

# Statement on Children's Rights in Northern Ireland (SOCRNI)

## Launch Event



Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2018 - Hazelwood Integrated College

# Statement on Children's Rights in Northern Ireland

## Welcome

**Kathleen O'Hare**

Principal - Hazelwood Integrated College

# Statement on Children's Rights in Northern Ireland

## Overview and Introduction

**Mairéad McCafferty**  
Chief Executive - NICCY

# Statement on Children's Rights in Northern Ireland

## Opening Address

**Koulla Yiasouma**

Northern Ireland Commissioner  
for Children and Young People



# Statement on Children's Rights in Northern Ireland

## UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

### What is the UNCRC?

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is a list of the rights for every child up to 18. Government has promised to make these rights a reality for all children and young people in Northern Ireland.



**GENERAL PRINCIPLE 1:** All children have these rights, no matter who they are or what their culture, language, religion or gender is. No child should be treated unfairly on any basis.



**GENERAL PRINCIPLE 2:** All adults should do what is best for you.



**GENERAL PRINCIPLE 3:** You have the right to live and develop fully. You should have food, clothing and a safe place to live.



**GENERAL PRINCIPLE 4:** You have the right to give your opinion, for adults to listen to it and take it seriously.





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[www.niccy.org/SOCRNI](http://www.niccy.org/SOCRNI)



We are here to help - contact the Legal and Investigations team

Contact us

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You are here: [Statement on Children's Rights in Northern Ireland](#)

### Introduction

This 'Statement on Children's Rights in Northern Ireland' (SOCRNI) is NICCY's first such publication and is informed by current contexts, the UN Committee's Concluding Observations following their 5th periodic examination of the UK State Party, and NICCY's work with stakeholders on key priorities.

Each rights themed area of this Statement is prefaced with the relevant UNCRC Articles, the UN Committee's Concluding Observations, followed by children's rights followed by NICCY's Calls to



Youth Panel

Who We Are

What We Do

The Commissioner

Our Current Work

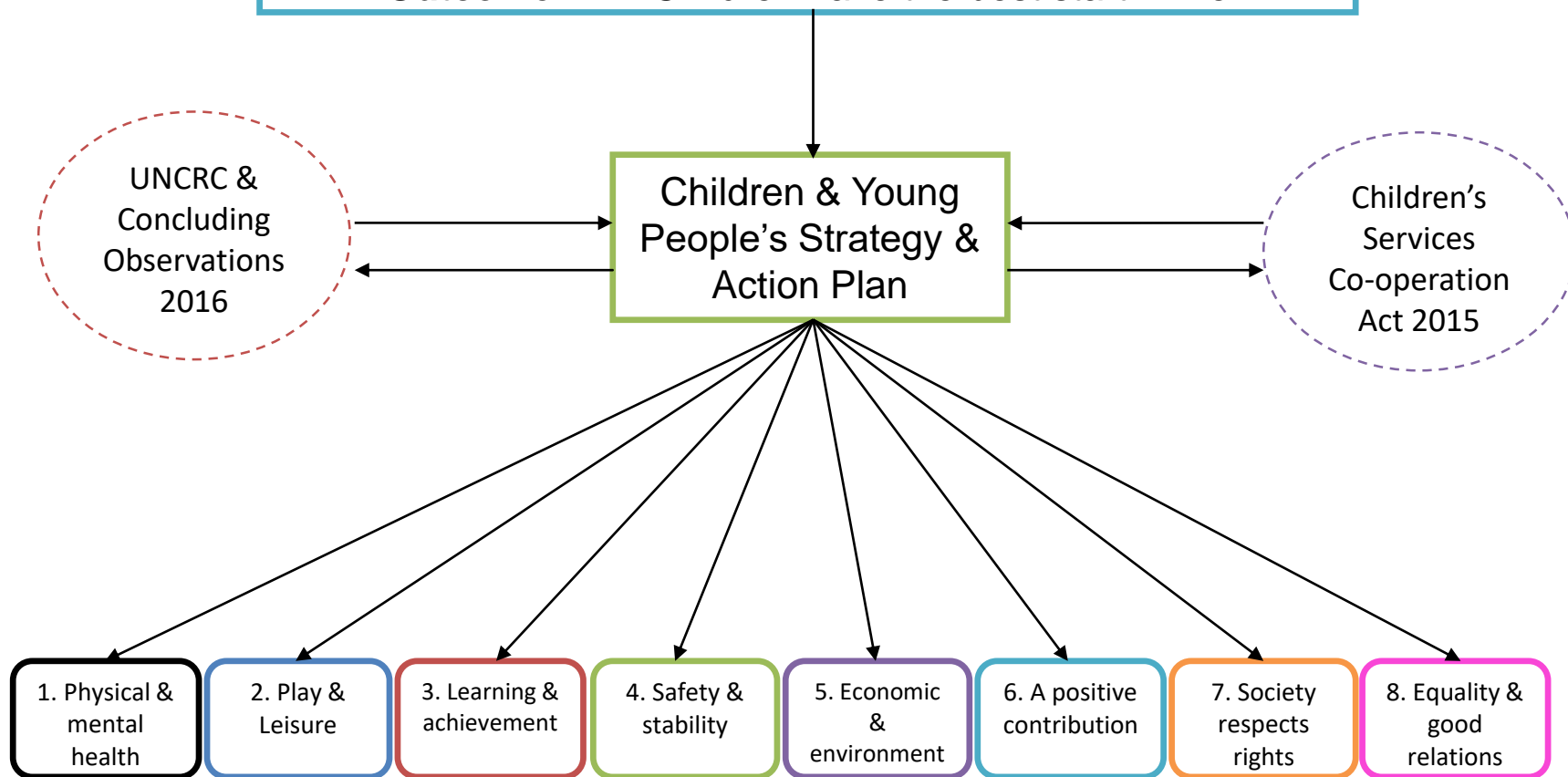
Programme for Government (PFG), Children and Young People's Strategy and

