



# Georgia State University College of Law

Georgia State University College of Law,  
Legal Studies Research Paper No. 2020-01

MAKING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS WIDELY KNOWN

Jonathan Todres

29 MINN. J. INT'L L. 109 (2020)

This paper can be downloaded without charge from  
The Social Science Research Network Electronic Paper Collection:  
<http://ssrn.com/abstract=3541747>

## Making Children's Rights Widely Known

Jonathan Todres\*

### Abstract

*Since the advent of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child ("CRC"), the international community has witnessed significant progress on children's rights in both law and practice. Yet as we reach the 30th anniversary of the CRC, children's rights violations remain widespread. These abuses reinforce the fact that children's rights—and human rights more generally—have yet to be fully embraced in all communities. A precursor to children's rights being fully embraced and respected is to have them widely known and understood. This article asserts that a significant factor in the failure to achieve widespread acceptance of children's rights is the insufficient attention given to implementation of Article 42 of the CRC and its obligation to make children's rights "widely known." Article 42 of the CRC is simultaneously one of the most important and most overlooked provisions of the treaty. Article 42 requires states to ensure that "the principles and provisions of the [CRC] are widely known, by appropriate and active means, to adults and children alike." Despite the threshold nature of Article 42—without knowledge that they have rights, individuals cannot seek to realize them—there has been surprisingly little meaningful work done to ensure that Article 42 is fully implemented.*

---

\* Jonathan Todres is a Distinguished University Professor & Professor of Law at Georgia State University College of Law. He served as a Fulbright Scholar in residence at University College Cork in Ireland, Spring 2018. I would like to thank The Fulbright Commission and University College Cork School of Law for their generous support of my research for this article. This article benefited greatly from presentations at the University College Cork School of Law Research Colloquium and the Frontier Research in Children's Rights and Family Law Workshop at UCC School of Law. I also want to thank the following individuals for their feedback on earlier drafts: Ursula Kilkelly, Conor O'Mahony, Sean Butler, Dug Cubie, Fiona Donson, Catherine O'Sullivan, and Maria Cahill. Thank you also to the *Minnesota Journal of International Law* editors and, in particular, to Cindy Shi and Sam Logterman for their excellent work, and to Susan Heikkila for her research assistance.

*This article seeks to invigorate a discourse on Article 42 of the CRC, its meaning, and best practices for securing its full implementation. It includes an analysis of the U.N. Committee on the Rights of the Child's jurisprudence on Article 42. The article also discusses how Article 42's mandate and the human rights education mandate found in CRC Article 29 and other treaties should be understood in relation to each other. Finally, the article maps the relevant stakeholders and their roles in the implementation of Article 42, with a view to building sustained support for law, policies, and programs that advance children's rights and well-being.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION . . . . . 111

I. THE OBLIGATION TO MAKE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS WIDELY KNOWN . . . . . 113

    A. Mapping the Mandate of Article 42 . . . . . 113

    B. Committee Guidance to States Parties . . . . . 117

    C. Case Study: Denmark . . . . . 122

II. ARTICLE 42'S RELATIONSHIP TO HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION MANDATES . . . . . 127

    A. The Human Rights Education Mandate . . . . . 128

    B. Connecting Article 42 and Article 29 . . . . . 131

III. IMPLEMENTING ARTICLE 42: IDENTIFYING THE STAKEHOLDERS . . . . . 132

    a. *The Committee on the Rights of the Child* . . . . . 132

    b. *Governments* . . . . . 133

    c. *Schools and the education system* . . . . . 135

    d. *Other relevant professionals in the lives of children* . . . . . 137

    e. *Children's rights NGOs* . . . . . 138

    f. *Private sector* . . . . . 139

    g. *Academic institutions* . . . . . 140

    h. *Parents* . . . . . 140

    i. *Children* . . . . . 141

    j. *Casting a wide net* . . . . . 143

CONCLUSION . . . . . 144

INTRODUCTION

The story of the children's rights movement—like the broader human rights movement—is one of slow and inconsistent progress. Since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights more than 70 years ago, there has been a proliferation of multilateral and regional human rights treaties.<sup>1</sup> More recently, since the advent of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child (“CRC”), additional optional protocols and other children's rights treaties<sup>2</sup>—such as ILO Convention

---

1. See, e.g., *International Human Rights Instruments*, UNIV. OF MINN. HUM. RTS. CENTER, <http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/instree/ainstls1.htm> (last visited Sept. 30, 2019).

2. See, e.g., Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child

No. 182—have sought to advance children’s rights in law and practice. Yet in the era of the CRC, the international community has also failed to prevent a long list of atrocities and severe violations of children’s rights. In addition, short of mass atrocities, millions of young people experience persistent violations of, or challenges to, their rights. From large-scale crises to day-to-day microaggressions, this evidence reinforces the fact that children’s rights—and human rights more generally—have yet to be fully embraced in all communities. A precursor to children’s rights being fully embraced is to have them widely known and understood. This article asserts that a significant factor in the failure to achieve widespread recognition of children’s rights is the insufficient attention given to implementation of Article 42 of the CRC and its obligation to make children’s rights “widely known.”

Article 42 of the CRC is simultaneously one of the most important and most overlooked provisions in the CRC. Article 42 imposes a mandate on states parties to “make the principles and provisions of the [CRC] widely known, by appropriate and active means, to adults and children alike.”<sup>3</sup> Without knowledge of their rights, children may be unaware that harmful treatment they experience is a violation of their rights for which there are, or should be, remedies. They are also far less likely to be able to advocate for and realize their rights, if they are unaware of them. Children might also be less cognizant of when their own actions infringe on the rights of others. Similarly, without knowledge of children’s rights, adults will be unclear as to when their actions violate the rights of children or, alternatively, what steps they can take to help children realize their rights. Despite the threshold nature of Article 42, there has been surprisingly little meaningful work done to ensure Article 42 is fully implemented.

This article seeks to invigorate a discourse on Article 42 of

---

on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, U.N. Doc A/RES/54/263 (2000); Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, U.N. Doc. A/RES/54/263 (2000); Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a Communications Procedure, U.N. Doc. 1/RES/66/138 (2011); ILO Convention No. 182 Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor, 2133 U.N.T.S.161 (1990); African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, O.A.U. Doc. CAB/LEG/24.9/49 (1990).

3. Convention on the Rights of the Child, art. 42, G.A. Res. 44/25, 1577 U.N.T.S 3 (1989) [hereinafter CRC].

the CRC, its meaning, and best practices for securing its full implementation. In Part I, the article examines how the U.N. Committee on the Rights of the Child—the primary body charged with overseeing implementation of the CRC—has conceptualized Article 42's mandate. After looking at the Committee's jurisprudence on Article 42, the article then examines selected efforts at implementation of Article 42. Part II then discusses how Article 42's mandate and the human rights education mandate found in CRC Article 29 and other treaties should be understood in relation to each other. Human rights education has received greater attention and support, but I argue that it must be understood as connected to and part of the broader Article 42 mandate. In Part III, the article aims to map the relevant stakeholders and their roles in the implementation of Article 42. Finally, the article concludes by arguing for greater focus on Article 42 as a vehicle for building sustained support for law, policies, and programs that advance children's rights and well-being.

## I. THE OBLIGATION TO MAKE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS WIDELY KNOWN

### A. MAPPING THE MANDATE OF ARTICLE 42

The drafting history and travaux préparatoires of the CRC offer little guidance on the intention of Article 42.<sup>4</sup> Only one change was made to the language of Article 42 during the drafting stage, and it does not shed any light on what drafters viewed the obligation of states to be under this article.<sup>5</sup> This lack

---

4. See UNITED NATIONS, LEGISLATIVE HISTORY OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD 813–14 (vol. 2 2007); See generally JAAP DOEK, ET AL., THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD: A GUIDE TO THE TRAVAUX PRÉPARATOIRES 1–3 (1992).

5. Indeed, so seemingly uneventful was the development of Article 42 that Sharon Detrick's authoritative volume—*A Commentary on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*—which dedicates a chapter to each article of the treaty, does not include a chapter on Article 42. See SHARON DETRICK, A COMMENTARY ON THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD 1–26 (1999); see also U.N. Economic and Social Council, *Question of a Convention on the Rights of the Child: Report of the Working Group on a Draft Convention on the Rights of the Child*, ¶¶ 96–99, U.N. Doc. E/CN.4/1987/25 (Mar. 9, 1987) (reporting that draft language of what became Article 42 had read: “The States Parties to the present Convention undertake to make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known, by appropriate and active means, to adults and children alike, using forms, terminology and

of deliberation on Article 42 during the drafting phase heightens the importance of the Committee on the Rights of the Child's discussion of Article 42. In the Committee on the Rights of the Child's jurisprudence, however, Article 42 has received comparatively little attention. In both its general guidance and specific assessments of states parties' progress under the CRC, the Committee has addressed Article 42 in largely superficial terms.

