

# The Universal Rights of Children of Separation and Divorce

1. **THE RIGHT** to a continuing relationship with both parents and their extended families, based on a fair and just arrangement that will provide the opportunity to have a meaningful relationship with both parents, which includes the freedom to receive and express love for both.
2. **THE RIGHT** to a relaxed, secure relationship with both parents without being placed in a position to manipulate one parent against the other.
3. **THE RIGHT** to a sense of security and belonging derived from a loving, nurturing environment that is free of negative social influences such as drugs, alcohol, crime, bigotry and weapons in the home.

4. **THE RIGHT** to be a child, to be insulated from parental conflicts and problems.
5. **THE RIGHT** to be able to contact any parent, or any member of either parent's extended family without unreasonable objection or interference from either parent.
6. **THE RIGHT** to be able to participate in their own destiny and to be taught about their family's culture and history.
7. **THE RIGHT** to be assisted by competent third parties whose responsibility it is to protect or advocate for children and to be provided this assistance without prejudice or bias in favor of, or against, either of the parents.
8. **THE RIGHT** to be listened to by legal authorities and to have their age appropriate wishes and preferences made known to any court of law.
9. **THE RIGHT** to be supported and cared for, both financially and emotionally, by one's own natural parents and extended family as the first option before the involvement of the government or other parties.
10. **THE RIGHT** to be taught, according to their developing levels, to understand values, to assume responsibility for their actions, and to cope with the consequences of their choices.

11. **THE RIGHT** to be treated as an important human being, with unique feelings, ideas and desires and not as a source of argument between parents.
12. **THE RIGHT** to continuing care and guidance from both parents, where they can be educated in mind, nourished in spirit, developed in body and surrounded by unconditional love.
13. **THE RIGHT** to express love and affection for each parent without having to stifle that love because of fear of disapproval by the other parent.
14. **THE RIGHT** to flourish in an atmosphere free of disrespect, exploitation and neglect.
15. **THE RIGHT** to have "listening parents" who work cooperatively in the best interest of the child as well as all members of the family.
16. **THE RIGHT** to have parents who will not undermine the child's time with the other parent by suggesting tempting alternatives or by threatening to withhold activities or parenting time as a punishment for the child's wrongdoing.
17. **THE RIGHT** to know and appreciate what is good in each parent without one parent degrading the other.
18. **THE RIGHT** to know that their parents' decision to separate or divorce is not their responsibility.