**Northern Ireland Commissioner  
for Children and Young People**

# Statement on Children's Rights in Northern Ireland

## Programme for Government 2016-21

**Outcome 12** – Children have the best start in life



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***“Education shall aim at developing the child’s personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to the fullest extent”***

Article 29, UNCRC



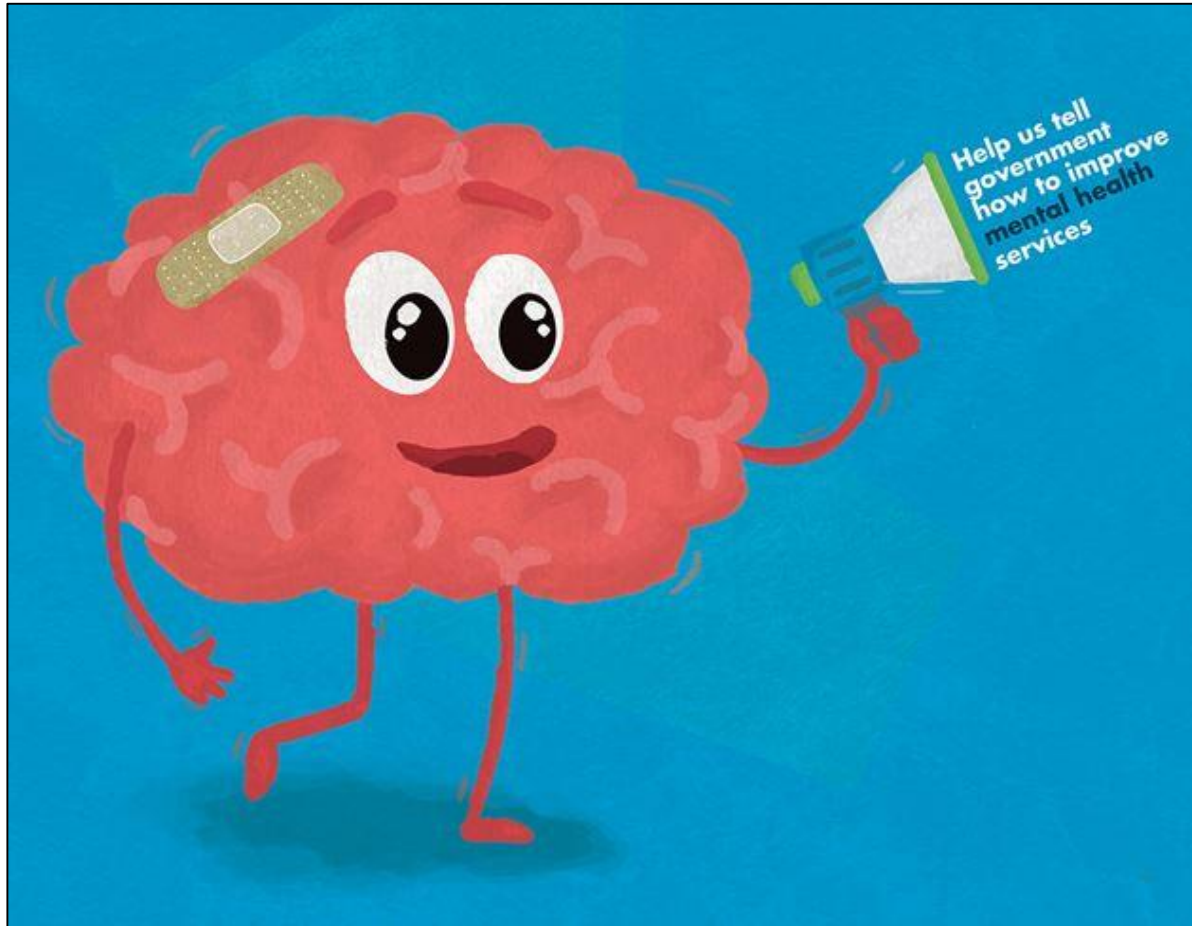
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## Calls to Government – Education