To begin, two General Comments of the Committee are particularly relevant to Article 42's mandate, yet they fall short of prioritizing this threshold obligation. First, in General Comment No. 5—General Measures of Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child—the Committee acknowledges the importance of making children's rights widely known by including Article 42 in what it considers the “general measures of implementation.”<sup>6</sup> The Committee begins matter-of-factly with the foundational idea that “[i]ndividuals need to know what their rights are” and that without full implementation of Article 42, “it is most unlikely that the rights set out in the Convention will be realized for many children.”<sup>7</sup> Although recognition of Article 42 as part of the general measures of implementation is arguably significant, the Committee's mapping of Article 42's requirements provides limited guidance to states as to how to effectively ensure children's rights are *widely known*. In terms of specific action, the Committee interprets Article 42 to require that:

- States “should develop a comprehensive strategy for disseminating knowledge of the Convention throughout society”;
- The CRC should be available in all relevant languages;
- Education on children's rights should be incorporated

---

language (including local languages) accessible to them.” However, the delegation from Norway—supported by delegations from Australia, Austria, Canada, the Netherlands, and the United States—proposed deleting the last phrase “using forms, terminology and language (including local languages) accessible to them.” That proposal was accepted, and the Working Group adopted the final language by consensus).

6. U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *General Comment No. 5: General Measures of Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, ¶ 66, U.N. Doc. CRC/GC/2003/5 (Nov. 27, 2003).

7. *Id.* ¶ 66.

into the school curriculum;

- All people who work with and for children should receive “initial and in-service training” on the CRC; and
- “The media can play a crucial role in the dissemination.”<sup>8</sup>

The above requirements contain significant shortcomings both for their weak language (e.g., suggesting that states “should” develop a comprehensive strategy and that the media “can play a role” rather than urging or mandating action) and for their lack of specificity (e.g., the Committee offered no detail on what a comprehensive strategy should include).

Second, one would expect additional discussion of Article 42’s mandate in the Committee’s General Comment on the Aims of Education. Yet in General Comment No. 1, there is only one reference to Article 42: “In general terms, the various initiatives that States parties are required to take pursuant to their Convention obligations will be insufficiently grounded in the absence of widespread dissemination of the text of the Convention itself, in accordance with the provisions of article 42.”<sup>9</sup> This brief mention suggests that the Committee viewed Article 42’s primary mandate as dissemination of the CRC. That is a much narrower and weaker obligation than Article 42’s language, which requires states to make the provisions and principles of the CRC “widely known” to both children and adults.<sup>10</sup> “Widely known” suggests an obligation on the state not only to disseminate information about the CRC, but also to ensure actual acquisition of knowledge about the rights of the child enshrined in the CRC. Yet, the Committee’s focus on dissemination effectively suggests that Article 42 is merely on par with Article 44’s dissemination requirement that “States Parties shall make their reports widely available to the public in their own countries.”<sup>11</sup>

Other general comments add incrementally to this discussion of Article 42. For example, in General Comment No.

8. *Id.* at ¶¶ 67–70.

9. U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *General Comment No. 1: The Aims of Education*, ¶ 20, U.N. Doc. CRC/GC/2001/1 (Apr. 17, 2001).

10. CRC, *supra* note 3, art. 42.

11. CRC, *supra* note 3, art. 44(6).



2 on “The role of independent national human rights institutions in the promotion and protection of the rights of the child,” the Committee identifies national human rights institutions (“NHRIs”) as key to implementation of Article 42, noting in part that NHRIs should “sensitize the Government, public agencies and the general public to the provisions of the Convention,” assist in the implementation of human rights education in schools, and ensure human rights education focuses specifically on children.<sup>12</sup> These are important steps, however the Committee does not provide meaningful detail on how each of these measures can be implemented.

The Committee does address dissemination of children’s rights norms in other general comments focused on more specific issues or subpopulations of children. For example, in General Comment 9 on the rights of children with disabilities, the Committee urges states parties to develop “systematic awareness campaigns” and provide “targeted and focused” training for a wide range of professionals on the rights of children with disabilities.<sup>13</sup> It also addresses the need to disseminate information and educational curricula about the rights of indigenous children and “strengthen efforts to translate and disseminate information about the Convention and its Optional Protocols and the reporting process among indigenous communities and children, in order for them to actively participate in the monitoring process.”<sup>14</sup>

Overall, most of the Committee’s guidance in its General Comments can be described as concentrating around three suggestions: (a) dissemination of materials; (b) education in schools; and (c) training of professionals who work with children. Although each of these areas is relevant to the mandate of Article 42, the Committee’s language tends to be both general and permissive, rather than identifying specific steps and pressing states to take action. These passing references to Article 42 treat this threshold provision as a marginal issue,

---

12. U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *General Comment No. 2, The Role of Independent National Human Rights Institutions in the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child*, ¶ 19, U.N. Doc. CRC/GC/2002/2 (Nov. 15, 2002).

13. U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *General Comment No. 9: The Rights of Children with Disabilities*, ¶¶ 26–27, U.N. Doc. CRC/C/GC/9/ (Nov. 13, 2007).

14. U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *General Comment No 11: Indigenous Children and Their Rights Under the Convention*, ¶¶ 27, 81, U.N. Doc. CRC/C/GC/11 (Feb. 12, 2009).

rather than recognizing it as a core component of children's rights.

#### B. COMMITTEE GUIDANCE TO STATES PARTIES

In theory, the very general guidance provided by the CRC Committee in general comments could still have an impact if the Committee subsequently built out tailored recommendations and requirements in its dialogue with states parties during the reporting process. The 2015 Committee guidelines to states parties on the content of their reports to the Committee call for "relevant and up-to-date information . . . [on] Measures taken to make the principles and provisions of the Convention and its Optional Protocols widely known to adults and children through dissemination, training and integration into school curricula."<sup>15</sup>

Given this request and, more generally, the foundational significance of making children's rights widely known, we should expect that states parties would map out steps taken to implement Article 42 at least in these three areas of dissemination, training, and school curricula. And, in response, the Committee would provide an evaluation of such government efforts in its Concluding Observations on states parties' reports.

To assess the Committee's engagement with Article 42, I reviewed 107 concluding observations to states parties' reports, issued over a five-year period (June 13, 2013 to June 27, 2018).<sup>16</sup> I analyzed not only whether the Committee discussed Article 42 or its "widely known" requirement, but also whether the Committee addressed dissemination, training, and integration into school curricula given the expectation set out in the reporting guidelines that states parties report on these issues.<sup>17</sup> If a state failed to report on these issues in its state party report, one should expect that the Committee would critique that omission, and if a state reported on its Article 42 implementation

---

15. U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *Treaty-Specific Guidelines Regarding the Form and Content of Periodic Reports to be Submitted by States Parties Under Article 44, Paragraph 1(b), of the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, ¶ 19(g), U.N. Doc. CRC/C/58/Rev.3 (Mar. 3, 2015).

16. In reviewing each of the concluding observations, the following search terms were used: "article 42," "widely known," "public awareness," "disseminat" (which would pick up both "disseminate" and "dissemination"), "training," "curric" (which would pick up "curriculum" and "curricula"), and "human rights education." See *infra* Table 1.

17. The results are summarized in Table 1. Additional data are on file with the author.

efforts, one would similarly expect the Committee to evaluate those efforts.<sup>18</sup>

This review of the Committee's concluding observations over a five-year period found inconsistent, and often limited, assessment of states' efforts to fulfill the mandate of Article 42. To begin, none of the Committee's concluding observations for this five-year period mentions "Article 42" by name in its review of states parties.<sup>19</sup> The concluding observations for each state reviewed has a heading that references Article 42—"General measures of implementation (arts. 4, 42 and 44 (para. 6) of the Convention)"—but Article 42 is not mentioned in the substantive discussion of the Committee's concluding observations.

The lack of reference to Article 42 does not end the analysis, as it is possible for the Committee to discuss the substantive content of a treaty provision without mentioning it by name. Thus, the concluding observations were reviewed for references to the "widely known" concept, as well as the three criteria set forth in the Committee's reporting guidelines for states parties: dissemination, training, and integration into the school curriculum.<sup>20</sup> An analysis of the Committee's concluding observations during the five-year period reveals limited discussion of issues covered by Article 42.

