that is affecting a child the office cannot help them.

Segment 14: What have you learned?

1. Children's rights are human rights and are protected under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
2. The UNCRC has 54 articles and 42 rights.
3. The OCO works to promote and protect the rights of all children living in Ireland through:
 - ✓ rights education workshops
 - ✓ talking and listening to children to highlight their views and concerns
 - ✓ offering a free complaints service
 - ✓ giving advice to the government on policy and laws,
 - ✓ raising public awareness of children's issues

Segment 15 Contact the Ombudsman for Children's Office

There are a number of different ways to contact the Office:

Email: oco@oco.ie

Online complaint form: www.oco.ie/complaints/make-a-complaint/online-complaint-form/

Freephone :1800 20 20 40

Post: 52-56 Great Strand Street Dublin 1

Instagram: [@ombudsmanforchildren](https://www.instagram.com/ombudsmanforchildren)

Twitter: [@oco_ireland](https://twitter.com/oco_ireland)

Facebook: [@OCOIreland](https://www.facebook.com/OCOIreland)

Segment 16 Any Questions?

If you have any questions on this presentation you can contact us on education@oco.ie or visit www.oco.ie.

Optional Extension Activities

Activity 5: Get the message out

Aim: What is the role of government in protecting and promoting children's human rights?

Time: 30 minutes.

Materials: Art materials.

Instructions: In small groups, students will think about the role of governments in protecting the rights within the UNCRC. Each group runs a very successful advertising agency. The OCO has hired the advertising agency to create an advertising campaign that reminds Ireland's leaders of what they signed up to when they adopted the UNCRC. The advertisement can be a poster, billboard, TV ad, whatever you or students choose, but it must stress the rights within the Convention and urge leaders to do much more to protect children's rights. For the last 5 minutes, invite groups to share their ideas and ask each other questions.

Activity 6: Who wants to be Ombudsman for Children

Aim: Now that the class have learned about the role and work of the OCO, this activity encourages the class to think about what they would do if they were the Ombudsman for Children.

Time: 30 – 55 minutes.

Materials: Pens, paper, outline of SMART methodology outlined in the What do I need section above.

Instructions: Explain what SMART means. Tell the class to imagine that the job of Ombudsman for Children is vacant. Create two teams and get the time to use the SMART methodology as a guide to create their objectives for the job. Encourage them to think about what issues and rights need to be addressed for children in Ireland today. Ask the teams to select a candidate from their team to present their SMART goals to compete for the job of Ombudsman for Children. Each team should interview the opposing candidate. The students should ask the candidates about the issues that concern them and what issue they will work on if they get into office. The entire class should vote in a secret ballot for which candidate should be appointed to the job of Ombudsman for Children.

Further study

- Short video by the OCO [What is the UNCRC](#)
- Child friendly list of all [articles under the UNCRC](#)
- Report from OCO Direct Division Children's views and experiences of living in Direct Provision: <https://www.oco.ie/directdivision/direct-division-report/>
- Report from OCO Take My Hand Young Peoples Experiences of Mental Health Services: https://www.oco.ie/MentalHealthReport_2018.pdf
- Report from OCO No Place Like Home Children's views and experiences of living in Family Hubs: <https://www.oco.ie/app/uploads/2019/04/No-Place-Like-Home.pdf>
- Amnesty International on video the indivisibility of rights: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ew993Wdc0zo>