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LIFE THROUGH CHILDREN'S EYES

CHILDREN'S REPORT ON THE RESPECT
OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD
IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

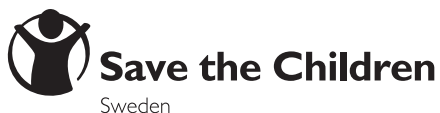


Dreptul la recreere și Odihnă

Dreptul la odihnă

Cu toate că Statele părți se angajează, în
lumina art. 31.1, să recunoască dreptul copilului
la odihnă și timp liber, la joacă și activități recrea-
tive proprii vârstei sale, la participarea în mod
liber la viața culturală și artistică, cu pre-
zervare de timp, în special în mediul rural,
acest drept este foarte des încălcat.
Munca pentru a copilului sunt necesare să se
incadreze în timpul muncii, pentru a supraviețui,
pentru a reduce un lucru cât de cât elent.





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Chişinău, 2008

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Children's Report on the Respect of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the Republic of Moldova

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Photo: Oleg Roibu

1. CONTEXT

Introduction

The present Children's Report appeared in the context of the complementary Report submission to UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, in 2008. The elaboration of the complementary Report was coordinated by the Alliance of Active NGOs in Social Protection of the Child and the Family, with the support of UNICEF Moldova.

Children's involvement in the monitoring of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, carried out for the first time in the Republic of Moldova, was part of this process. Child Rights Information Centre (CRIC), with the help of the Save the Children Sweden conducted children consultation and facilitated the elaboration of the Children's Report.

This Report is designed for:

- *children* – to get familiarized with their peers' opinions and to get involved in the child rights monitoring.
- *parents, caregivers, teachers and other professionals* – to consult children and to take into consideration their opinions in any matter concerning them.
- *decision-makers* – to find out what children think of present social services and to take into account children's opinions when developing policies and legislation.

A number of 20 children, along with Viorica Harea and Elena Pănăguță – guardians, and Cezar Gavriluc, Iosif Moldovanu, Daniela Platon – CRIC team of facilitators, contributed to the elaboration of the Report.

Participants

The group of children was identified by the CRIC team in association with its partners from 14 districts of the country (District Departments of Education, Youth and Sports, school administration, teachers, community services for children and youth)*.

When selecting the children, the emphasis was put on the insurance of the diversity, regarding their gender, age, residence and participation experience at school and community levels. (*Table*)

The consultation workshop was moderated by three adults experienced in developing projects on children participation in decision making and conducting studies utilizing participative methods.

Throughout the workshop activity, 2 adult supervisors ensured the participants' security outside the working program.

Table. Socio-demographic characteristics of the participants in the Children Consultation Workshop regarding the respect of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the Republic of Moldova, 2008.

Characteristic		Number of participants
Gender	Girls	12
	Boys	8
Residence	Rural area	16
	Urban area	4
Age	13 years old	1
	14 years old	4
	15 years old	6
	16 years old	3
	17 years old	5
	18 years old	1

* Cahul, Călărași, Căușeni, Criuleni, Fălești, Glodeni, Hîncești, Ialoveni, Orhei, Rîșcani, Soroca, Strășeni, Telenești, Ungheni.

Process

In the development of the consultation, the CRIC team was guided by the principles of the children informed consent, confidentiality, non-discrimination and equal opportunities of expression. Besides, the team sought for parents' or caregivers' permission for children to participate in the consultation process.

The content of the present Report, the titles it has, as well as the way it was structured, express the ideas of the consulted children. The responses given by children were reproduced as close to the original as possible, excluding comments and interpretations.

There have been two stages of children consultation, which took place from January 9th to 12th and from March 1st to 2nd 2008, in Chişinău.

Before the first stage all children received, as general information, an adapted version of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Republic of Moldova 2002.

Within the first stage of the consultation, the participants familiarized themselves with the historical background of the Convention, its principles, structure and contents, which served as an introduction to the addressed topic. Children expressed further their opinions on the rights that are/are not realized in the communities of their origin and they analyzed the factors that influence the respect of the rights of the child. In addition to this children expressed their views on the prospects of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the Republic of Moldova.

In the interval between the two stages of consultation the participants gathered other children's views, children of various age, regarding the respect of their rights. Such an exercise contributed to a better understanding of the addressed topic, by the participants in the workshop.

On the basis of the collected data from children during the first session (with children's permission, their responses were recorded, and the elaborated material by children – stocked), CRIC team synthesized the information and prepared the Draft Report.

During the second stage of the consultation children identified the main characteristics of the present situation of the rights of the child in the Republic of Moldova. The participants in the workshop analyzed the Draft Report and added the ideas collected from peers in their communities. Children worked out a list of recommendations aimed at improving the respect of the rights of the child.

Throughout the consultation workshop various working techniques were used: individual, in pairs, in small groups, in plenum. At the beginning of the first session numerous get-to-know-each-other activities were performed, which helped the participants open up and feel free to communicate and express.

Outside the working program, children in the workshop enjoyed various relaxation and leisure activities – table games, energizing games, music, and movies.

Within the evaluation of the participants' experience, a list of necessary conditions for a children consultation process was elaborated. CRIC will take into account these suggestions within the systematical monitoring of the respect of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by children, process that CRIC intends to initiate in the Republic of Moldova.

Children were enthusiastic about their involvement in the consultation on their own situation, about the informal working atmosphere, the interactive methods used, the opportunity of expression, the adaptation of the workshop program to meet their needs and interests. Here are some of the participants' opinions:

- “Being aware of the situation in our community, even in our country, I liked the most the fact that my voice could be heard, that I could express my opinion, and it's not just a simple thing, because my opinion will be included in the report submitted at an international level”.
- “I did not know that a similar workshop could be carried out in absolutely informal conditions and that this could lead to quality outcomes”.
- “I feel very free; I can't imagine that I took part in such a seminar, where I could express myself, discussing about everything, saying everything I know”.

- "I have to admit that this was the first seminar I attended where the right to the freedom of expression is truly respected. It was an extraordinary atmosphere of friendship and understanding".
- "I participated in many workshops, but I discovered that this one was the first workshop in which the facilitators don't talk, we talk to them, it is something unusual".

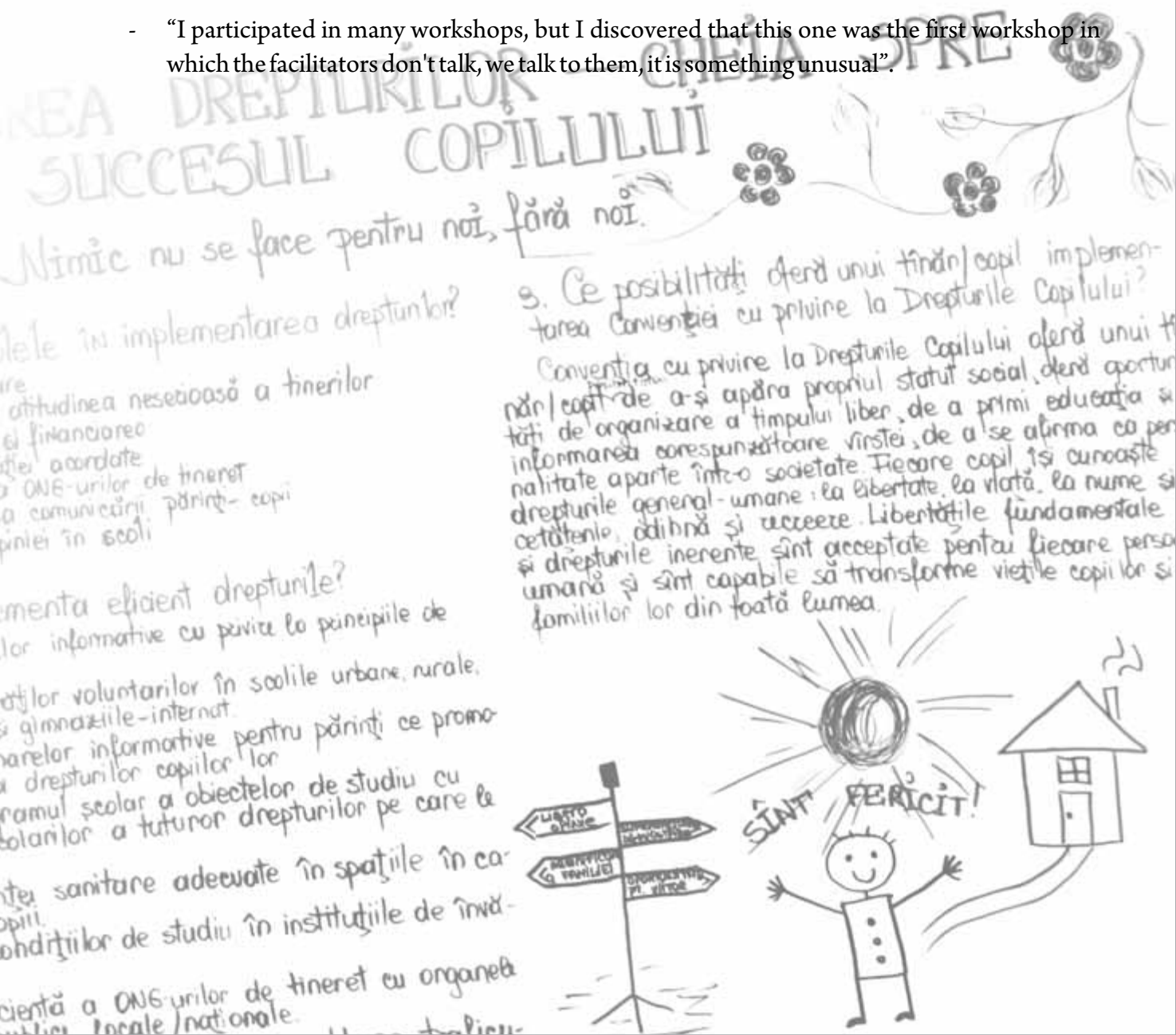




Photo: Cristina Puțunică

2. CHILD'S RIGHTS: PRESENT SITUATION

2.1. Non-discrimination

Non-discrimination is one of the rights of the child violated quite frequently.