The Committee invoked the "widely known" standard of Article 42 in only ten of the 107 concluding observations.<sup>21</sup> A small number of concluding observations on states parties reports include no discussion of the state's progress in

---

18. It is possible that a state party discussed implementation of Article 42, but the Committee did not address that in its concluding observations. However, such a scenario would still highlight a failure by the Committee to engage the state party on Article 42's mandate and evaluate the state's progress.

19. See generally *U.N. Treaty Body Database*, U. N. OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMM'R FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en) (last visited Oct. 5, 2019) (using search terms "CRC" under "Filter by Committee," "Concluding Observations" under "Filter by Document Type," and "June 13, 2013" to "June 27, 2018" as the date range).

20. See *supra* note 16.

21. See *infra* Table 1. Five concluding observations mentioned children's rights being "widely recognized and understood" but did not track the "widely known" standard (see the concluding observations on Palau, Marshall Islands, Vanuatu, Samoa, and Nepal, *infra* Table 1). The concluding observations for Malta use the term "widely known" but only when speaking of the "best interests" standard; it does not address the obligation to make children's rights widely known.

implementing the components of Article 42.<sup>22</sup> Given the threshold nature of knowing one's rights, it is worrisome that some state party reviews are completed without mention of Article 42's mandate—by the state or the Committee—and that most concluding observations do not address the requirement of making children's rights “widely known.”

In terms of the reporting guidelines' requirements, the results are mixed. The Committee addressed dissemination—which, in this study, was broadly construed to include any mention of dissemination or public-awareness raising—in 88 percent of its concluding observations (94 of 107).<sup>23</sup> Of that total, it bears noting that in at least eight reports, the Committee mentioned dissemination but only in reiterating recommendations from previous concluding observations.<sup>24</sup> In other words, in those Committee reports, there was no new discussion of dissemination. In the remaining 13 concluding observations, the Committee spoke only of dissemination of the concluding observations and other documents related to the reporting process.<sup>25</sup> These were not counted as discussing dissemination as contemplated under Article 42, because the CRC contains a separate requirement that states parties make reporting process documents available to the public.<sup>26</sup>

While it is encouraging that the Committee almost always mentions some aspect of dissemination, approximately 20 percent of reports made no new mention of dissemination (i.e., they either did not address dissemination of the CRC or only referred to a previous recommendation on dissemination).<sup>27</sup> If we include in this total the ten reports in which the Committee mentioned awareness of the Convention only as an indirect result of dissemination of the concluding observations, then a full 30 percent of concluding observations did no more than reiterate prior recommendations or call for dissemination of the reporting process documents.<sup>28</sup>

---

22. See, e.g., U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations on the Fifth Periodic Report of Denmark*, U.N. Doc. CRC/C/DNK/CO/5 (Oct. 26, 2017).

23. See *infra* Table 1.

24. See *infra* Table 1 (concluding observations that expressly mentioned dissemination in referring back to recommendations made in prior reviews of the state party were included in the total).

25. *Id.*

26. CRC, *supra* note 3, art. 44(6).

27. See *infra* Table 1.

28. In some concluding observations, the Committee's final paragraph on

The results on training—which the Committee identified in its reporting guidelines—are similar. Eighty-five percent of the Committee's reports (91 of 107) mentioned training on the CRC, children's rights, or human rights.<sup>29</sup> There is, however, significant variation in the discussion of training, including both the content of the training and who should be trained.<sup>30</sup>

Finally, on integrating rights education into the school curriculum, only 32 percent (34 of 107) of the Committee's concluding observations addressed children's rights education.<sup>31</sup> An additional fifteen concluding observations mentioned human rights education (in school curricula or generally), but did not specifically address education about the CRC or children's rights, as Article 42 requires.<sup>32</sup> Even using the broader criteria of human rights education, only about 46 percent of country reviews (49 of 107) by the CRC Committee mention either human rights education or children's rights education.<sup>33</sup>

Overall, only 40 percent (43 of 107) of the concluding observations mentioned all three components that the Committee, in its reporting guidelines for states parties, asks states to report on—dissemination, training, and rights education in school curricula.<sup>34</sup> Given the threshold nature of knowing about children's rights, and the fact that many of the concluding observations that did address these issues did so only

---

dissemination of the concluding observations included language such as “in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention and the Optional Protocols thereto and of the need to have them implemented and their implementation monitored.” See, e.g., U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations on the Combined Third and Fourth Periodic Reports of Saudi Arabia*, ¶ 49, U.N. Doc. CRC/C/SAU/CO/3–4 (2016). This occurred in at least ten concluding observations and those reports, because they mentioned awareness about the Convention, were included in the total number of reports mentioning dissemination.

29. See *infra* Table 1. This total includes concluding observations that mentioned training on specific rights, as opposed to comprehensive children's rights training. A smaller subset of concluding observations called specifically for training on all children's rights, as the reporting guidelines emphasize. See U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *supra* note 15; see also U.N. OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMM'R FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, *supra* note 19.

30. See *infra* note 36.

31. See *infra* Table 1; see also U.N. OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMM'R FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, *supra* note 19.

32. See *infra* Table 1.

33. See *infra* Table 1; see also U.N. OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMM'R FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, *supra* note 19.

34. See *infra* Table 1; see also U.N. OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMM'R FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, *supra* note 19.

very briefly, these results show relatively limited engagement with Article 42.

It bears noting that the above analysis is quantitative only. This study did not evaluate quality of the Committee's evaluation or recommendations. A report was included as covering dissemination, training, or human rights education if it mentioned the topic at all.<sup>35</sup> Further analysis is needed to assess the extent to which the Committee engages on issues covered by Article 42 and whether subsequent state party reports and alternative reports by NGOs show evidence of progress implementing Article 42.

However, two preliminary observations are worth noting regarding the quality of the Committee's discussion of dissemination, training, or integration in school curricula. First, in many instances, where the concluding observations mention dissemination, training, or human rights education, the Committee used boilerplate language for recommendations and did not tailor the recommendation to the specific country.<sup>36</sup>

---

35. Compare, for example, U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations on the Combined Third to Fifth Periodic Reports of Mauritius*, ¶ 22, U.N. Doc. CRC/C/MUS/CO/3-5 (Feb. 27, 2015) ("The Committee recommends that the State party provide adequate and systematic training on children's rights to all professionals working for and/or with children, in particular law enforcement officials, judges, prosecutors, teachers, the media, health workers, social workers, personnel working in all forms of alternative care and migration authorities."), with U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations on the Combined Third to Fifth Periodic Reports of the United Republic of Tanzania*, ¶ 20(c), U.N. Doc. CRC/C/TZA/CO/3-5 (Mar. 3, 2015) ("Undertake systematic education and training on the provisions of the Convention for all professional groups working for and with children."). For an example on dissemination, see U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations on the Combined Third to Fifth Periodic Reports of Sierra Leone*, ¶ 11, U.N. Doc. CRC/C/SLE/CO/3-5 (Nov. 1, 2016) ("The Committee recommends that the State party continue strengthening its awareness-raising programmes, including campaigns on children's rights, through the existing community-based structures.").

36. Compare U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations on the Combined Fifth to Seventh Periodic Reports of Angola*, ¶ 12(a) U.N. Doc. CRC/C/AGO/CO/5-7 (June 27, 2018) (calling on Angola to "[i]ntensify its efforts to disseminate information on the Convention, including through awareness-raising programmes, to parents, the wider public and children in a child-friendly manner, and to legislators and judges to ensure the application of the Convention in the legislative and judicial processes."), with U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations on the Combined Fifth and Sixth Periodic Reports of Seychelles*, ¶ 13(b), U.N. Doc. CRC/C/SYC/CO/5-6 (Mar. 5, 2018) (calling on the Seychelles to "[i]ntensify its efforts to disseminate the Convention, including through awareness-raising programmes, to parents, the wider public and children, including through

Second, when the Committee did address these issues, it often indicated briefly that the state must do more, for example, to disseminate information about children rights, but provided little specific guidance as to how to ensure rights are widely known among children.<sup>37</sup> For example, in its 2017 concluding observations on Ecuador, the Committee stated that Ecuador should “[s]trengthen its awareness-raising programmes, including campaigns aimed at ensuring that the provisions of the Convention are widely known throughout society, including by parents and extended families, caregivers, professionals working with children and children themselves.”<sup>38</sup> Such a statement provides no assessment of whether a human rights curriculum has been adopted in the schools, whether training has been provided to relevant professionals, the efficacy of that training, the role of the media, or even whether the state has adopted a plan of dissemination.

In short, this critical threshold step to ensuring the rights of all children—making children’s rights widely known—has been insufficiently developed and monitored. It has been mostly relegated to the margins of children’s rights advocacy.

