



Radio Stations : **All Community Radio Stations**
Subject : **Early Childhood Development**
Audience : **Parents, caregivers and educators**
Program Topic : **Rights and responsibilities (LOVE)**

Guidelines to the presenter

- Presenter – please familiarize yourself with the brief and the use the facts effectively by referring to them from time to time during the show.
- You should be seen as a peer, rather than an authority.
- Offer guidance or opinion, rather than telling people what to do.
- Encourage people to seek further information – including referring to the Ilifa website: www.ilifalabantwana.co.za.
- Always keep the objectives and outcomes in mind and drive these.

Topic

Rights and responsibilities

Objectives

- Enable understanding of child rights
- Encourage the view that children have a right to develop to their full potential
- Enable understanding of parents' rights
- Enable understanding of key parental responsibilities

Introduction

'It's my right' is a phrase that many people evoke when they want to make something happen. But how many people recognize that children have rights, even when they're very young? In some cultures, it may be considered that only older children and adults have rights as full human beings. But it's important to understand that all children have rights, from the moment they're born. It is our responsibility as parents to ensure that our children's basic human rights are met. And we, as parents, also have rights related to our children, which we may not always realise or understand.

Today we'll be talking about children's rights and why it's important to see young children's development from a child rights perspective. We'll also be learning more about adults' rights and responsibilities, as parents and caregivers.

Questions	Facts/Information
<p>1. <i>Do all children have rights?</i></p> <p>2. <i>Are there any other documents relating to the rights of South African children that we all must take into account?</i></p>	<p>Yes, indeed. All children all around the world have the same rights which are described in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Along with most countries in the world, South Africa has signed an agreement that commits the government to ensuring that every child has a fundamental set of rights. Another important international document to which South Africa has signed up is The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. This was drawn up by African governments to recognize the special place of children in African culture. It's very similar to the UN Convention, with some additional rights and responsibilities for children.</p> <p>The South African Constitution enshrines rights for all people and specifically provides for certain special rights for children. One of the most important rights for children in the Constitution, is the right to have their best interests taken into account in every matter that concerns that child.</p> <p>There is also the Children's Act, which was written after the government accepted the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. The aim of the Act is to make sure that children are able to grow up safely and develop well, and where they are abused or neglected, that they will be helped to recover.</p>

<p>3. <i>What are the basic rights of children?</i></p>	<p>The Convention on the Rights of the Child says that children need a number of basic things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food, shelter, basic health care and clean water • Protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation • Opportunities to play and to learn, so that they can develop to their full potential • They also need to have a say in decisions that affect their lives. <p>And, critically, it's important to understand that children not only need, but have a right to these things.</p>
<p>4. <i>Can you tell us about these rights in more detail?</i></p>	<p>Yes. Children's rights can be seen as grouped into four categories: the right to survival, the right to develop, the right to protection and the right to participation. Aspects of the right to survival, for instance, are that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children have the right to a name and nationality • They have the right to grow peacefully in a caring and secure environment • They have the right to basic necessities of life, such as food, shelter and clothing • And all children have the right to be taken care of by parents, families or other responsible caregivers
<p>5. <i>You mentioned the right to a name and nationality – what does that mean in practice?</i></p>	<p>Everyone has the right to an identity and it's important to give your child an identity – i.e. a name – and acknowledge that identity by registering your child's birth. Birth registration allows your child to be acknowledged by the state as a citizen, with rights – for instance rights to health, education and protection.</p>

<p>6. <i>Is it important to register my child's birth quickly?</i></p> <p><i>A reminder that today we're talking about child rights and the rights and responsibilities of parents and caregivers on <Show name>, with my guest, xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx from xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx. If you have any questions or examples of any challenges you've experienced in having your rights or those of your child acknowledged, phone in now on tel: xxxxxxxxxxxx.</i></p>	<p>Yes, it's your legal responsibility as a parent to register your child's birth within 30 days of birth. Any child born in the Republic of South Africa must be registered with the Department of Home affairs within this time. You will get the birth certificate the same day that the child is registered and it's a free service. Remember, birth certificates are needed to apply for social grants, to enter school, to write Matric, to vote and many other things. Children need birth certificates to qualify caregivers for a child support grant, for instance. So not only is it your child's right to have such a certificate, but it has a practical purpose, too.</p>
<p>7. <i>We've heard that children have the right to play – why is that important?</i></p>	<p>Playing is an important part of young children's development. Not only is it an essential aspect of a free childhood, but it helps children develop language, creativity and critical thinking. It is one of the basic things that stimulates early learning and is therefore linked to another important right – the right to a basic education. Play with other children is also important to help children learn to socialise and to develop the ability to work cooperatively and peacefully with other children.</p>
<p>8. <i>For young children, clearly the right to protection is critical. Can you tell us more about what that actually means?</i></p>	<p>The right to protection means that all children have a number of different rights, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The right to be protected from abuse and