“There is discrimination based on ethnic, religious and financial situation reasons”.

“This right is not fully respected, especially it is a huge concern regarding children from socially disadvantaged families, children with disabilities, or children belonging to a different ethnic group or sharing different religious beliefs. These children find it hard to integrate in the society, to communicate and to feel that they are indeed children”.

“The most discriminated ones are children from poor families, or children with disabilities... the way they look, the way they dress... the other children mock at them, they are not accepted in the group, they are isolated”.

A separate case of discrimination could be considered the situation of children from the left bank of the Nistru River. Many of the children coming from this region of the country do not exercise their right to association, the freedom of thought and conscience, the right to receive education in their native language.

“... the violation of the fundamental rights of children in the self-proclaimed transnistrian republic, these children are deprived of their right to speak in their native language, they can not study in Romanian speaking schools, they can not associate with children from the right bank of the Nistru River and from other countries”.

Children are discriminated both by adults (parents, teachers, medical workers and other community members) and peers. The most frequent types of discrimination in the Republic of Moldova occur on the grounds of:

● Ethnic origin

"The laws are in favor of this, but there are not any conditions for various ethnical groups to practice their culture, to choose their religion, very few opportunities".

"... mostly Romani children face discrimination issues, they find it hard to find a place in the society, they are rejected by both adults and children".

"There are many cases when children belonging to other nationalities, especially Romani children, are victims of brutal behavior in public places, they do not enjoy the same freedom as the other children".

"Romani children are practically deprived of their rights, being forced to work for many days without rest. In addition to this they are beaten for allegations of sneaking in the house and stealing things and they are usually not paid for their labor".

● Confession

"Most frequently children are discriminated for belonging to a different religious community, especially now, since so many sects appeared".

"... this right is violated especially during the religious holidays".

"It occurs sometimes embarrassing situation during Ester, when you say to someone without even thinking: «Christ resurrected!» and he/she does not answer you, just blushing. That might lead him/her to the thought that you are trying to make fun of him/her".

"There is a new subject in schools now, The Study of the Religion – not in all the schools, it is an optional class..."

"One of my schoolmates converted to a different religion since she was in the 6th grade. I don't like the fact that everybody treats her as if she is an alien - "Why do you pray this way? Why do you do like this? Why don't you come to church?"

“Sometimes, children belonging to these sects attempt to convince Christian orthodox children to convert, with arguments, forcing them, telling them that only they hold the truth”.

“I have never met a single case of an orthodox person trying to impose his/her religion, usually it's all the way around”.

● **Gender**

“We are asked to wear skirts during the Religion class. It is very uncomfortable if the same day you have Physical Training and you have to bring so many different clothes, because you need a uniform to attend Physical Training. And what if I don't feel comfortable to come to school wearing a dress! Or when it is freezing outside...”

● **Family financial situation**

“There are children from socially disadvantaged families in our locality, they usually lack clothes and footwear. When a schoolmate or a teacher says that someone did not attend school because of the lack of a proper footwear, everybody starts saying... he/she is poor, and everybody starts making fun, that's why similar children suffer a lot because of this”.

“... due to the family's bad financial situation – they are poorly clothed, they don't have any pocket money – neither teachers pay any attention to them, nor other children accept them in their group”.

“Children from socially disadvantaged families are not accepted in the society, regardless of their abilities”.

● **Social status/parents' or caregivers' image in the society**

“... if parents are sick or one of the parents went abroad, or one of them is alcoholic, these children are rejected by their peers”.

● **Teachers' attitudes**

“At school it is widely spread the phenomenon of «pupils selection»: some pupils make a good impression, others make a bad impression. Teachers like to work with the first ones, they focus on those who made a good impression right at the beginning, on those whose parents have a better social rank and are well known”.

“If a teacher has «favorite pupils», those pupils feel superior to the others, and this generates some kind of envy among them”.

In many cases, within school, children whose parents work as teachers are privileged compared to regular children.

“The Math teacher has a daughter in the 9th grade and during various tests she would bring her the correct variant of the test”.

“Who are those ringing the first and the last bells? – Teachers' sons... They are always favored in various contests”.

“... his son broke the window, but the teacher did not tell anyone”.

“Not all the children whose parents work as teachers are privileged, of course this happens, but not always”.

● **Health issues / child's special needs**

The existence of special schools for children with special needs allows many of them to realize their right to education. Teachers who received a special training work in these schools. Mass-media presents the fact that special schools are materially supported by the authorities. In these schools children can communicate with their peers, who are in similar situation, that is why they are better understood.

“Special centres are opened for these children; they can spend their time there, doing various activities”.

“They receive a better education in these schools, because they are taught by special teachers”.

“Sometimes media reports about the support that these children get from the state”.

“It is better for them to study in special schools, because this is how they can make friends with those who have something in common with them, so they are able to help each other”.

Children with disabilities are isolated from the rest of the society. In many cases this happens because of a lack of special equipment which would increase their mobility. But the main factor is the attitude of children and adults without disabilities towards children with special needs, which can be

described as reserved or most of the time even negative. That is why children with special needs find it hard to integrate in ordinary schools.

“Children with disabilities don't have equal opportunities compared with other children with regard to the respect of rights, they stay indoors most of the time, they are deprived of information, isolated, and they don't communicate with their peers”.

“Although there are schools specially designated for children with disabilities, in the society they are often neglected”.

“Two friends of mine are disabled, they can not go to school, thus they are deprived of special care and education”.

“They feel much better in special schools, because they are not understood in ordinary schools, they are being psychologically maltreated and as a result they might grow aggressive”.

“Those disabled children who study in regular schools... - some schoolmates understand them, they help them, but others give them a hard time”.

● **The status of HIV positive person**

HIV positive children are discriminated only if people are unaware of the way the infection is transmitted. Cases of discrimination of similar children occur because of a lack of information in this field. In reality this children do not constitute a group of persons with special needs, therefore there is no need for special kindergartens and schools for them.

“HIV positive children are not a threat for the society. These children do not have special needs, they are just like us”.

“There is a rumor in the village where I study that we rank first in the Republic according to the number of HIV positive persons. In addition to this, I found out that there are about 12 HIV positive people in our highschool. And somehow both pupils and teachers get suspicious, everybody wants to know the identity of those people and there is some kind of discrimination”.



Photo: Sanda Cojocaru

2.2. Family environment

Among the child's rights which are violated quite frequently in the Republic of Moldova there is the child's right to a family environment.

The main reason for this constitutes the large-scale migration of parents, determined by the families' poor financial situation (parents receive insignificant wages or they struggle with unemployment). People are forced to go abroad because they lack money to financially sustain their families or their goal is to earn money for their children's education. Mothers are the ones leaving more often and this phenomenon has even greater negative repercussions on children. Even if children are left in the care of close relatives, these people, usually old, are not able to ensure that children will receive the education they need.

"There is a growing number of families that break up, because of the migration and limited financial resources".

"In the Republic of Moldova poverty and migration are increasing at an alarming rate, especially among women".

"There are dramatic situations in families, when women are forced to go abroad, leaving their children in the care of different people, or even alone. That's why these children do not receive a proper education and they take a wrong path in life".

"If women had opportunities to find a good job in their homeland, or if they were given proper means by the state, they wouldn't leave their children. I don't think women leave the homeland because of their great desire to visit other countries for entertainment".

“... they are left alone, or in the best case they have to live with an irresponsible father or an old grandmother”.

People working abroad send regularly money to financially support their families, but this is a solution not just for them, but for the country as well.

“Part of the country's money is money coming from abroad, it's a vicious circle, which is convenient in a way”.

In the great majority of cases the separation of children from their parents has negative consequences on children. Only a small number of these children can fend for themselves in such a difficult situation. Although these children receive money from their parents working abroad, they are deprived of a moral support.

“The coin has two sides, therefore it is hard to assess what kind of persons these kids will become in the future, but one thing is certain, every child has the right to a family”.

“For some children this might be a good thing, they become more mature, get used to living on their own, but let's admit that it is difficult to stay alone when you are only 10 years old”.

“Those children who live without parents become mature ahead of time and they are deprived of the best years of their life – the childhood. They find themselves emotionally neglected and they feel inferior to their peers”.

“The lack of parental education leads to great gaps in the physical, psychological and intellectual development of any child”.

“Many adults do not realize that family is above any material goods. Therefore numerous children suffer because of the separation from their parents, who went abroad trying to find a better life. After parents' departure children have to bear the brunt of all the household duties”.

The separation from parents, due to migration influences in many ways children's life:

- children undertake many adult responsibilities (for instance, they have to care for younger brothers and sisters), being forced to work more than children are supposed to, at their age.