### C. CASE STUDY: DENMARK

This section provides a case study to show an example of how a state and the Committee engage with one another on Article 42 during the review process. Denmark is regarded as strongly supportive of children’s rights.<sup>39</sup> In this regard, one might expect that if Article 42 were to receive significant

---

appropriate materials tailored specifically for children in different communities, as well as to legislators and judges, with a view to ensuring that the principles and provisions of the Convention are applied in the legislative and judicial processes.”).

37. See, e.g., U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations on the Fifth Periodic Report of Romania*, ¶ 13, UN Doc. CRC/C/ROU/CO/5 (July 13, 2017).

38. U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations on the Combined Fifth and Sixth Periodic Reports of Ecuador*, ¶ 13(a), UN Doc. CRC/C/ECU/CO/5-6 (Oct. 26, 2017).

39. See generally *Denmark’s Engagement with the UNICEF*, PERMANENT MISSION OF DEN. TO THE U.N. IN N.Y.: MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFF. OF DEN., <https://fnnewyork.um.dk/en/denmark/sustainable-development/denmark-and-unicef/> (discussing Denmark’s strong financial support of the U.N. Children’s fund); KIDSRIGHT INDEX, OVERALL RANKING (2019), <https://www.kidsrightsindex.org> (ranking Denmark the tenth best country for supporting children’s rights).

attention, Denmark might be among the group of states likely to have addressed the issue. Denmark's experience in the reporting process offers insights into how, and to what extent, the Committee has pressed countries on their implementation of Article 42.

In its initial report to the CRC Committee in 1993, Denmark reported that its efforts vis-a-vis Article 42 had "two parts, viz. the distribution of material primarily to children and young persons and the publication of a book for adults."<sup>40</sup> The materials for adults included both the CRC and other documents, as well as child-friendly materials adults could use with children.<sup>41</sup> Various media sources were enlisted to help with dissemination and public awareness raising.<sup>42</sup> In response, in its 1995 Concluding Observations, under the heading "principal subjects of concern," the Committee wrote: "The Committee is concerned about the adequacy of measures taken to ensure that the principles and provisions of the Convention are widely known to children and adults alike."<sup>43</sup> To the extent that we can read anything into the order of concerns listed, the Committee chose to list this concern prior to concerns about any substantive right, suggesting that Article 42 may have been considered of threshold import in the early years of the CRC.

The Committee went on to encourage Denmark to "develop an ongoing and systematic approach to making the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known to children and adults alike."<sup>44</sup> It highlighted the importance of making children's rights "widely known in the main languages of the minority, refugee and immigrant groups living in Denmark."<sup>45</sup> The Committee also pushed Denmark to ensure education about the CRC and children's rights is "systematically incorporated into retraining programmes and training curricula for various professional groups working with and for children such as teachers, social workers, law enforcement personnel and

---

40. U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties under Article 44 of the Convention—Denmark*, ¶ 22, U.N. Doc. CRC/C/8/Add.8, (Oct. 12, 1993) [hereinafter Demark, First Report].

41. *Id.* ¶ 24.

42. *Id.* ¶ 25.

43. U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Denmark*, ¶ 9, U.N. Doc. CRC/C/15/Add.33 (Feb. 15, 1995).

44. *Id.* ¶ 22.

45. *Id.* ¶ 22.



judges.”<sup>46</sup>

In its second report (submitted in 2000), Denmark detailed efforts to implement Article 42 in two areas: education and police.<sup>47</sup> For education, Denmark reported holding human rights trainings for teachers, though there was no mention of what percentage of teachers attended these trainings.<sup>48</sup> It also said the CRC was “a natural and important part” of these courses, but offered no further detail as to how much of the training was focused on children’s rights specifically as opposed to human rights more generally.<sup>49</sup> The government also reported the publishing of a bibliography of available resources for teaching human rights.<sup>50</sup> For police, the government reported training of police about the CRC both directly and indirectly through training on national laws that implement CRC provisions.<sup>51</sup>

In 2001, in response to Denmark’s second report, the Committee made no direct mention of Article 42’s obligation to make children’s rights widely known, nor did it provide an assessment of Denmark’s actions described above.<sup>52</sup> At best, one could read the Committee’s closing statement about the dissemination of reporting process documents as indirectly referencing Article 42:

[T]he Committee recommends that the second periodic report and written replies submitted by the State party be made widely available to the public at large and that the publication of the report be considered, along with the relevant summary records and concluding observations adopted by the Committee. Such a document should be widely distributed in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention, its implementation and monitoring within the Government, the Parliament and the general public, including

---

46. *Id.* ¶ 23.

47. See U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties under Article 44 of the Convention—Denmark*, ¶¶ 280–89, UN Doc. CRC/C/70/Add.6, (Mar. 31, 2000) [hereinafter *Denmark, Second Report*].

48. *Id.* ¶ 281.

49. *Id.*

50. *Id.* ¶ 282.

51. *Id.* ¶¶ 284–289.

52. See U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Denmark*, U.N. Doc. CRC/C/15/Add.151 (May 22, 2001).

concerned non-governmental organizations.<sup>53</sup>

Denmark submitted its third report in 2005, providing details of a CRC tenth anniversary conference it held.<sup>54</sup> Denmark also reported that dissemination occurred through schools and teacher education.<sup>55</sup> While acknowledging that individual colleges control the content of curriculum, the government reported, “There is hardly any doubt, however, that general information about international conventions is included in their education.”<sup>56</sup> This statement offers no insight into how many colleges cover the CRC, how much time is spent on preparing teachers to educate children about children’s rights, what is meant by “general information about international conventions,” how much of that general information focuses on the CRC and children’s rights, and whether these programs have been evaluated for effectiveness.

Despite the minimal coverage of Article 42 in Denmark’s third report to the Committee, the Committee again provided only a closing paragraph on dissemination:

The Committee further recommends that the second periodic report and written replies submitted by the State party and the related recommendations (concluding observations) it adopted be made widely available in the languages of the country, including (but not exclusively) through the Internet, to the public at large, civil society organizations, youth groups, professional groups and children in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention, its implementation and monitoring.<sup>57</sup>

Denmark’s fourth report, submitted in 2010, provided some, albeit piecemeal, discussion of efforts to make children’s rights

---

53. *Id.* ¶ 48.

54. See U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties under Article 44 of the Convention—Denmark*, ¶¶ 28–29, U.N. Doc. CRC/C/129/Add.3 (Mar. 30, 2005) [hereinafter Denmark, Third Report].

55. *Id.* ¶ 30.

56. *Id.*

57. U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Denmark*, ¶ 61, U.N. Doc. CRC/C/DNK/CO/3, (Nov. 23, 2005).

widely known.<sup>58</sup> The report stated that:

A nationwide survey of all residential institutions in the child and youth area was carried through in 2007, aimed to check, for example, the extent to which staff has acquired knowledge of and uses the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The report has not yet been completed.<sup>59</sup>

Denmark's report also mentioned an "information campaign focused on care for children and neglect of children," to educate relevant professionals.<sup>60</sup> The CRC, however, seemed to be a small part of this campaign: "The topics that dominated all courses were cross-disciplinary cooperation and early intervention. In addition, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was reviewed."<sup>61</sup> Despite this seemingly limited attention to the CRC, the Committee offered little critique. Denmark listed thirteen other conferences/trainings and stated that these events had children's rights content, but the report provided no detail on the amount or type of content, what percentage of relevant professionals received this training, and what impact the conferences/trainings had.<sup>62</sup> Again, the Committee did not challenge Denmark on this point. Instead, in its Concluding Observations to Denmark's fourth report, the Committee essentially duplicated the boilerplate language used in the third cycle regarding dissemination of report-related documentation regarding an effort to stimulate "debate and awareness" about children's rights.<sup>63</sup>

In 2016, Denmark submitted its fifth report to the Committee.<sup>64</sup> It included a number of paragraphs on human rights education, which are relevant to Article 42's obligation to

---

58. See U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties under Article 44 of the Convention: Denmark*, U.N. Doc. CRC/C/DNK/4 (Jan. 22, 2010) [hereinafter Denmark, Fourth Report].

59. *Id.* ¶ 780.

60. *Id.* ¶ 781.

61. *Id.*

62. *Id.* ¶ 783.