1. End the education gap between specific groups of children and young people
2. Remove all barriers to every child's full participation in, and access to, a child's rights education system
3. Ensure that the focus of education is on the development of every child's talents, skills and abilities
4. Have a debate and consultation on how we fund education in Northern Ireland



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***“The child has a right to the highest health and medical care”***

Article 24, UNCRC

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## Calls to Government – Mental Health

1. Demonstrate robust strategic planning and investment
2. Develop robust data monitoring systems
3. Tackle root causes of poor mental health by applying a 'health in all policies' approach to policy making
4. Deliver on existing CAMHS improvement plans



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*“Every child has the right to a standard of living adequate for his or her development”*

Article 27, UNCRC

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## Calls to Government - Poverty

1. Meet the material needs of children through the increase of family income
2. Allocate resources to mitigate against changes in social security benefits
3. Eradicate child poverty





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*“1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.*

*2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.”*

Article 19, UNCRC



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## Calls to Government - Safeguarding

1. Ensure independence of child protection body within new CYPSP arrangements
2. Commence Child Death Review process
3. Publish CSE Progress Report
4. Ensure the rights of all children who are subject to immigration control
5. Ensure that all separated children have access to an independent guardian
6. Support the transfer of children to NI where it is in their best interests
7. Intensify efforts to tackle bullying and violence in schools
8. Commence Addressing Bullying in Schools Act
9. Implement E-Safety Strategy

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***“A child in conflict with the law has the right to treatment which promotes the child’s sense of dignity and worth, takes the child’s age into account and aims at her or his re-integration into society”***

Article 40, UNCRC

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## Calls to Government – Youth Justice

1. Monitor how government is fulfilling it's obligation to ensure the best interests of the child
2. Publish proposals on how it is to raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility to 14
3. Demonstrate purpose and effectiveness of 'Stop and Search'
4. Youth Justice System must publish robust outcome and performance data



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## Calls to Government – Brexit

1. All aspects of the Good Friday Agreement must be protected
2. UK and EU must avoid all physical infrastructure, at or around, the island of Ireland
3. Safeguarding arrangements must be ensured by maintaining current security, policing and justice arrangements
4. Freedom of movement must not be impeded
5. Continuation of financial support for agriculture, structural and peace funds





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## Calls to Government – Legacy of the Conflict

1. Ensure protection of children from all forms of violence in their communities, particularly from armed groups
2. Address the continuing impact of the conflict on children and young people
3. Support children to have a central role in building a peaceful Northern Ireland
4. Information about the conflict should be provided to children and young people, with a view to achieving a shared narrative about the conflict



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## Calls to Government – Participation

1. Develop measurable outcomes to provide a 'progression framework', from local to national participation
2. Establish structures for the meaningful participation of children and young people
3. Establish benchmarked levels of children's and young people's participation



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## Calls to Government - Discrimination

1. 'Age, Goods, Facilities and Services' legislation which includes all ages
2. Equivalent access to safeguards under the mental health and mental capacity frameworks
3. Ensure equal protection for children from all forms of assault



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***“We worry about  
what a child will  
become tomorrow  
yet we forget that he  
is someone today”***

Stascia Tauscher





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## Presentation by Hazelwood Integrated College pupils

Aniesha Courtney and  
Tony Carlisle





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## Presentation by NICCY Youth Panel

El Savage

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## Presentation by Young People

[Young people's video](#)

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## Political Party Responses

**Steven Agnew MLA**  
Green Party

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## Political Party Responses

**Gavin Robinson MP**  
DUP

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## Political Party Responses

**Colum Eastwood MLA**  
SDLP



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## Political Party Responses

**Robbie Butler MLA**  
UUP

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## Political Party Responses

**Catherine Kelly MLA**  
Sinn Féin

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## Political Party Responses

**Fiona Ferguson**  
People Before Profit

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## Political Party Responses

**Chris Lyttle MLA**  
Alliance

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## Closing Remarks

**Koulla Yiasouma**

Northern Ireland Commissioner  
for Children and Young People

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**Thank you for attending**

**You can out more about our work at:**

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