"Parents are in Italy... the aunt went abroad and left two kids in the care of the girl".

"Due to parents' migration, children find themselves in the situation of working physically much more than they are supposed to, and this is an obvious case of violation of the right to rest and leisure".

- children's school performance is worsening, the rates of absenteeism and school abandonment are increasing.

"I have a neighbor, whose father went abroad and after two months I noticed that he became more nervous, psychologically unstable, and his school attendance dropped radically".

"... now she is not able to finish school, because of her endless household responsibilities".

- the rates of juvenile delinquency increase as well.

"Juvenile delinquency is growing rapidly lately, due to parents' migration".

As a result of migration, many families break up. Children's right to the family reunification works only in certain cases, because most parents go abroad illegally.

"This right can not be implemented because of the migration and parents' divorce... migration, mostly among women has a negative impact on children. As I mentioned, the divorce and the separation from parents do not allow families to reunite".

"Nowadays, in our republic, the number of families breaking up is rapidly growing".

"Parents going abroad after a while take their kids with them".

"It is impossible to go abroad on a legal basis, therefore most parents find illegal ways and as a result children are deprived of family love and care".

Very often children left behind by migrating parents find themselves unprotected, their right to protection is violated.

- Some children, forced to live alone, due to certain reasons (decease, migration, alcohol abuse by parents) become homeless.

“Both in villages and cities one can encounter numerous homeless children who are humiliated by people, who are not protected by the state, and who do not even live in boarding schools”.

“It is one of the state's responsibilities to provide special protection for children without parents, children left behind by migrating parents, children with disabilities and to create special centres in order to help them integrate in the society. Unfortunately many children live on the streets”.

- Life in boarding school type of institutions is difficult for children. Therefore, these children prefer living in a family where they do not receive the attention they wish for, but at least it is a family atmosphere. There are cases when brothers or sisters are placed in separate boarding schools, which affects these children even more.

“The fact that children living in boarding schools want to have a family so much makes us realize that, in those places they are not taken very good care of. In many cases children agree to live in a family in which their opinions are not taken into account, or they are not very respected, what matters for them is that they will live in a family”.

“There is a family in our village I want to tell you about. Three children became orphans and they were taken to separate boarding schools. The Convention on the Rights of the Child stipulates that taking them to a boarding school should be the last measure, but at least they could have been placed in the same boarding school, all together... they didn't do it”.

- Adoption is a good mean of providing children with a family environment. But there are cases when children are adopted by families which are not able to ensure these children with adequate living conditions. Sometimes the adoption process lacks transparency, it is illegal or it has negative consequences on the child. Similar situations occur within boarding schools as well.

“In our locality, young families not being able to conceive children have adopted children and bring them up properly”.

“Very often, relevant bodies do not inquire sufficiently about the adopting families, that is why many children are adopted by socially disadvantaged families and they do not receive all they need and they are forced to work at an early age”.

“I witnessed a case when a child was sleeping outdoors, because they wouldn't allow him to get inside the house and he was barely eating twice a day. Necessary measures were taken afterwards, parents understood that he is a human being too and he was integrated in the family. But at the beginning that child suffered a lot”.

“Some boarding school principals are hungry for money and they perform illegal adoptions, as a result many of the adopted girls become prostitutes and many of the boys are forced to beg on the streets. In order to avoid issues with the law, the principal, as a rule, shares the money with the prosecutor investigating the case and the case is closed, you know: «we are even»”.

“Many children are adopted by foreigners and they end up being trafficked or forced into panhandling”.





Photo: Victoria Tăranu

2.3. Protection from violence and abuse

Children are, to a great extent, exposed to violence. The right to protection from violence is violated in every social environment in which children live: family, school, society. Nowadays, the phenomenon of *"aggressive behavior among children"* is widely spread.

"Although, we hear so often on TV and elsewhere about protection from violence, this phenomenon is still a great concern, especially within families, perhaps even at school".

There are families that have recourse to abusive methods of education. Physical punishment occurs very frequently. Similar cases take place even in the relationships between children and caregivers, when parents are working abroad.

"... the improper education that children receive from parents. There are few obvious cases, but it's hard to deny that this right is violated".

"If parents did not like something in children's behavior – spanking. They don't think of children. After being spanked, maltreated by their own parents, children think that everybody will treat them in the same way".

"Parents encounter problems at work or they struggle with their bad financial situation and arrived at home they take revenge on children – they deprive them from their spare time, they make them work, they don't allow children to watch TV or perform their favorite activities, even the right to association is violated".

“In some families children are exposed to violence by parents, who struggle with their problems and they free their anger on these unprotected creatures”.

Punishment has negative consequences on children and sometimes it might have an opposite effect to discipline.

“Punishment will not have a positive impact on me, on the contrary, I will be afraid and I will not become more responsible”.

“In my neighbor's family children are maltreated and I noticed that at the age of 18 the older son is not mature enough, he is not confident in his own strength”.

“For adults punishment is not a big deal, but for children this is humiliation, a discussion is much more efficient”.

“Physical punishment influences negatively the mentality. When children become grown-ups and do something, everybody asks: «Why did he do this? » – because of the physical punishment suffered in childhood!”

As a rule, a maltreated child becomes a father or a mother and behaves in the same way with his/her own children.

“Our parents treat us the exact way their parents treated them as children”.

“Childhood is the period when children build up their character, they learn everything from their parents and if they are punished, violence will be transmitted from generation to generation”.

“... taking into consideration the fact that violence generates violence, what will the future of our society be if all the children are maltreated?”

Children are neglected quite frequently in families affected by migration and in families where parents make abusive use of alcohol.

“There are situations in which women have to go abroad and leave their children in the care of other people or even alone”.

“... if parents got into the habit of drinking alcohol, children do whatever they want without being supervised, after a while, they stop spending nights at home, wandering on the streets most of the time, they are completely or partially absent from school life, absorbed by all kinds of dangerous activities in the street”.

Physical, emotional and sexual violence is present at school. Sometimes parents themselves consent with the use of abusive methods of education by teachers.

“In certain schools, teachers use violence”.

“A girlfriend of mine was offered good marks and private lessons in exchange of sexual services”.

“There was a case in our school when a girl stepped in front of the classroom, then a boy made a remark and she replied. The female teacher punched her in the back a couple of times. She burst into crying and took place”.

“A teacher of ours keeps telling us: «I do not have the right to beat you. Either I give you a bad mark (2), either you step in front of the classroom». But to step in front of the classroom means to be slapped by the teacher. And my desk mate used to say: «Instead of having a bad average grade, I would rather receive a couple of slaps»”.

“... the teacher took that «yes» as an imitation, he got angry and he punched the child twice in his back and once in his belly. As for girls, he likes tweaking their ears or noses”.

“Teachers rebuke pupils for misbehaving and often even tell them: «I have the right to beat you, because I spoke to your mother and she allowed me to do so»”.

In educational institutions attended by children with special needs, physical violence is quite frequent.

"As far as I know, children with disabilities are taught by means of physical punishment, this is how they learn".

Violence is much more frequent in rural areas of the country.

"It is very strict in the high school where I have recently moved. Under no circumstances the teacher has the right to raise the voice to pupils, to insult them or to behave violently. Unlike the schools in villages, where a disastrous situation reigns. While I was studying in the village, teachers could afford to hit pupils with their legs, to insult them, to psychologically humiliate them".

Traditionally, it is considered that teachers' decisions to have recourse to punishment are always justified, therefore, as a rule, children do not undertake anything to demand their rights.

"Teachers never have to explain anything to anyone, the rule is pretty simple – if a teacher hit you, it means that you deserved it, you are to blame and you must keep your mouth shut".

Violence is often a way of establishing relationships and working out issues among children as well, even in situations in which they pursue good intentions.

"Violence occurs even among children, boys fight a lot. And this phenomenon is a real problem, because parents and teachers are not the only ones beating children".

"In our class there are children from socially disadvantaged families. Often they do not want to attend classes. There is also a group of boys who get them, then after having given them a little drubbing and bring them back to school. If they intend to skip lessons again – a little drubbing puts them back on the right path. Our form teacher gives us a lot of headache when somebody skips lessons, she rebukes everybody. The boys are tired of this that is why they are obliged to have recourse to violence to fix the problem".

Violence against children manifests itself indirectly in the growing rates of delinquency and substance consumption. Cases of child exposure to pornographic materials, child trafficking, and sexual exploitation of children are less known, taking mostly the form of rumors and informal discussions rather than being officially addressed by mass-media or public debates. In most cases, abused persons prefer keeping this experience secret fearing condemnation by public opinion.

"Nowadays, we face an alarming rate of sexual exploitation, child trafficking, juvenile delinquency, drugs and alcohol consumption, high presence of pornography and prostitution, as well as vandalism and hooliganism".

"I heard of a case when a girl was raped in our locality, but I do not know the girl".

"What can one watch on TV nowadays? The next country visited by the president or other officials, but the real situation, the abuses taking place... no media coverage at all".

