



A Guide to Reporting on Children and Adolescents

Communicating responsibly

Reporting on news or information related to children and adolescents is essential for highlighting their situation, promoting their participation and making them agents of change. However, an inappropriate approach could lead to a violation of their rights and a risk to their wellbeing. It is always important to take into account national and international standards on children's rights (Convention on the Rights of the Child).

This guide has been designed to help journalists and communicators apply a child rights approach to interviews, photos and videos.

5 Basic Rules

- 1. Message:** The message conveyed by a story, interview or report depends on how it is presented. Information must always respect the dignity and rights of children and adolescents. 
- 2. Image and sound:** When choosing supporting images and sounds, always use ones that reinforce the child's or adolescent's opinion or story. 
- 3. Respectful language:** Do not stigmatize or use denigrating terms such as "handicapped" or "teenage delinquent". It is not the child who should be judged, but the situation. Similarly, it is not correct to use the terms "raped" or "rape victim" to refer to a child who has suffered sexual violence; the language should refer to the situation by using the term "child victim or survivor of sexual abuse or violence". 
- 4. Identity protection:** Do not include any information or personal data that would allow the child being interviewed to be identified, such as their full name, address, where they study, the identity of their parent or guardian, or any other unnecessary details.

! All information, whether written or visual, must respect the rights of children and adolescents.



Interviews Before

Dignity and rights: Respect the dignity and rights of children at all times.

Impact: Consider the potential repercussions of involving children in your journalistic work, prioritise their wellbeing and avoid any harm.

Information: Explain clearly and in language appropriate to age and developmental level what information will be shared and for what purpose.

Consent: Forms for the consent and transfer of image and voice rights must be clear and precise, and written and illustrated in a way that can be understood by someone who has no legal or journalistic background. These rights are also fully revocable.

Authorisation: All interviews, photography or videos must be conducted with the informed consent of the child or adolescent and with the written authorisation of the child's parent, guardian or tutor.

Trust: If possible, carry out a preliminary visit to get to know the children or adolescents in order to build trust.



It is essential to obtain informed consent from the child and his or her legal guardian.



Interviews During

Presentation: Take time to introduce yourself, explain who you are, what you do, where you work, why and what the interview is for.

Environment: Provide an inclusive, safe, and positive treatment environment.

Language: Use language adapted to the child's age and do not use words that stigmatize, humiliate or harm the integrity of the child or adolescent.

Presence of another adult: Never be alone with children or adolescents.

Right to stop the interview: Respect the child's right to stop the interview at any time or not respond to certain questions.

Interviews about violence: Keep in mind that interviews on violence against children and adolescents can only be conducted with those who have overcome the situation of violence or abuse, and that re-victimization must be avoided.

Personal information: Do not share your personal email address, telephone number and personal social media accounts with children and adolescents.

Physical contact: Avoid any type of physical contact or gestures that could be interpreted as invasive or threatening. Use reassuring gestures and a calm tone of voice.





Images

When photographing, filming or creating images of children and adolescents, the following aspects are essential:

Positive image: Guarantee that the photographs or videos project a positive, respectful and dignified image. Avoid sensationalism.

Respect: Appreciate and make an effort to act in accordance with local culture and traditions when taking photos or filming video.

No faking: Ensure that images are honest representations of the context and facts.

Active attitude: Show children and adolescents as active agents of change and not as passive recipients of an action. It is better to show them in action rather than posing.

! Images conveyed must be positive, respectful and dignified.



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