63. U.N. Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Denmark*, ¶ 71, U.N. Doc. CRC/C/DNK/CO/4 (Apr. 07, 2011).

64. U.N. Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties under Article 44 of the Convention: Fifth Period Report of States Parties due in 2016: Denmark*, U.N. Doc. CRC/C/DNK/5 (Oct. 14, 2016) [hereinafter Denmark, Fifth Report].

make children's rights widely known.<sup>65</sup> It addressed teaching of children's rights in schools, as well as measures aimed at engaging professionals including teachers, social workers, and law enforcement, on children's rights.<sup>66</sup> Yet in response, the Committee's concluding observations included only this less-specific suggestion about dissemination, which does not even mention disseminating the CRC: "The Committee also recommends that the fifth periodic report, the written replies to the list of issues and the present concluding observations be made widely available in the languages of the country."<sup>67</sup>

Even though the Committee's Concluding Observations generally became longer and more detailed over time—compare its first concluding observations to Denmark, which was five pages, with its concluding observations to Denmark's fourth and fifth reports, which were sixteen and fourteen pages, respectively—the Committee addressed Article 42's threshold requirement of knowledge of rights progressively less.<sup>68</sup> In its most recent review of Denmark, the Committee fails to specifically address Article 42 at all.<sup>69</sup>

This case study suggests a worrying trend. If making rights widely known is a critical first step to realizing children's rights, then the Committee should be demanding more, not less, of states parties with respect to Article 42. Moreover, merely recommending dissemination of reporting process documents falls well short of pressing states to make children's rights widely known by "active means" as required by Article 42.

## II. ARTICLE 42'S RELATIONSHIP TO HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION MANDATES

Although Article 42 has received relatively little attention,

---

65. *Id.* ¶¶ 20, 21, 23, 27.

66. *Id.* ¶¶ 20–27.

67. U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Denmark*, ¶ 49, U.N. Doc. CRC/C/DNK/CO/5 (2017).

68. Compare U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Denmark*, U.N. Doc. CRC/C/DNK/CO/5 (Oct. 26, 2017), and U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Denmark*, U.N. Doc. CRC/C/DNK/CO/4 (Apr. 07, 2011), with U.N. Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Denmark*, U.N. Doc. CRC/C/15/Add.33 (Feb. 15, 1995).

69. U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *supra* note 67, at 1.

a related area, human rights education, has seen more robust efforts. This section begins by reviewing the international law mandate on human rights education, and then proposes how these two overlapping mandates should be understood in relation to each other.

#### A. THE HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION MANDATE

Human rights education has been a part of human rights law since its beginnings. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (“UDHR”) establishes not only that every individual has the right to education, but also that:

Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.<sup>70</sup>

Subsequent legally binding treaties reaffirmed this core principle. The International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (“ICESCR”) requires that education “strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.”<sup>71</sup> The CRC similarly mandates that education “shall be directed to . . . development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms” and shall prepare children for “responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples.”<sup>72</sup> These core human rights treaties and other international instruments affirm that states have an obligation to ensure that education enhances respect for human rights.<sup>73</sup>

---

70. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, art. 26, U.N. Doc. A/RES/217 (III) A (1948).

71. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, art. 13(1), 993 U.N.T.S. 3 (1966).

72. CRC, *supra* note 3, art. 29.

73. See, e.g., Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (2010), <https://rm.coe.int/16803034e5>; see also *World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-Ongoing)*, OFF. OF THE U.N. HIGH COMM’R FOR HUM. RTS., <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Education/Training/Pages/Programme.aspx> (last visited Nov. 3, 2019).

Further, the human rights education mandate should be understood broadly. That is, human rights education, indeed all education, encompasses not only school-based learning. The Committee on the Rights of the Child explains that “[h]uman rights education should be a comprehensive, life-long process and start with the reflection of human rights values in the daily life and experiences of children.”<sup>74</sup> While learning is a lifelong process, it takes on particular importance during childhood.<sup>75</sup> Education has a multiplier effect, positioning children to realize a host of other rights during their youth and as adults.<sup>76</sup>

In addition to recognizing that human rights education is not limited to educating children (which parallels Article 42’s mandate to make children’s rights widely known “to adults and children alike”), it is important to understand that human rights education includes not only teaching about human rights norms and enforcement mechanisms, but also instructing and learning in ways that respect the rights of students and teachers and empowering individuals to exercise their rights and respect the rights of others.<sup>77</sup> Rote learning about rights concepts is largely ineffective.<sup>78</sup> Effective human rights education encompasses education *about* human rights (which includes teaching human rights norms), education *through* human rights (which includes teaching and learning in a rights respecting environment), and education *for* human rights (which includes empowering young people to exercise their rights).<sup>79</sup>

Despite the importance of human rights education and the positive outcomes that result from human rights education,<sup>80</sup> the human rights education mandate has suffered some of the same implementation challenges as Article 42 has. The Committee on the Rights of the Child exerts minimal pressure in its concluding observations on this issue, and states are largely left to decide

---

74. U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *supra* note 9, at ¶ 15.

75. See KATARINA TOMASEVSKI, HUMAN RIGHTS OBLIGATIONS IN EDUCATION: THE 4-A SCHEME 7 (2006).

76. *Id.*

77. U.N. Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, art. 2(2), G.A. Res. 66/137 (2011).

78. UNESCO, ALL HUMAN BEINGS . . . A MANUAL FOR HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION 46 (2000); *see also* UNESCO, *Global Education Monitoring Report 2019: Migration, Displacement and Education – Building Bridges, not Walls* 194 (2018).

79. U.N. Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, *supra* note 77, art. 2(2).

80. R. BRIAN HOWE & KATHERINE COVELL, EMPOWERING CHILDREN: CHILDREN’S RIGHTS EDUCATION AS A PATHWAY TO CITIZENSHIP 7 (2005).

the content of school curriculum for themselves.

Despite this limited pressure from the Committee on the Rights of the Child, a number of successful models for human rights education have been developed and put into practice in selected countries. The United Nations Children Fund (“UNICEF”) has developed two notable school-based human rights education programs.<sup>81</sup> Its Child-Friendly Schools initiative builds on four key principles that are grounded in children’s rights concepts: child-centeredness; democratic participation; inclusiveness; and protection, safety, and sustainability.<sup>82</sup> A second UNICEF program, the Rights Respecting Schools program, builds on the Child-Friendly Schools initiative and “places the [CRC] at the heart of a school’s planning, policies, practice and ethos, enhancing an inclusive, participatory and respectful school culture for children and adults. It involves learning *as* a right, learning *about* rights, learning *through* rights and learning *for* rights.”<sup>83</sup> Both programs have produced positive outcomes in schools in a number of countries.<sup>84</sup> Amnesty International has also developed a Human Rights Friendly Schools program that places human rights at the heart of the learning experience and makes human rights an integral part of everyday school life. From the way decisions are made in schools, to the way people treat each other, to the curriculum and extra-curricular activities on offer, right down to the very surroundings in which students are taught, the school becomes an exemplary model for human rights education.<sup>85</sup>

Finally, the Rights, Respect and Responsibility initiative in Hampshire, England, which has been evaluated since the early 2000s, has shown consistent positive results, particularly in urban schools with high levels of poverty.<sup>86</sup> In short, successful

---

81. UNICEF, CHILD RIGHTS EDUCATION TOOLKIT: ROOTING CHILD RIGHTS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS (1<sup>st</sup> ed., 2014).

82. *Id.* at 70.

83. *Id.* at 73 (emphasis in original text).

84. *Id.* at 35–36.

85. *Human Rights Friendly Schools*, AMNESTY INT’L, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/human-rights-education/human-rights-friendly-schools/>.

86. Katherine Covell, et al., *Implementing Children’s Education Rights in Schools*, in HANDBOOK OF CHILDREN’S RIGHTS: GLOBAL AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES 298–99 (Martin D. Ruck et al., eds., 2016); R. BRIAN HOWE & KATHERINE COVELL, EDUCATION IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE CHILD: A CHILDREN’S RIGHTS PERSPECTIVE ON CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP 177 (2013).

models for human rights education exist, offer important benefits to children and their school communities, and deserve to be embraced. The Committee could press states to implement these or other comprehensive human rights education models.

#### B. CONNECTING ARTICLE 42 AND ARTICLE 29

Although in many respects Article 29—and its human rights education mandate—has been prioritized over implementation of Article 42, the two articles should be seen as mutually supportive. Equally important, Article 29 contains limitations that suggest that Article 29 might be better understood, at least in some respects, as a component of Article 42.

First, Article 29 reads, in part, that “States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to . . . development of respect for human rights.”<sup>87</sup> This focus on education of the child is only half of the mandate of Article 42, which insists that states parties to the CRC make children’s rights widely known “to adults and children alike.”<sup>88</sup> Relying solely on Article 29 leaves out the education of adults.