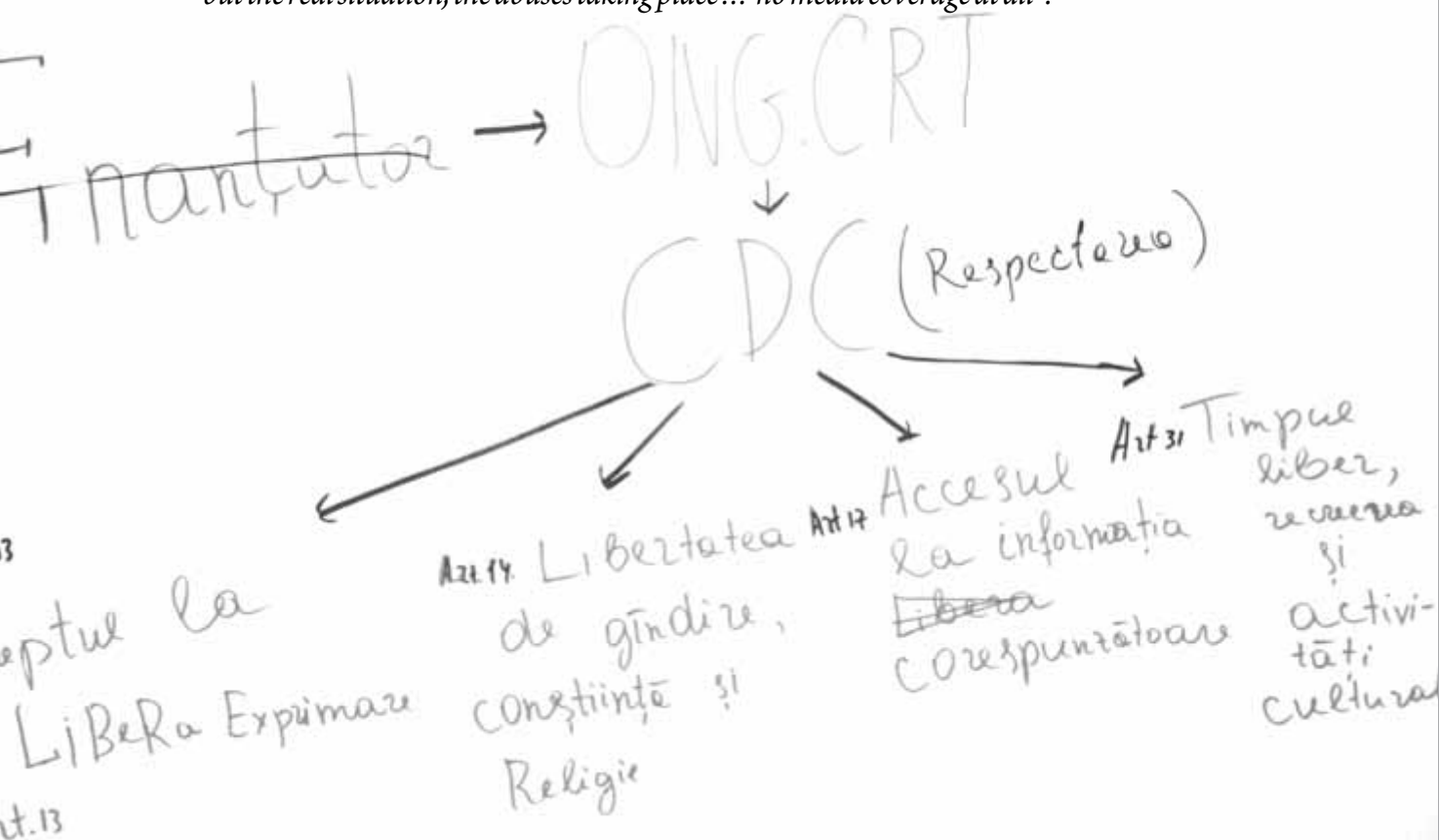




Photo: Cristina Puțuntică

2.4. Medical assistance

Children's right to medical services is respected differently, varying from one area to another. Thanks to personal relationships, medical services are better in small communities. As a rule, children involved in the educational system get a medical coverage as well. Nevertheless, Physics or Chemistry classes conducted in insufficiently or inadequately equipped labs, Physical Training classes conducted on partially or completely damaged playgrounds, in cold gyms, put in danger children's health.

“In our locality there was no record of any epidemic or serious infectious disease, that is why I think we do not have any problem in the medical assistance field”.

“The access to medical services in cities is different from that in rural areas – perhaps people know better each other, they are friends and relatives; this explains why this right is more respected in villages, in many cases medical assistance is free of charge and of a better quality”.

“Your health is protected as long as you receive education”.

“Sometimes during Physics and Chemistry classes you don't feel safe”.

“While running, during a Physical Training class, a girl had an accident because of the playground conditions and she broke her leg. The teacher was supposed to do something, because she was not able to move and the leg started to swell. But he did not provide her first aid, he said that it was nothing serious and told her to keep on running”.

It is officially considered that the access to medical assistance is favored by its free of charge character. In reality, unfortunately, it is known that medical workers are more careful with children from

families with a better financial situation, due to the fact that they cover the cost of the medical services at least partially, even though they are officially free.

“Children are provided with a good medical care, the vaccines are free of charge”.

“The right to health care and health-related services is a little better respected, the state tried to ensure that children and elderly receive free medical coverage”.

“I shared the hospital room with a boy whose parents did not pay the doctors for the provided services and I noticed that their attitude towards him was worse, they were rude to him”.

“There is no free medical assistance for children – we all pay when we go to see a doctor”.

“Doctors pay more attention to children with money. If you don't pay, they don't bother to ask you how you feel or what happened”.

“In our community only children from elementary school and teachers received free vaccines against flu, the others had to buy it. The same thing happened with the mumps vaccine. We were told it was hard to be found”.

The realization of the right to an adequate health care involves a whole range of conditions and factors. One of these constitutes raising children's awareness of the ways in which they can sustain their health. Certain actions are taken in this regard, but they are not sufficient.

“... is respected in accordance with what the state can do for us in this field – the right to a healthy life depends on numerous factors”.

“... we need to be informed as well about how to protect our health, about viruses, diseases, medicines...”.

“The state made a step to inform the citizens: articles in newspapers, information broadcasted on TV and other means of disseminating the information”.

The protection of children's health is threatened by many factors:

- **Parents' and medical institutions' insufficient financial resources**

"The right to medical assistance is violated daily when small children do not receive necessary medicines to survive, because their parents can not afford to provide them with everything they need".

"Financial resources are provided, but not sufficiently".

"Many children from socially disadvantaged families can not afford to pay for a surgery, some medicines or a medical consultation".

"... people pay even for ambulance services".

- **The lack of necessary equipment or its non-correspondence with the patient's needs**

"In the Republic of Moldova there is no corresponding equipment to provide efficient and timely medical assistance".

"... the equipment is used only for VIPs".

"... the lack of medical centres, well equipped, especially in poorly developed rural areas".

- **Violation of hygienic norms in medical institutions**

"The hygiene in certain medical institutions is far below the necessary standards. There are cases when due to hygienic norms violation by nurses, some patients contracted various diseases".

- **Under-trained medical personnel**

"Many physicians are not capable to provide quality medical assistance, either because they are not good specialists in the field, or because they are under-trained".

"I went to see a physician in order to get a certificate required at the high school and I must say it was a very, very unpleasant experience for me".

“... he was talking rudely, he was calling me by my last name, I felt humiliated: «You are still here? What else do you want from me?»”.

“A friend of mine strained his leg and he went to see a doctor. He sent him to a radiographer and then he was told that the leg was broken and he had to immobilize it. After a month when he went to see the doctor again it proved to be that the leg was not broken, it was just a leg strain”.

“... the bad attitude and the indifference towards patients, unless this patient motivates somehow the doctor”.

- **Parents' and caregivers' poor knowledge in the medical and sanitary fields (the widespread tradition of having recourse to unverified traditional means of healing, not knowing the symptoms of the disease, postponing the medical consultation)**

“The lack of parents' attention and care”.

“Neither children, nor parents are educated to go to see a doctor when something occurs, they use traditional means of healing, at home”.

“The aunt did not pay attention to her niece. The girl was poorly clothed and she contracted tuberculosis and unfortunately died. She had certain symptoms of the disease, but nobody noticed that she was coughing or something. And the girl did not tell anybody”.



Ce fac eu pentru a promova drepturile?

- organizez seminare cu sementi, cu profesori, maturi la tema data,
- încerc să ridic nivelul de implicare al tinerilor/copiilor pentru a colabora și a ne susține în activități de succes.
- conștientizez profesorii și maturii că activitatea necreativă (de redactoriști, consilierii) nu este jocul și că e necesar să ne cunoscă și să ne respecte drepturile pentru a ne putea dezvolta și crește sănătos și eficient anul școlar,
- aduc exemple concrete de reușite și succese (schimb de experiență) ale celor care s-au informat și au transmis colegilor, prietenilor lor informații despre drepturile copilului și n-au regretat.

IERI



- * nu-mi cunoșteam toate drepturile;
- * eram timidă și nu participam, nu mă afirmam;
- * nu-mi prea cunoșteam dreptul la opinie (în fața maturilor)

AZI



- * îmi cunosc toate drepturile
- * mă învăț să particip calitativ
- * știu că am dreptul la opinie și-mi exprim liber gândurile;

MÂINE



- * voi putea să-mi apar drepturile.
- * voi fi implinită și voi avea succese.
- * opinia mea va fi auzită de societate și va fi luată în considerație.



Photo: Victoria Țăranu

2.5. Education

The child's right to education is realized mostly due to the mandatory and free of charge character of the primary education and the existence of such institutions in all the localities of the Republic of Moldova. Nevertheless, there are children in certain communities who fail to integrate in the educational system. There are cases when children have to attend the educational institution from the neighboring village or town, which generates inconveniences and prevents them from getting involved in extracurricular activities.

