

“A World Fit for Children” The Views of Children and Young people.

Report from a meeting of children from the 6th region of Chile
Rancagua, Chile 5/5/01

The consultation with children about their opinions of the document “A World Fit for Children” in Chile took place in Rancagua in the VI region. It was organised by ACHNU (Asociación Chilena Pro Naciones Unidas), an NGO working for the promotion of the rights of the child. The participants were members of organisations associated with GAMA, an environmental project for young people, and their friends.

The methodology suggested by Save the Children was used, but due to lack of time not all questions were discussed. After an initial introduction to the Special Session and the importance of the opinions of children and young people the participants were divided into three groups and asked to discuss the document considering the questions provided by Save the Children. The questions were divided as follows:

- Group 1: Declaration and Plan of Action.
- Group 2: Declaration and Goals, Strategies and Actions – Health and Education
- Group 3: Declaration and Goals, Strategies and Actions – Abuse and HIV/AIDS

Summary of the discussions

Declaration

What are the three most important things which need to be done to make these 10 principles work for children?

1. Provision of more resources for health and education.
With regards to education the importance of civic education was emphasised, i.e. the importance of educating children as well as adults about their civil and human rights. An important part of implementing the principles in the declaration is that people are aware of the promises of their governments.
In the area of health it was suggested that a more professional health service was necessary with better equipment and better methods of diagnosing illnesses. It was also pointed out that the Chilean government does not lack resources but chooses to spend existing resources for military purposes such as the purchase of fighter jets, rather than on social services.

2. Better support and resources for institutions and organisations working with and for children.

The importance that institutions working for children listen to children in order to gain a better understanding of what they need and want was discussed.

The government should support the formation of organisations working with and for children and adolescents.

3. Support for families in order to provide an abuse free environment for children to grow up in.
4. Children must be included in the work to implement the principles of the declaration, platforms from which children can express their opinions should be provided. All institutions dealing with children and young people of the community should discuss matters with the children and take into consideration their opinions.

Plan of Action

1. Creating a child-friendly world.

Do you think that these are the most important issues for government to address in order to build a better world for and with children?

Yes, we agree that these issues are important but believe that the importance of technology is missing from the list. Today technology is fundamental both in order to adapt to modern times as well as in order to incorporate children into the modern world. For example, children living in rural areas and lacking access to communications technology become isolated both from urban areas as well as from development and modernisation.

2. Goals, strategies and actions

The following 4 areas have been given a high priority for action over the next 10 years: Health, Education, Abuse, Violence and Exploitation and HIV/SIDA

Are there any other issues that need to be included?

Yes, the following:

- Recreation, amusement and play.
- The protection of the environment
- Prevention of social discrimination
- Support for the family

What do you think are the biggest problems facing children in these 4 areas? And what do you think needs to be done about them?

I. HEALTH

Problem: Difficulty getting access to health care.

Solution: Free health care for children, both physical and psychological.

Problem: Inadequate context - health care institutions are not suitable for children.

Solution: To provide a better environment in these institutions.

Problem: Segregated attention

Solution: The service should be integral and multidisciplinary

Problem: School health services are bad

Solution: They should be more professional.

II. EDUCATION

Problem: The educational reform

Solution: To implement it properly

Problem: Infrastructure

Solution: More and better schools

Problem: They don't take into consideration the family

Solution: The family should be included in the education of their children and made to participate. Education shouldn't be seen as something that only takes place in schools.

III. ABUSE

Problem: Agricultural Labour

Solutions: Better control/inspection of agricultural labour
Public manifestations and protests
Spread information about the issues

Problem: Abuse within the family

Solutions: Make sure abuse gets reported

Create consciousness about the issues through campaigns, education and meetings with parents and children.

IV. HIV/AIDS

HIV/SIDA is still taboo in Chile, as sex isn't something that is talked about. The theme isn't dealt with. A first step in solving this problem is to start talking about the matter.

Age of participants:	14-21
Country:	Chile
City/Town/Village:	From all communes of the VI region of Chile
Number of females:	7
Number of males:	12

We would be grateful if you could send the completed report of the views of children and young people to achnu@achnu.cl , Att: Consuelo Hernandez.

Thank you.

ACHNU Background Information

La Corporación Asociación Chilena Pro Naciones Unidas (ACHNU) is a non-governmental organisation with consultative status at the United Nations and with formal representation at the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). ACHNU is a member of the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA) and a partner organisation of Save the Children Sweden.

ACHNU is an institution working with and for children and young people. Its aim is to protect and fulfil the rights of children in order to guarantee their development and happiness, promoting a conception of children and young people as protagonists of their own lives. ACHNU implements innovative proposals and methodologies in political, social and cultural areas.

This institution is affiliated with the Corporación Asociación Chilena pro Derechos de Niños y Jóvenes (PRODENI). Together they have successfully carried out original projects, articulating the desire for change in civil society. ACHNU-PRODENI have, with the help of funding from various sources, been able to strengthen the institution, ensuring an accountable and transparent management, a strong professionalism and the commitment of its members.

ACHNU is politically and religiously independent. Throughout its 10 years of existence ACHNU has been able to promote the resolutions and conventions of the United Nations in a pluralist manner. In this way, ACHNU works actively with the state and the private sector in order to implement social projects. The institution has at its core the promotion of innovative forms of social action avoiding charitable/assistentialist projects. Rather, the projects aim at the empowerment and strengthening of existing capacities in order to confront disadvantageous social conditions.

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