Second, CRC Article 29, which is modeled on earlier articulations in the ICESCR and UDHR, focuses on *human rights* education. That mandate is distinct from educating children (or adults) about *children’s* rights. Although children’s rights and human rights overlap significantly, there are important differences. These differences can be acknowledged without relegating children’s rights to second class status. To begin, children’s rights include some rights—e.g., Article 3 on the best interests of the child, and Article 7 on the right to know and be cared for by one’s parents—that are not found in general human rights treaties.<sup>89</sup> Also, some rights are more limited as applied to children (e.g., freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, which recognizes the role of parents in guiding children’s decisions).<sup>90</sup> Children also do not have some rights that adults do, most notably voting rights, which means that teaching children’s rights means teaching about strategies for securing rights in ways that must account for these differences. Next, there is an immediacy in the nature of children’s rights

---

87. CRC, *supra* note 3, art. 29(1)(b).

88. CRC, *supra* note 3, art. 42.

89. CRC, *supra* note 3, arts. 3, 7.

90. CRC, *supra* note 3, art. 14.



that distinguishes the rights of children from the rights of adults; the developmental nature of childhood means that even short-term denials of rights can have lifelong adverse consequences, in ways that might not be true for adults.<sup>91</sup> Finally, children's rights are closer to the lives of young people and, thus, more meaningful to young people. For these reasons, educating about *children's* rights, as recognized by Article 42, is important as distinct from human rights education.

Third and finally, General Comment No. 5 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child lists implementation of children's rights education in school curriculum as a component of Article 42.<sup>92</sup> For these reasons, it is appropriate to think of Article 42 as providing the broad mandate to ensure children's rights are widely known and to view the human rights education mandate as one of the vehicles that must be used to achieve that goal.

### III. IMPLEMENTING ARTICLE 42: IDENTIFYING THE STAKEHOLDERS

Invigorating dialogue and action on Article 42 will require a concerted and sustained effort from a variety of stakeholders. But for the reasons discussed above, it is critical that both children and adults develop knowledge and understanding of children's rights. This Part seeks to map the roles of key stakeholders in this endeavor.

#### *a. The Committee on the Rights of the Child*

As the entity charged with monitoring the CRC's development and implementation, the Committee on the Rights of the Child has an obligation to ensure states parties take the mandate of Article 42 seriously.<sup>93</sup> The Committee needs to probe governments about their efforts to implement Article 42 and to challenge governments that do not provide evidence that children's rights are widely known in their country. As the Denmark case study shows, some of the more recent Concluding Observations by the Committee have failed to even mention Article 42's mandate, let alone assess its implementation. As the

---

91. NAT'L ACAD. OF SCI. ENG'G, & MED., REACHING AND INVESTING IN CHILDREN AT THE MARGINS: SUMMARY OF A JOINT WORKSHOP 8 (2016).

92. See U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *supra* note 6.

93. CRC, *supra* note 3, art. 43(1).

Committee moves to implement the “simplified reporting procedure,”<sup>94</sup> there is a risk that rights issues viewed as peripheral will simply not be covered at all in future reviews. Thus, it is critical to increase the visibility of Article 42.

To achieve this increased visibility, there are additional steps the Committee can take. The Committee should consider holding a Day of General Discussion on Article 42,<sup>95</sup> during which it could explore in greater depth what it means to make rights “widely known,” what strategies are effective for transmitting knowledge about children’s rights both to adults and children, how to respond to resistance to children’s rights education, and what resources—financial, human, or informational—are necessary to ensure full implementation of Article 42. Beyond the Day of General Discussion, the Committee should also consider a General Comment on Article 42 to reinvigorate and build out the mandate to make children’s rights widely known.

#### *b. Governments*

The obligation under Article 42 of the CRC lies ultimately with national governments. As a starting point, governments must follow the limited guidance of the CRC Committee to “develop a comprehensive strategy for disseminating knowledge of the Convention throughout society.”<sup>96</sup> In developing a comprehensive strategy, the government must include children and families in the design, development, and evaluation of such a strategy. The national strategy should be widely disseminated, a child-friendly version should be published in conjunction with the national plan, and the strategy and its child-friendly version should be published in all relevant languages.

Beyond developing and overseeing implementation of a national strategy, government plays several other relevant roles.

---

94. U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *Simplified Reporting Procedure*, U.N. OFF. OF THE HIGH COMM’R ON HUM. RTS., <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRC/Pages/ReportingProcedure.aspx>; see also U.N. General Assembly, *Resolution 68/268: Strengthening and Enhancing the Effective Functioning of the Human Rights Treaty Body System*, ¶¶ 1–2, U.N. Doc. A/RES/68/268 (2014).

95. As of June 2019, no Day of General Discussion (“DGD”) has focused on Article 42. For a list of DGDs, see *Days of General Discussion*, U. N. HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMM’R, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRC/Pages/DiscussionDays.aspx>.

96. U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *supra* note 6, at ¶ 67.

National and local government agencies play a key part in shaping school curriculum (discussed more in the next section), and they can provide the mandate for teacher training and the training of other relevant professionals. As the Committee on the Rights of the Child has emphasized, all individuals who work with or for children, in a professional or volunteer capacity, should receive initial and ongoing training on children's rights.<sup>97</sup> That training must be evaluated by an independent entity—such as an academic institution focused on children's rights and/or human rights education—to ensure its effectiveness.

Furthermore, government can play a significant role in developing materials that can be used to educate adults about children's rights. Governments can make these materials available to parents and families, starting with prenatal education programs or after the child's birth in the hospital, just as they provide other materials, such as health information and parenting information, to families with newborn babies.

Governments can also shepherd resources to support policies and programs that aim to make children's rights widely known. All rights—from voting rights to health rights—require resources to fully realize.<sup>98</sup> Governments must provide resources to implement Article 42. In addition to allocating resources directly, governments can also provide financial and other incentives for other actors—such as the private sector—to contribute to realizing Article 42's mandate.

Finally, as the duty under international law to ensure children's rights resides with government, governments are also responsible for ensuring that rights are secured without

---

97. See, e.g., U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *supra* note 6, at ¶¶ 68–69; U.N. Comm. on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding Observations on the Second Periodic Report of the United States of America Submitted under Article 12 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, Adopted by the Committee at its Sixty-second Session*, ¶ 20, U.N. Doc. CRC/C/OPSC/USA/CO/2 (2013) (in which the Committee urged the U.S. government to ensure training is “provided to all relevant professionals working with and for children, including judges, public prosecutors, police officers, immigration and customs officers, medical staff, social welfare officers, religious and community leaders, organizations accredited for adoption, media and other professionals and all technical staff concerned”).

98. Joy Gordon, *The Concept of Human Rights: The History and Meaning of Its Politicization*, 23 BROOK. J. INT'L L. 689, 712 (1998) (footnote omitted) (“Civil and political rights are neither self-generating nor free of costs; they ‘need legislation, promotion and protection and this requires resources.’”).

discrimination of any kind.<sup>99</sup> Schools are an important space for children's rights education, but, in many countries, substantial numbers of school-age children do not regularly attend school.<sup>100</sup> Without government action, these children will miss out on school-based children's rights education. Similarly, some community-based efforts to educate adults about children's rights might not reach all adults. Governments need to ensure, as part of their comprehensive strategy, that education about children's rights reaches all individuals, including adults and children in the most marginalized communities.

*c. Schools and the education system*

Human rights education, and more specifically, children's rights education, must be integrated throughout the school curriculum. However, adding human rights education only as a unit within a social studies or civics course will leave children's rights at the margins of the educational process. Human rights education must include children's rights education and must be an integrated and integral part of the educational process.

When the United Nations adopted the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015, it articulated a vision for quality education for all, which included human rights education.<sup>101</sup> Sustainable Development Goal 4—to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all—acknowledges the importance of human rights in education for sustainable development.<sup>102</sup> Importantly, the Sustainable Development Goals apply to all countries.<sup>103</sup> In its indicators for measuring progress toward education for all, Sustainable Development Goal 4 identifies four levels at which global citizenship education and education for sustainable development, including human rights education, should be integrated: “(a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c)

---

99. CRC, *supra* note 3, art. 2.

100. *One in Five Children, Adolescents and Youth Is Out of School*, U.N. EDUC., SCI. AND CULTURAL ORG. (UNESCO) INST. FOR STATISTICS (2018), <http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/fs48-one-five-children-adolescents-youth-out-school-2018-en.pdf> (reporting that 263 million children are out of school globally).

101. U.N. General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, target 4.7, G.A. Res. 70/1 (Sept. 25, 2015).

102. *Id.*

103. *Id.* at pmb1 (“All countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership, will implement this plan.”).

teacher education, and (d) student assessment.”<sup>104</sup> This multi-level framework offers one model for integrating human rights education. Action on all four levels is critical to ensuring human rights education is truly integrated and supported.