“The secondary education is mandatory and free of charge, only few parents do not allow their children to attend secondary school”.

“The Education is free up to the 9th grade and everybody has the right to study”.

“There are kindergartens and schools in every village”.

“There is a growing number of children who do not attend school in our country”.

The complete family, which has adequate living conditions, and in which parents pay attention to their children, is the main condition for the realization of the child's right to education, especially in his first years of life.

“Family is the foundation of the child's education, within family the child starts learning about things, and later in life he simply develops these abilities”.

“The education of children from complete families differs from that of children living in families struggling with financial issues, or from the education of social orphans”.

“There are cases when orphan children are doing as well in school as children from complete families or even better. Sometimes, parents are indifferent to children's performance in school and they do not check their school success. Orphan children, on the contrary, think of their future, they realize that education is their way in life and they focus on it”.

“Family is like a house wall, if parents find time for their children and spend time together, children can learn more than they do in kindergarten”.

If a child happens to have special needs or the family environment proves to be inadequate, in order to realize the right to education, other institutions get involved – the relatives, the kindergarten, the school, the children and youth community centres, the boarding school, the school for children with special needs.

“Family is indeed the foundation of education but it is not the only source”.

“Family is not the only educational actor, but without family's support – there is nothing you can do, if you are backed by your family, you feel more courageous”.

“... not only the family, because there are cases in which the family fails to provide a decent education and then children are brought up in kindergartens and schools”.

Although the right to an education is among the most realized rights, the educational system in the Republic of Moldova encounters a series of issues, especially in the rural areas.

“There are villages in which children do not have the opportunity to study all the subjects, because of insufficient teaching stuff, due to migration. Thus, they are forced to attend schools in neighboring villages. It is quite inconvenient – they have to participate in many extracurricular activities... In addition to this they have to pay the transportation fees and not all the families can afford these extra expenses. Not to mention that it is very tiring to commute every day”.

The following are the difficulties mentioned:

- **The content of the school program which is very theoretical, the teaching methods, which are focused on the reproduction of the information, rather than preparing children for their future life.**

“... too much information, which is unnecessary in life, we study about lots of things, but as a result we know nothing concrete”.

“... we retell what others have written”.

“... the emphasis is not put on personality development, we are asked to retell what we have read in the book, nobody shows us how to apply in real life all the received information”.

“Older teachers make us study what we will not need in the future, compared to younger teachers, who due to their recent education, are closer to our needs and you are sure to receive up-to-date information”.

- **Overwhelming school program**

“... the principal asked two girls how much time it takes them to get ready for classes – 8 hours at school and about 6 hours at home”.

“Teachers teach only one subject, but we have to study all of them”.

“The school program keeps us too busy, all our time is absorbed by reading books”.

- **The high school does not offer a sufficiently specialized education**

“There are different classes for both sciences and humanities, but the school leaving examination is the same”.

- **Without taking into account children's preferences, teachers force them to accept the available optional classes.**

“Among the optional classes there is the Math class, something that we are doing every day. We would like to study at optional classes something more interesting, that we would really like. We want to feel free at optional classes”.

"... we hear: "Whether you want it or not, you will have to sign up for this optional class, otherwise you will be graded below 7 at the end of the semester... ". We are forced to accept this additional class".

"The choice of optional classes we make is influenced by teachers, who threaten us, I mean warning us: «Choose the subjects which are included in the leaving school examination». We want to study «We and the Law», «Life Skills», but the Math teacher, even the Geography teacher force us to choose".

"The teacher said: «Those graded 9 and 10 at the end of the semester must attend optional classes, otherwise you will not receive the same high grades next time»".

- **The lack of a program of school and professional orientation**

"Not every child is capable of choosing a field (sciences, humanities), children do not know what they want to do in the future. Perhaps 15 out of 100 have already made the choice, but the rest... "

- **Teachers are not sufficiently trained to apply interactive methods of working with pupils**

"... children take chances and everybody receives the grade that was given to the person who had to answer the topic... whether the mark is good or not..."

"In the recent years, many young teachers came to our school and you can tell they lack experience. The teacher asks us to read the topic from the book, but we need some explanations, we need some examples, there are so many new words that we do not understand. Sometimes I prefer old teachers to young ones".

"What matters is the method of teaching, rather than the teacher's age; we used to have a teacher, who would come into the classroom and tell us: «Read the topic!»".

- **Teachers are under-trained in the field of modern informational technologies**

"Teachers say: «The internet means responsibility, the internet belongs to the school, to the teachers and the principal»".

"Teachers' role is to guide pupils, to show them how to work without damaging something, but not to prohibit".

“The teacher does not allow us to search on the web information for the classes, so at the Computer class we just sit and look at each other”.

“In our school, 9th graders do not know basic stuff about computers, all thanks to the Computer class we attend”.

“... we are told: «Search on the web», being aware that only a couple of girls know how to do it, as a joke”.

“The teacher does not accept information found on the internet, because it is the easiest way of finding the information”.

“A young teacher uses modern technologies to conduct a lesson, unlike older teachers who are not familiar with such things”.

● **Teachers' inadequate motivation**

“... many teachers' main goal is to earn money, instead of educating children, they do not care about children”.

● **Under-trained teachers in the field of emotional management and children's emotional development**

“Teachers daily personal problems affect children, because they take revenge on children, not being able to manage their anger”.

“There are a couple of boys who misbehave and the teacher refuses to explain the topic, because of them”.

“We have a young teacher who does not understand me when I tell her: «Please, leave me alone today, because I have a terrible headache. But tomorrow I will bring you a report or I will answer your questions and I will receive a good mark»”.

“We also had some young teachers, but I did not like their classes, because their methods of teaching are different from those used by older ones. We had an old Math teacher who used to understand children as if she were a child”.

- **The authoritarian, dominating style of talking to pupils and the use of violent discipline methods**

“The lack of equal to equal communication between teachers and pupils, teachers are looking down to pupils”.

“Many teachers like to yell. But we have a teacher who starts writing on the board as soon as we get noisy. When we see this, we stop talking immediately”.

“... they like to use authority and instill fear in children – this makes a teacher happy. When the teacher sees that violent measures help, he/she keeps on using it”.

“Teachers do not realize that there is a limit, they want to see immediate outcomes and they are ready to have recourse to anything, including violence... sometimes without even realizing it”.

“... he used to hit our fingers with an iron ruler. The teacher thought that the boys would learn from this, but they were proud that they could resist the pain and did not cry. As a result the number of beatings kept rising on and on”.

“There is a teacher in our school who takes a piece of cable and hits the pupils, but the boys end up catching it and throwing it back to the teacher”.

- **Violation of the nonreligious character of the education**

“... the second teacher was a church priest. He did not conduct the lesson the way he was taught at Pro Didactica, but when pupils stepped into the classroom they were obliged to bow down and perform the things people usually do at the church. Therefore many pupils refused to attend his class”.*

- **Violation by teachers of the pupils' right to privacy**

“The right to privacy is not respected, especially at school; it occurs many times that teachers get involved in the pupils' personal life”.

* The Educational Centre “Pro Didactica” is a non governmental, nonprofit organization founded on the 11th of August 1998, which provides information, training and consultation programs and services

"... they can tell you: «You found time to talk to X, so why didn't you find time to do your homework?»".

"When this right is violated we do not feel respected".

- **The schedule is elaborated without consulting children**

"The schedule poses big issues in most schools".

"We would like to be consulted when the schedule is conceived – when it is better for us to have particular classes".

"We have 7 classes every day and on Friday only 3".

- **The lack of equipment for the Physical Training class**

"... we do not have a locker room, so we have to bring the uniforms in bags".

- **The lack of a special equipment needed for the experiments at the Physics and Chemistry classes**

"A huge issue is the fact that we do not have special equipment used to perform various experiments and during school Olympiads those who are familiar with this equipment rank first, but those who are guided by the pictures from the school books only find it hard to compete".

"The teacher brings various devices for the Physics class, but unfortunately they are all broken and she can only theoretically explain how they work".





Photo: Tatiana Etço

2.6. Freedom of expression

The degree of realization of the freedom of expression, as well as the right to association is different in different communities. In the last years, in certain regions of the country, children's opportunities of expression have improved. Children's participation is favored by the nongovernmental organizations active at the local and national level.

“Seminars are held, various clubs, there are NGOs for children and during these events children can express themselves”.

“... NGOs create participation opportunities for children”.

“... children and youth can step out and share their concerns and views, various debates clubs are organized, in which everyone can express his opinion”.

“... there is a progress in this regard, but it is not enough”.

“Children's right to an opinion is partially respected, we can not say that this right is completely violated, because there are Local Youth Councils...”

Children's rights to opinion and participation are nevertheless among the most violated rights in the Republic of Moldova.

“Children are often stopped, deprived of their freedom of expression, even when the addressed matters concern them”.

Children feel deprived of their right to opinion within family, school, community and even among friends.

“The freedom of expression is very frequently violated, especially in the family, at school, among friends. Very often, there are people overestimating themselves or having a higher rank in the social hierarchy”.

“The child spends most of his time at school. Most of the rights are indeed violated within school, and among the most violated rights is the freedom of expression”.

“Even peers can inhibit, prevent a child from participating”.

“... the freedom of expression is violated even among friends”.