	<p>exploitation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The right to be treated fairly and humanely• The right to have their health protected through immunisation and appropriate health care• The right not to be employed or engaged in activities that are harmful to their health and development <p>It also means that children should not be allowed to be punished in a cruel or harmful way.</p>
<p>9. <i>How should the right to protection best be realised for young children?</i></p>	<p>Parents and caregivers have the responsibility to protect their children from harm and neglect. Young children cannot defend themselves and they rely on their parents and other adults in their lives to protect them. Evidence shows that large numbers of South African children suffer neglect and abuse. It's a sad fact that the people most likely to abuse or neglect a child are parents, other close relatives or caregivers. Evidence also shows that repeated exposure to violence in the first years of life has a major impact on the developing child. It can even badly affect their hormonal and neurological systems. So all adults need to understand that we have a duty of care to children to protect them from physical, emotional or sexual abuse and neglect.</p>
<p>10. <i>But children do misbehave, so what can parents and caregivers do to discipline their children, while respecting the child's right to protection?</i></p>	<p>Harsh punishments are harmful to children and affect the way they develop and learn. So any adult caring for a child needs to understand their responsibility to learn about and use positive forms of discipline. For instance, you can gently stop your child from doing what she must not do. If she persists, talk firmly but kindly to tell her to stop the negative behaviour. You could also sit her out</p>

<p>11. <i>So, apart from protection, what other responsibilities do parents and caregivers have regarding the children in their care?</i></p> <p>12. <i>We often refer to mothers when we talk about these kinds of responsibilities, but what kind of parental responsibilities do fathers have?</i></p>	<p>of a game or activity for a few minutes – but not in another room and someone should stay with her. Always follow up by talking about the behaviour – it’s important to do this with even very young children. It’s not OK to hit a child, lock her in a room, force her to stay outside the house, threaten or shame her.</p> <p>We’ve talked about parents’ responsibility to give their child a name and register him to get a birth certificate. Other responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing a place to live, as well as food and clothing for their child• Guiding and supporting their child’s growth and development – which includes health, nutrition and early learning, among other things• And, very importantly, loving and caring for their child <p>Fathers are often overlooked when it comes to talking about early childhood care and development, but they have a very important role to play in the lives of their children. Research has shown that children whose fathers are involved in their lives do better at school and feel more confident. While children with little or no contact with their fathers are more likely to use drugs or alcohol, be more violent and get involved in crime. Children will feel more secure when their fathers protect, love and participate in their lives, especially in their early years. So fathers have a responsibility to be involved, just as much mothers.</p>
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<p>13. <i>We've talked about children's rights and parents' responsibilities to ensure these rights are protected. But what kind of rights do parents have and should be aware of?</i></p>	<p>Parents and caregivers have rights related to their children. These include the right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live at home with the child or decide where their child will live and not have the child adopted without consent • Be involved with their child's life, even if the child does not live with them • Have their child carry the family name • Say how their child will be brought up, including cultural and moral values and beliefs and the religion of the child • Discipline their child – but positively • Make decisions about their child's education
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Conclusion

So today we've learned that all children have rights, even babies and very young children, and we must all respect these rights. While parents and caregivers also have rights, they have a particular responsibility to observe and protect their children's rights. And it's important to recognise that ensuring that young children have the opportunity to develop to their full potential is not just a nice to have, but their fundamental right.

Learning outcomes

After listening to this show the audience should:

- Understand the basic categories of children's rights and why they're important
- Know about the key documents that enshrine children's rights
- Know to register a child's birth within the first month
- Understand about the importance of positive discipline
- Understand the importance of paternal involvement in the lives of young children