Human rights education programs developed by UNICEF and Amnesty International call for human rights education to be fully integrated into the school curriculum and environment. As Amnesty International explains, “[a]dopting a whole school approach goes beyond teaching human rights as a separate lesson in the classroom. It means creating an environment where everyone understands, values and protects human rights.”<sup>105</sup> For children and their communities to realize the full benefits of human rights education, it must be embedded in the entire curriculum.<sup>106</sup> Recall that human rights education is not only teaching human rights norms but also about educating in a way that is respectful of the rights of all. There are numerous opportunities across the curriculum and not only in social studies or civics classes.<sup>107</sup> For example, as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (“UNESCO”) explains, “mathematics offers students tools for measuring and comparing that can, in turn, help them identify discrimination and inequities or quantify the effects of actions implemented to address these injustices.”<sup>108</sup> That means math class can incorporate children’s rights education and, conversely, math class can be woven into a school-wide children’s rights education curriculum. Similarly, language and reading courses offer opportunities to use the narrative form to educate about children’s rights. Teachers can develop children’s rights modules using children’s literature.<sup>109</sup> Opportunities exist in the other

---

104. UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 4, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg4> (follow “Targets & Indicators” hyperlink and see indicator 4.7.1).

105. *A Whole School Approach to Human Rights Education*, AMNESTY INT’L (2016) at 1, <https://www.amnesty.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Whole-School-Approach-to-HRE-Booklet.pdf>.

106. For a parallel approach to education for sustainable development, see U.N. EDUC., SCI. AND CULTURAL ORG. (UNESCO) & MAHATMA GANDHI INST. OF EDU. FOR PEACE AND SUSTAINABLE DEV. (MGIEP), *TEXTBOOKS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A GUIDE TO EMBEDDING* 17–19 (2017).

107. Eugene Verhellen, *Facilitating Children’s Rights in Education: Expectations and Demands on Teachers and Parents*, 29 *PROSPECTS* 223, 230 (1999).

108. UNESCO & MGIEP, *supra* note 106, at 20.

109. See generally JONATHAN TODRES & SARAH HIGINBOTHAM, *HUMAN RIGHTS IN CHILDREN’S LITERATURE: IMAGINATION AND THE NARRATIVE OF LAW*

core subjects; schools and teachers do not need to trade student competency in the core curriculum for knowledge and understanding of human rights or children's rights. By truly integrating human rights education, schools can help foster rights-supporting environments, even as children study and learn reading and writing, mathematics, science, and other components of the core curriculum.

*d. Other relevant professionals in the lives of children*

Many other adults play important, ongoing roles in the lives of children. The section identifies four illustrative examples: pediatricians, coaches, religious leaders, and judges. Pediatricians are not only entrusted with caring for children, but they also have been tasked with a variety of other duties related to child well-being. For example, pediatricians are expected now to discuss "good touch" and "bad touch" with young patients, with a view to preventing or identifying sexual abuse and other forms of maltreatment.<sup>110</sup> Given the existing care relationship, pediatricians seem well positioned to help children develop awareness of their rights.

Coaches, too, occupy a unique position in many children's lives. They are not only mentors, but for many children they are also akin to parental figures.<sup>111</sup> Moreover, many youth spend countless hours—time when they are truly engaged—playing sports. Like the world of children's literature, sports offer an opportunity to meet children where they already are. Similar roles are played by art teachers and other after-school instructors.

Religious leaders play vital, leadership roles in countless

---

(2016).

110. See, e.g., CAROL GREEN-HERNANDEZ ET AL., PRIMARY CARE PEDIATRICS 143–44, 273 (2001); *American Academy of Pediatrics, Preventing and Identifying Child Sexual Abuse—Tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics*, AM. ACAD. OF PEDIATRICS (Nov. 2011), <https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/news-features-and-safety-tips/Pages/Parent-Tips-for-Preventing-and-Identifying-Child-Sexual-Abuse.aspx>;

111. See Edythe M. Krampe, *When is the Father Really There?*, 30 J. FAM. ISSUES 875, 889 (2009) (discussing the potential for coaches to fill the role as an extra familial father figure); see also Gene Sapakoff, *Mentoring through Sports: Area Coaches Filling "Father Figure" Void*, POST & COURIER, Oct. 15, 2012, [https://www.postandcourier.com/sports/mentoring-through-sports-area-coaches-filling-father-figure-void/article\\_a270d02c-4a58-5a85-a918-bd996f72c551.html](https://www.postandcourier.com/sports/mentoring-through-sports-area-coaches-filling-father-figure-void/article_a270d02c-4a58-5a85-a918-bd996f72c551.html).

communities.<sup>112</sup> Not only do religious leaders and faith-based organizations serve youth directly in important ways, but also religious leaders inspire adults—parents and other community members—to act in certain ways.<sup>113</sup> With awareness of children's rights, religious leaders can help community members—adults and children alike—appreciate the common values among various religions and children's rights.<sup>114</sup> Doing so can help forge common ground and spur the development of policies and programs that simultaneously support families and the rights of children.

Finally, judges are a critical constituency. Judges may not interact with all, or even most, children. However, when they do interact with young people, it is at some of the most critical junctures in the lives of children: juvenile justice proceedings, child dependency hearings, and child custody matters. Ensuring that children's rights are widely known among judges is critical to developing better processes and outcomes for children and adolescents who intersect with the legal system and related parts of the state.

*e. Children's rights NGOs*

Numerous NGOs focus on human rights education for children. An even far greater number of NGOs address education more broadly. These organizations work to secure access to education, reduce discrimination in education, and secure safe schools. It is unclear how many of these entities incorporate children's rights education in their work. However, many of these NGOs are well-positioned to contribute to children's rights education and the implementation of Article 42 given their partnerships with schools and their work with out-of-school youth. Moreover, many of their programs—such as a program that aims to secure access to education for marginalized children<sup>115</sup>—offer children a real world case study of children's rights which can be a meaningful part of children's rights

---

112. See UNICEF, PARTNERING WITH RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES FOR CHILDREN, 11 (2011).

113. *Id.* at 9.

114. See *id.* at 25–31. See generally ARIGATOU INT'L, FAITH AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS: A MULTI-RELIGIOUS STUDY ON THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (2019).

115. See, e.g., *Education*, OXFAM INDIA, <https://www.oxfamindia.org/programdetails/6/education> (last visited Jan. 15, 2020).

education.

NGOs beyond the education sector should also be encouraged to consider how human rights education, and, in particular, children's rights education, might be integrated into their work. Empowering children in health care settings leads to better outcomes.<sup>116</sup> Research finds that enabling child participation in health care settings can yield a range of benefits, including "better provision of information; opportunity to express feelings; developing confidence and competence; feeling valued, increased locus of control, [and] increased adherence [to treatment protocols]."<sup>117</sup> Efforts to realize children's participation rights in health care settings are valuable not only for these benefits, but also these efforts can be connected with other rights education initiatives to further advance efforts to ensure children's rights are widely known and understood in all relevant contexts. In short, children's rights NGOs working across many sectors of society should consider how their work helps, or has the potential to help, fulfill the requirement to make children's rights widely known among both young people and adults.

*f. Private sector*

The private sector has a critical role to play. Various private sector actors play important gatekeeper functions. This section briefly describes two illustrative examples: publishers and digital media companies.

Article 17 of the CRC requires states to "ensure that [every] child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources" and calls on governments to support "production and dissemination of children's books."<sup>118</sup> Achieving these goals requires cooperation from the private sector. Ensuring diversity in children's books and children's access to a range of materials that can support children's rights education requires that publishers seek out and publish books and other materials that can support children's developing

---

116. See Svein A. Vis, et al., *Participation and Health—A Research Review of Child Participation in Planning and Decision-making*, 16 CHILD & FAM. SOC. WORK 325, 325 (2011).

117. Imelda Coyne & Pamela Gallagher, *Participation in Communication and Decision-making: Children and Young People's Experiences in a Hospital Setting*, 20 J. CLINICAL NURSING 2334, 2335 (2011).

118. CRC, *supra* note 3, art. 17.



understanding of their rights and the rights of others.

Digital media companies also have a major role to play, as they can be both a tool for advancing human rights ideas and a platform for hate incidents and other acts antithetical to human rights. A 2014 report, *Children's Rights in the Digital Age*, explained some of children's views: "Children increasingly see digital media as crucial to their rights to information, education, and participation."<sup>119</sup> Given children's perspective on digital media, it is also the case that digital media could be an effective platform for making children's rights widely known. It is critical, therefore, that media and technology companies be engaged so that they can take steps that are supportive not only of children's rights but also of efforts to educate children about their rights. Moreover, given the significant expertise that digital media companies have with respect to targeting specific populations with messaging, their expertise and insights could help with the development of effective children's rights education strategies aimed at adults and children.