“The right to participation is violated not only within school; the teachers are not the only ones to neglect this right”.

Sometimes, children's opinion is neglected within family, although this should be the proper environment for children to develop and practice abilities which are necessary for their future. For some reasons, certain parents are not aware of their children's abilities and interests, thus they do not support their development. There are parents who decide for their children what activities they should do in their spare time, which profession to choose or with whom to make friends.

“Parents should take into account what we say, because we know better what we want, what we like in this life”.

“... sometimes parents, adults assume too many responsibilities. As a result, children become private property and they fail to develop a personality with rights, aspirations and opportunities”.

“Parents should let children make decisions from early childhood; this is how they can get ready for the future. If someone learns how to make decision as a child, it will be much easier for him/her to do it as an adult”.

"I know cases when parents, instead of children, choose the Centres to attend, without taking into consideration their children's talents, abilities, which are sometimes hidden and wait to be discovered".

"Her parents don't even care that the girl has a phenomenal voice, thus she does not have the opportunity to study in this field".

"I know a girl who likes to sing from childhood, she is talented and she took piano classes. She is about to finish school and her dream is to enter the College of Music, but her parents do not agree. They thought that the best thing for her would be to graduate from high school and then to study the Law at the University".

"In many cases, the relationships between families, between parents influence the relationships between children. For instance, if two neighbors do not get along, they prevent their children from being friends".

When parents make the decision to go abroad looking for a job, they do not consult with their children about it, they do not ask them if they agree. Many children would choose to lead a modest life, but to be with their parents.

"... it depends on every person which are the so-called «my basic needs»".

"We can live without a cell phone or a computer".

"Nowadays people are racing for money, they have all they need, but they want more".

In cases of parents' separation, due to divorce or migration children's opinion is not taken into account, it is not heard. Very often children are not able to keep in touch with one of the parents.

"The divorce has a negative impact on children. They often ask themselves: «Why isn't my family united?»".

"After parents' divorce children do not have the opportunity to choose whether to stay with the mother or the father, as a rule, the decision is taken by the judge in the favor of the mother".

“Although the child wants parents to be together, his opinion does not matter. His father is in a foreign country, his mother is in a different one, the child lives with his grandparents or with some aunts”.

The expression of the personality and of personal views is a natural thing for children and youth. The affirmation opportunities influence positively children's development.

“When we participate we develop our personality, we attempt to express our opinion and evolve”.

“We, children, are full of ideas, full of energy, full of opinions, therefore we try to express our opinion and views, especially if it concerns us”.

“For me affirmation means to do or say what I like, for instance, I like to listen to this music...”

“We have the right to express our opinion when we need to solve a personal problem, and this experience will help us in the future... it will help us shape our life”.

“... if children are encouraged, supported by adults, they develop better, they become more receptive, able to solve any issue”.

“... this child enjoys a greater freedom, a greater support, and these are very important things at this level of childhood, this experience will be very valuable in the future”.

The violation of the child's freedom of expression has negative consequences on the child's development. If children are not listened to, they tend to inhibit, they become aggressive, violent, fearful and uncertain. There are cases of suicide and self mutilation of children who failed to make themselves heard.

“We noticed that if a child is not heard or is ignored within family, among friends or within any other institutions, he does not develop his personality and he stops fighting for his place in the society”.

“... these children do not develop properly, they loose faith in their own strength. They refuse to participate and they stay unnoticed in the society”.

"In kindergartens and schools children do not have the right to self-expression and this damages their mentality... later in life they become unemployed, homeless or even criminals who want to impose their authority".

"... not all the children have the opportunity to express themselves freely and sometimes when they face this wall, this obstacle, some of them refuse to fight for their freedom, they refuse to express their opinion".

"... the violation of this article can lead to bullying".

"I witnessed some cases in which a child who was constantly neglected and whose opinion was not heard, became isolated. A young lady ended up committing suicide, because nobody was taking her seriously... Others were performing self mutilation, which means that they were looking for comfort in the physical pain. They were trying to get rid of the overwhelming sorrow in their souls by physically injuring themselves".

"Violation of this right leads to serious damages to a child's personality and makes him passive, isolated, indifferent. And even if this child has good ideas in a field, he will be afraid to share them, because he knows that nobody listens to him".

In the society, children from socially disadvantaged families, as well as children with special needs are among the most affected by violation of the freedom of expression.

"As for socially disadvantaged families, the entire society violates their right to opinion, whether it occurs at school, in the store, these children are treated differently and their opinion does not matter at all".

"Vulnerable children, including children with special needs suffer a lot. Many times people don't even notice when they neglect the rights of these children".

"Disabled children are neglected by healthy ones. They can not express their thoughts and their opinions are not taken into consideration. They are deprived of information; they don't know what is going on beyond the house walls".

Within family and at school, small children's opinions are more often neglected than those of older children. Both adults and older children manifest this discriminatory attitude.

“Very often small children, up to 10 years old are not listened to when they try to express themselves. Their opinion does not matter for parents. The same thing happens at school”.

“Children from elementary school have their freedom of expression most often violated. In a circle of children of various age, the most affected in this regard are the smallest ones”.

“The difference in age is a reason for the freedom of expression violation – small children are beaten, given nicknames, older children take their ball, send them home”.

The specific character of certain existent models of participation and the way in which some Child and Youth Resource Centres work limit the access of all children to the realization of this right.

“In our village the representatives of the Children's Council dare participate in the Adult Local Council sessions and in the Teachers Council sessions. They familiarize themselves with the events that are going to be conducted at school, they come up with suggestions and bring up matters of their concern. There is an obvious positive change, lately, but the change concerns those involved and does not influence the others who are left far away behind”.

“Sometimes the Centre volunteers become its beneficiaries. Their role is to train and conduct various activities with vulnerable children, but instead they take advantage of the canteen and all the other things available, designed for beneficiaries”.

Very often even if adults consult children and listen to their opinions, it is just a formal consultation, because in the end these opinions are not taken into consideration.

“The main issue is the fact that although the freedom of speech seems to be realized and children's opinions seem to be listened to by adults, they are not always taken seriously”.

“... we are told that the future is in our hands but there is nothing we can do to change it”.

“There are cases when a teacher does not want to say straight: «Shut your mouth!» So he pretends

to listen to you, but he does not even take it into consideration. Children can understand it and they feel neglected by the teacher”.

“Sometimes teachers encourage us to express our opinion, but then they still choose theirs as the best one: «Yes, we will do as you say ... but it is better to do it the way we teach you»”.

An important field in which children's and youth's opinions are not heard or taken into account is the educational process in school. Children are not consulted when school regulations are adopted or the schedule is elaborated. Children's consultation with regard to the contents of the classes in most cases has a formal character.

“When the deputy director or the school principal makes the schedule we are never consulted. One day we might have scheduled Geography, Biology, Math and Physics classes and the next day Physical Training, Drawing and Music classes”.

“School regulations pose serious problems as well... It is written that the School Council approved them, but as a member of the Council I don't know anything about it. Teachers elaborate these rules and then sign as if the Council approved them”.

“... the Geography teacher told us to choose from three topics, but when he realized that we have chosen three different ones – «No, we will all take one topic»”.

“Maybe it would be easier to consult just the class leaders, since there are too many pupils: «Does this suit you or not? What changes do you suggest?» In the majority of the schools there is a lack of such a communication”.

As a reaction to the impossibility of expressing their opinion, children and youth lose interest in the education and other activities conducted within school. Very often, they are viewed by teachers as having improper behavior.

“... the lack of activities leads to the fact that children lose interest in lessons and find other activities which bother the teacher”.

“In order to be heard, pupils who want to express their opinion become noisy or find other ways of making themselves noticed”.

The atmosphere in which a child lives influences his freedom of expression. The more encouraging it is, the more opportunities of personality developing it provides. The adults within school have an important role of stimulating the opinion expression.

“Not everyone can express freely his/her opinion, therefore everyone needs to be encouraged. If everyone is asked for his/her opinion more often, he/she will develop this ability”.

“... teachers using phrases like – «Come on, say something!», «I know you can!», «Come on, tell us what you think!» – are very popular and children like to attend their classes”.

“Certain expressions – «Don't be afraid!», «Say what you think!», «Feel free! », «Dare!», «Be confident in your strength!» – help children develop their personality, help them become brave”.

Sometimes, adults' behavior, especially teachers' behavior discourage children's participation.

- **Adults have insufficient information about children's rights**

“Very often adults deny the fact that children have rights or, on the contrary, they say that children have too many rights and that they should have only responsibilities”.

- **Certain teachers consider that the freedom of expression is nothing else than an act of indiscipline**

“The difference in age between teachers and pupils contributes to the fact that children's opinion is not taken into consideration”.

“The freedom of expression is violated in most cases by teachers in schools, because they want to impose their authority and instill fear in children”.

- **The limited understanding of children's participation, usually perceived as an entertaining, artistic activity or one meant to maintain the cleanliness in schools**

"When the radio was installed in our high school, many teachers did not agree, because of the headache the music gave them during the break. But the speakers are not very powerful, and besides, we play all types of music, including songs from the 80s, for teachers. That is why the radio team ended up by losing interest in this activity".

"Many times we can hear the Chemistry teacher say: «You want radio? What about doing your homework?»".

"Although we have Councils, they focus on cleanliness at school, on discipline and less on the organizational activities".

"A friend of mine told me that everybody in her team encountered the same issue – when they went to see the mayor in order to present him the project, the secretary told them that he was gone, then when they met him on the street, he told them to come the next day, and the next day it was the same story".

- **Teachers' preferences among pupils, especially on the grounds of school performance**

"... not all the pupils are allowed to take part in all the school and extracurricular activities".

"... various festivities are organized at school and teachers choose among the best pupils those who will sing or retell a poem. What about a pupil whose school performance is worse, but who has abilities to sing or draw or something else. That pupil wants to participate as well, but he will always have to compete with 2 or 3 of the best pupils, favored by teachers".

"If one pupil is asked to express his opinion too often, the others feel that they are left behind".

- **The rejection of pupils who do not meet the expectations, the refuse to accept children's mistakes, the act of labeling the pupils**

"Many times, children do not participate because of their teachers, they fear that ... "

"If you have a teacher who does not listen to you, because you once said something wrong, you are afraid to express your opinion".

"... there is a similar case in my class: the boy has abilities, but he is shy and if the teacher said once: «What you said is wrong!», and gave him a bad grade, he loses confidence. For written test his grades are high, but for oral answers ... "

"There are shy pupils in every class, but sometimes they have better ideas than those who are active during the lessons and very often these ideas are unnoticed".

"Different opinions are not taken seriously".

- **Teachers' refuse to admit their own mistakes and the fact that sometimes children are better informed in certain fields**

"... they refuse to acknowledge that sometimes they are wrong and the children are right".

"... it is normal to commit mistakes and teachers are sometimes wrong too, and there are pupils who dare correct them, which creates a huge tragedy, because the pupil does not have the right to correct a teacher".

"... we have a Computer class teacher who is already old. He has knowledge in this field but there are pupils who have advanced, up-to-date knowledge and try to teach him how to perform the same operation easier, but all they hear is: «Shut up and sit down!» and he gives them bad grades. For misbehavior".

"There are teachers in our school who tell us: «Don't you dare teach me, is that clear?», because pupils sometimes make remarks ... "

+ Pozitiv

"Vreau!" → "Se dezvoltă"

"Nu te teme!"

"Spune!"

Fii liber!

Încălește!

AI încredere în tine!

Obține curaj



- Negativ

TACI! → copilul se inhibă

NU VORBI! → nu se afirmă

TU NU POTI! → nu se dezvoltă

ÎNCHIDE GURA! → nu se dezvoltă

NU TE PRIVEȘTE! → își pierde încrederea în forțele sale



Photo: Tatiana Eţco

2.7. Access to information

Progress was made in the recent years with regard to children's and youth's access to information. Due to this improvement, the respect of the right to information is in overall considered to be acceptable.

"The state... created a TV channel, which broadcasts throughout the territory of the Republic of Moldova; it provides citizens with information by means of the mass media".

"In the recent years, children from rural areas of the country have gained a wider access to information, namely access to Internet, additional books. They get more involved in projects, initiative groups and they attend seminars and various courses".

"We had discussions with Law Enforcement representatives, Juvenile Department representatives, and we even had the opportunity to interview a judge".

"Thanks to the NGOs' and Regional Centres' efficient activity the situation regarding the access to information has improved: they supply necessary material, books and they provide experienced volunteers".

Children benefit from various sources and methods of information, which nevertheless need to be diversified.

"... this right is respected to a certain extent, we have access to some sources of information, almost everybody has access to television, fewer enjoy Internet services, various seminars and meetings are held..."

“Children benefit from Information Centres, weekly classes with form teachers, information workshops, conducted by Local Youth Centres”.

“There are Youth Resource Centres in almost every community, which provides us with necessary information, but we should have access to diversified sources of information”.

The degree of realization of the right to information varies from one community to another. In overall, children and youth from rural areas have a poorer access to information, compared to those from urban areas. The regions with higher participation opportunities offer wider access to information.

“... things done in this regard were limited to posters, books for children and Internet, which, unfortunately, does not meet children's needs, especially in villages”.

“Nowadays, more children have access to information, but not all of them. Those living in rural areas of the country are deprived of information”.

“Children from cities and big, developed villages have wider access to informational services, but small village children are limited concerning the access to information”.

“In educational institutions, both Parents' Councils and Pupils' Senate assumed the responsibility to provide children with information. There are radio channels, informative boards, school publications, Internet access, although limited, in Computer rooms”.

The rights of the child is still one of the fields in which child's right to information is poorly ensured.

“The right to education and information is considered to be violated if a child is wrongly informed about his rights and responsibilities either at school or in the society”.

“Not all the children are informed about their rights, which are written in the Convention on the Rights of the Child”.

Parents generally contribute to the realization of child's right to information. There are cases though when parents violate this right.

“Parents ensure our right to information, by providing us with financial needs, this helps us get information and develop in various fields”.

“Very often this right is violated within family. Some parents do not allow children to watch TV, they keep them busy doing other activities, instead of reading a book. Or sometimes, when children ask questions, parents simply ignore them”.

“Parents could keep their children informed about what is going on in the community, in order to intellectually develop them, but sometimes they violate the children's right to information”.

Children's access to satellite television makes them vulnerable to certain harmful information. Parents' responsibility is to protect children from similar information, broadcasted by the television. Unfortunately, very often, due to migration, parents fail to do so.

“... channels with pornographic contents, for instance, are broadcasted on satellite television and many children have access to them. This is negative information, which leads to psychological disorders in children”.

“The issue caused by pornographic channels could be easily solved by encoding them. Parents who care for their children's education can easily take measures to ensure their normal development and protect them from such dangerous information”.

“There is a family in our community, in which the mother and the youngest and oldest sons went to Italy. The other son, with his father is watching these channels”.

Among the mentioned obstacles in the realization of the right to information are the following:

- interdiction to watch TV, used by some parents as a punishment
- the lack of free time, because of child's labor

- the lack of access to internet
- inconvenient location (certain Child and Youth Resource Centres are located too far)
- the working hours of some village libraries coincide with the school working hours.



Photo: Cristina Putuntică

2.8. Free time and leisure

In the recent years the situation concerning the free time opportunities for children improved in many regions of the country. Anyway, the realization of the child's right to free time is considered to be at an average level.

“Some changes are noticed in this field, because children are given more opportunities to organize their free time. Several years ago there were no Local Youth Centres. Today they try to create efficient ways of spending the free time. Now we have Councils, Centres. There is an obvious improvement”.

“In our village, the right to play, to rest and to recreation is taken into consideration to a certain extent, because we organize excursions with teachers, the breaks are respected by teachers. As for us, members of the Local Youth Council, we try to organize games and other activities”.

“... the right to play and rest, to sport, music and arts – youth confirmed that in our locality this right is respected”.

Among the mentioned reasons for violation of the right to free time, recreation and cultural activities are the following:

- **Child's labor as a result of poverty**

“Children are forced to start working in order to survive, in order to lead a somehow decent life”.

“Many friends of mine, during summertime work at factories as assistants. When the Commission comes to inspect the work they hide, or they are taken to special rooms where they wait until the Commission leaves”.

“It is very painful to know that there are opportunities in your own village or town to spend your time, but you can not do it because you have to work”.

“Some alcoholic parents spend all the money sent by relatives from abroad on alcohol and the child is forced to work when the money is gone”.

The violation of the child's right to free time is more frequent in rural areas.

“There is an agricultural association in our village and parents from socially disadvantaged families, who want to improve their living conditions, take their children to work with them on the field. Usually this happens in summertime, but sometimes these children do not attend school to work on the field”.

“Children work all day long, side by side with their parents, performing the same activities. In villages the working schedule is busier than in cities. Children from villages do their homework in the evening and most likely the next day they don't even go to school, because they have to join their parents on the field again”.

“... this right is mostly violated in rural areas. Very often, due to the fact that parents' jobs are poorly remunerated, they take their kids with them to improve just a little the family income”.

In the same time, older children who want to find a job during their free time, in order to financially help their family, or in order to earn their own money, find it hard to get a job.

“Those who find a job are lucky. Many children want to find a job, in order to earn some money, but there are few opportunities in rural areas”.

● Migration

“Due to parents' migration children find themselves in the situation of working physically more than it is normally recommended for children. In addition to this they are deprived of their fundamental right to rest”.

"There is a case in our village, when some children have to work as genitors in a commercial centre, because the money sent by their parents working abroad is barely enough for their grandmother who is very sick and require expensive medicines to stay alive".

"For children stay alone at home, due to parents' migration, they are forced to take over all the household duties".

- **Overwhelming school program**

"Because of the tight school program children do not have enough free time, they might even get sick, and this can lead to psychological disorders".

"Our right to rest is very often violated. I can tell from personal experience that we have too many classes, the program is too difficult and as a result I have very little free time. This might be an explanation for the fact that I often feel tired and I do not enjoy life".

"Because of the tight school program we have very little time to rest, most of the time being absorbed by homework".

- **The lack of opportunities to spend usefully the free time: there are no sports places, specialists in the field and proper equipment**

"Every child chooses how to spend his free time, but if there are no opportunities, there is no free time".

"Many children do not have any opportunity to spend their free time".

- **Parents impose children to perform the leisure activities they choose**

"Many children shared with me that parents tell them how to spend their free time, what Centres to attend... "



Photo: Tatiana Eïco

3. CHILD'S RIGHTS FUTURE IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Child's rights are respected

"All the rights will be respected".

"The adults will acknowledge and respect the Convention on the Rights of the Child".

"All the rights included in the Convention on the Rights of the Child will be implemented".

"The respect of the rights of the child will become a priority for all the citizens of the Republic of Moldova, including its governing bodies".

"The Republic of Moldova will no longer need the Geneva Committee recommendations".

No discrimination

"Full integration in the society of vulnerable children of all categories".

"Improvement of the situation of vulnerable children".

"Tolerance towards children belonging to minority ethnic groups".

"Equal rights for all children, regardless of their race and religious beliefs".

"Children can develop their personality, they are free to share openly their cultural traditions, being protected from any form of discrimination".

Children are protected

“Children benefit from all the social services necessary for their proper growth and development”.

“Fighting against juvenile delinquency, drug and alcohol consumption”.

“Children will be protected from violence and abuse within society”.

The family is complete

“In the future, children will enjoy family warmth, they will benefit from a healthy family environment”.

“Parents will not go abroad, families will be united and children will have more free time and they will not perform household duties”.

“Complete families, regardless of their financial situation, families leading a decent life and enjoying all its benefits”.

Medical assistance is provided for everyone

“Children will benefit from a better medical assistance and they will receive help any time”.

“Physicians will pay more attention to children, regardless of their social and financial situation”.

“Competent medical staff and better equipped hospitals”.

“Well trained specialists provide children with quality medical services”.

Children express their opinions

“Children's opinions will be heard, analyzed and applied in practice”.

“Equal rights for children and adults. Adults take children's opinions seriously”.

“Adults – Children = 0 (zero). There will be no difference between children and adults”.

“The right to opinion will be respected and the level of education will increase”.

“Youth build the future, their interests and opinions are taken into consideration”.

Quality education

“Improvement of school performance and school attendance”.

“Sharp decline in school abandonment”.

“Education quality improvement”.

“Teachers prepare children with special needs for the integration in the society, for the life among the other citizens”.

Children have access to information

“All the children have access to information, they have the necessary information and materials for their proper development”.

“Village children have access to resource centres located at a reasonable distance”.

“Children's right to information is realized through public libraries and access to Internet”.

Both children and adults are informed about the rights of the child

“All the people will be informed about the rights of the child”.

“Promotion of the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child”.

“People from our country will view differently the life of children and youth”.

“Children participate actively, they are involved in the cooperation between youth and adults in order to ensure that everyone gets informed about the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child”.

“Children will be aware of their rights and they will know how to protect them”.

“Raising awareness among children with no education about their rights”.

There are sufficient financial resources in order to ensure the respect of the rights of the child

"There will be plenty of financial and human resources for rights implementation".

"More available money for children at the local and national level".

"The Article 4 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child will be fully implemented".

Children participate in the monitoring of the respect of the rights of the child

"Youth will submit periodical reports on the respect of the Convention on the Rights of the Child".

"Groups of children who know the situation in the village will work within mayoralty".



4. RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE RESPECT OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

The elaboration and the implementation of a child protection strategy

“To elaborate a long-term strategy and to effectively apply the national conception on the child protection”.

“To ensure social assistance and youth mediation in all regions of the country”.

“If cases of violence are identified we must know where to seek support and how the relevant people or institutions can intervene and help. A child needs to know exactly how he can help others in case he witnessed a right violation situation”.

“If a child needs help, somebody should always be there for him; a child must receive assistance and help whenever he requires it”.

“To establish specialized centres for children with disabilities, providing psychological counseling for children facing discrimination”.

Budgetary allocations for the promotion of the rights of the child

“To increase the state's budgetary allocations for youth activities”.

“To financially support vulnerable youth”.

“To increase government financial support from local public authorities, parents”.

“To seek for financial support from public authorities, at a local level, and from the government at a national level”.

“... sponsoring organizations, as we know, leave and NGOs and Local Youth Centres have to undertake self-financing, therefore most of them are unable to perform the same amount of work and solve the same number of issues. Most of them deal with ensuring the respect for child's rights. The decrease in proper financing results in decrease in their efficiency to ensure child's rights protection... The issue could be solved if

the state agreed to take over the financing of NGOs and Resource Centres dealing with ensuring the respect of the child's rights".

"The state needs to allot money in order to create new Child Resource Centres".

"... there are many abandoned buildings, which are still in good shape... instead of selling them to private organizations, they should be used for the creation of new centres; children and youth should benefit from the activities organized in those centres and adults could participate as well".

Social integration of all the children

"Social integration of children with disabilities, orphan children, HIV positive children and those from socially disadvantaged families, by involving them in activities along with the other children".

"... finding ways to solve the transnistrian conflict, because the difficult political situation linked to the self-proclaimed republic is an obstacle for the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in that region of the country".

"Children with disabilities need to attend special schools for a limited period of time, during their treatment, I guess... Afterwards, they need to be integrated in the society".

"The society needs to be informed about how HIV is transmitted and people will become more tolerant".

Health services improvement

"The Ministry of Health needs to open more Health Centres; there is an urgent need for more well trained physicians".

"Medical Centres endowed with modern equipment and experienced staff should be created in all the regions of the country".

Educational quality improvement

“To ease the school program, children need to have more access to the elaboration of the schedule and more free time”.

“To consult with youth when decisions regarding the educational process are taken”.

“Stricter regulations are needed with regard to hiring kindergarten and school teachers”.

“The school program needs to be conceived in a way to meet the requirements of the reality”.

“Subjects like Civic Education and Life Skills should be included in the school program”.

“Teachers and pupils should be equal”.

“Teachers need to be continuously trained in order to be able to apply useful methods of teaching”.

“All the educational institutions need to be endowed with necessary equipment”.

Opportunities for children's participation and better information

“To create information centres in the regions where they are not present”.

“To ensure that internet services are available in every rural region of the country”.

“To organize multilingual schools for children who study in many languages and to ensure their access to information”.

“To create Child and Youth Local Councils, Initiative Groups, Youth Resource Centres in every region of the Republic of Moldova, because the existing ones are only at the regional level and children's opportunities of participation would increase if similar mechanisms were present in every village and city of the country”.

“To organize seminars, training courses, round tables for youth and children who did not have the opportunity to get involved in similar projects”.

“To conduct volunteer activities in educational institutions”.

“To establish more efficient relationships between youth and adults”.

“To organize more Pupils' Consultation Councils”.

“To conduct joint seminars for youth from both sides of the Nistru River, in order to ensure information sharing”.

Provision of information about child's rights for children, parents and professionals

“Informational seminars on the Convention on the Rights of the Child”.

“The need of specific subjects at school, like optional subjects, that would help children develop skills to participate, that would prepare them for...”

“To inform parents how to participate, how to get involved in activities together with the youth”.

“To organize seminars for future parents”.

“To provide information for parents who for certain reasons deny child's rights”.

“Police officers and judges need to be informed as well about the existence and the respect for the child's rights”.

“Mass-media needs to get involved in the provision of information for children and youth”.

The cooperation between the state and the nongovernmental sectors

“NGOs should cooperate with the state bodies, because the promotion of child's rights depends to a great extent on the competence of the state bodies”.

“The state, we – the children, the NGOs, the international organizations, the local public administration, the teachers...”

“The cooperation between the state bodies with youth NGOs”.

Opportunities for direct communication between children and the decision making factors

“To organize periodic governmental sessions attended by youth, where they could make suggestions, express their opinions, views on matters of their concern”.

“Youth cooperation with other bodies through opinion sharing, presentation of the reality in their communities...”

Experience sharing with regard to child's rights implementation

“To share experience between youth NGOs, including those at the international level”.

Monitoring by children and youth of the respect of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

“The creation of a target group, responsible for the awareness-raising among youth and the monitoring of the situation in the entire country”.

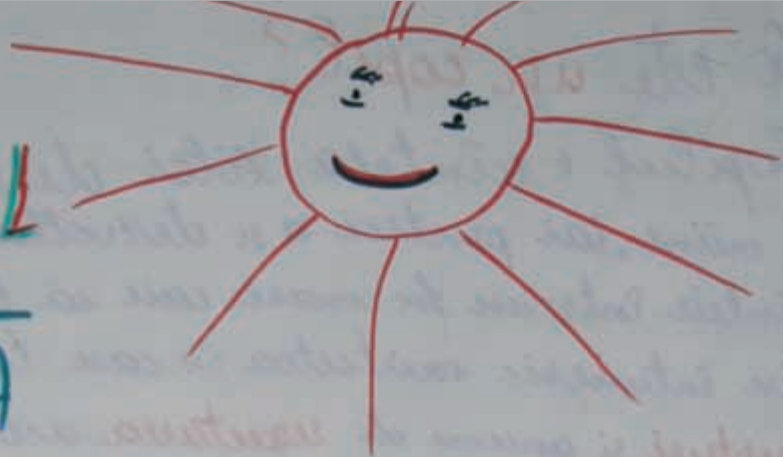
“The creation of youth groups who will submit to the state the opinions and suggestions gathered from children, and who will be responsible for the monitoring of the situation on child's rights at a national level, namely what is done in order to ensure the respect and the implementation of the child's rights included in the Convention in our country”.





Photo: Oleg Roibu

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RECUT, PREZENT ȘI VIIITOR!

Respectă-i drepturile!

El are nevoie de ele!

ITREBUIE SĂ ZÎMBEASCĂ!

CHILDREN'S REPORT ON
THE RESPECT OF THE CONVENTION
ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD
IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

LIFE THROUGH
CHILDREN'S EYES