*g. Academic institutions*

Researchers have an important role to play in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of states' efforts to make children's rights widely known. In all countries, resources for human rights education and related activities are limited. Resource constraints put a premium on ensuring programs are effective. Researchers can play a key role in helping design, implement, and evaluate programs aimed at ensuring adults' and children's acquisition of knowledge and understanding of children's rights. Involving researchers, particularly in the evaluation of policies and programs, can help determine whether a state party is actually making children's rights widely known, or whether it is merely taking steps that are, in fact, not producing the desired outcome.

*h. Parents*

Parents—and other caregivers—are essential partners. Parents shape children's understanding of rights and serve as gatekeepers in terms of the information their children are able

---

119. Amanda Third, et al., *Children's Rights in the Digital Age: A Download from Children Around the World* 9 (2014).

to access.<sup>120</sup> The CRC recognizes the importance of parents and families, referring to the family as “the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children” and requiring states to “respect the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents.”<sup>121</sup> Parents are also part of the focus of Article 42, which also requires that children’s rights be widely known among *adults*.

States need to partner with parents to find innovative ways to educate parents about children’s rights, to alleviate concerns that some parents might have about about tensions between parents’ rights and children’s rights, and to encourage parents to support their children learning about and exercising their rights.

### *i. Children*

Children are not only identified as one of the target audiences in Article 42, but they are also the subjects of children’s rights. Their agency must be recognized. In prior work, I have advocated for mainstreaming of children’s rights—that is, ensuring that children’s rights are considered at the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation stages of all law, policy, and programs that affect children.<sup>122</sup> As part of this process, children themselves need to be mainstreamed—that is, they must be afforded an opportunity to play a meaningful role at each stage in the process of making children’s rights widely known.<sup>123</sup>

Recall that human rights education encompasses not only education about human rights (which includes teaching about

---

120. See Barbara Bennett Woodhouse, *The Family-Supportive Nature of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child*, in *THE U.N. CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD: AN ANALYSIS OF TREATY PROVISIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF U.S. RATIFICATION* 37, 44 (Jonathan Todres et al., ed., 2006). *But see Parents: Take Control over Your Children’s Use of Technology*, NAT’L CONSUMERS LEAGUE (July 2011), [https://www.nclnet.org/parental\\_controls\\_managing\\_children\\_s\\_wireless\\_usage](https://www.nclnet.org/parental_controls_managing_children_s_wireless_usage).

121. CRC, *supra* note 3, pmb. and art. 5.

122. Jonathan Todres, *Mainstreaming Children’s Rights in Post-Disaster Settings*, 25 *EMORY INT’L L. REV.* 1233, 1255–61 (2011).

123. See also CRC, *supra* note 3, art. 12 (establishing that “States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.”).

human rights norms) and education through human rights (which includes learning and teaching in a rights respecting environment), but also education *for* human rights (which includes empowering children to realize their rights).<sup>124</sup> A more focused approach, as required by CRC Article 42, demands that *children's* rights be widely known. As such, children's rights education must be implemented with the aim of empowering children. The goal of empowering children cannot be achieved unless children's rights to be heard is respected and their views are given due consideration.

A critical component of engaging young people and ensuring their meaningful participation is to meet children where they are. By that I mean, in designing and implementing children's rights education programs, we should look to where children already spend their time and to what already captures their interest and attention. We should allow children's interests to help guide where and how we build children's rights education programs. Children's literature offers a good example. Most children love to read or, in the case of young children, have books read to them. Thus, although many schools do not have a human rights education curriculum, schools typically teach and encourage students to read<sup>125</sup> and can connect with students through books that children love to read.

Children's literature offers a safe, imaginative world in which children can confront and explore challenging real-world issues. Reading itself fosters empathy.<sup>126</sup> Beyond that, numerous books address, explicitly or implicitly, human rights themes.<sup>127</sup> Children's books can be a vehicle for processing and understanding complex issues that children will or already do confront in their lives. Children's books can also teach young people that not only do they have rights and should stand up for themselves, but also that other children have the same rights

---

124. U.N. Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, *supra* note 77, art. 2(2).

125. See generally MAX ROSER & ESTEBAN ORTIZ-OSPINA, LITERACY, OUR WORLD IN DATA (Sept. 30, 2018), <https://ourworldindata.org/literacy>.

126. See, e.g., David K. Dickinson, et al., *How Reading Books Fosters Language Development Around the World*, 2012 CHILD DEV. RES. 1, 6 (2012) (connecting language skills developed through reading to behavioral competencies, social development, and reduced aggression); MARY LEONHARDT, KEEPING KIDS READING 13–15 (1996) (using empirical research to show that reading children acquire the crucial skills to sift through information and draw moral conclusions).

127. See generally TODRES & HIGINBOTHAM, *supra* note 109 (reviewing more than 500 children's books).

and their rights must be respected as well. In short, children's books can humanize. Explaining why he wrote about poor inner-city children, the late, acclaimed children's book author Walter Dean Myers expressed that he wanted "to make them human in the eyes of readers and, especially, in their own eyes. I need to make them feel as if they are part of America's dream, that all the rhetoric is meant for them, and that they are wanted in this country."<sup>128</sup> Books address human rights themes in a particularly powerful way; the stories become deeply engrained in the hearts and minds of child readers, leaving indelible impressions that can last into adulthood.<sup>129</sup> Finally, and importantly, children's books meet children where they are, on their terms. As an added benefit, because children often are read to by adults or are excited to share what they read with adult caregivers, these same stories have the potential to shape the views of adults and to educate adults about children's rights. Children's literature is one example of an opportunity to meet children where they are. Many others exist, and we should consult with children to understand what interests them and where and how they want to learn about children's rights.

*j. Casting a wide net*

The above actors represent many of the most significant stakeholders in any effort to fully implement Article 42 of the CRC. However, with the diversity across and within countries and communities, no list can capture all the relevant actors for each situation. Ultimately, national and local governments and civil society must work together to identify and involve all stakeholders who play meaningful roles in the lives of children.

---

128. Walter Dean Myers, *Where Are the People of Color in Children's Books?*, N.Y. TIMES (Mar. 16, 2014), <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/16/opinion/sunday/where-are-the-people-of-color-in-childrens-books.html>.

129. See, e.g., Paulo Freire, *The Importance of the Act of Reading*, 165 J. EDUC. 1, 7–8 (Loretta Slover trans., 1983) (reflecting on the "importance of the act of reading" in shaping one's development); Denise von Stockar, *The Importance of Literacy and Books in Children's Development: Intellectual, Affective and Social Dimensions*, INT'L BOARD BOOKS YOUNG PEOPLE (María Candelaria Posada trans., 2006), <http://www.ibby.org/index.php?id=718> (discussing the central role reading plays in children's lives and development).

## CONCLUSION

Making children's rights widely known to adults and children alike has the potential to offer significant benefits. The research on human rights education programs is compelling, showing that human rights education produces a range of positive outcomes. As Brian Howe and Katherine Covell explain:

The evidence shows overwhelmingly that children who learn about and experience their rights are children who demonstrate the fundamentals of good citizenship. They gain knowledge not only of their basic rights but also their corresponding social responsibilities. They develop the attitudes and values that are necessary for the promotion and protection of the rights of others, and they acquire the behavioral skills necessary for effective participation in a democratic society.<sup>130</sup>

Children's rights education imparts the idea that all children possess rights and that each child is equally worthy.<sup>131</sup> In doing so, it bolsters children's sense of self-worth and their self-esteem, which can positively influence their learning.<sup>132</sup> Research has shown that human rights education can lead also to a decrease in peer aggression. In Belgium and Canada, for example, rights education programs have led to a decline in bullying because such programs taught children to respect the rights of others, and because it encouraged children to "command respect [from peers] and assert their rights."<sup>133</sup> By

---

130. HOWE & COVELL, *supra* note 80, at 7. In contrast, "[c]hildren who have not been taught their rights, in a rights-respecting environment, tend to personalize the concept of rights and have difficulty appreciating the rights of others . . . [C]hildren who have not received children's rights education tend to believe that having rights means being able to do what you want." *Id.* at 15.

131. *Id.* at 145.

132. See, e.g., John DeCoene & Rudy De Cock, *The Children's Rights Project in the Primary School "De Vrijdagmarkt" in Bruges*, in MONITORING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS 627, 634 (Eugeen Verhellen ed., 1996); Pamela Wallberg & Maria Kahn, *The Rights Project: How Rights Education Transformed a Classroom*, 36 CANADIAN CHILD 31, 35 (2011).

133. HOWE & COVELL, *supra* note 80, at 148; see also Julie Allan & John F'Anson, *Children's Rights in School: Power, Assemblies and Assemblages*, 12 INT'L J. CHILD. RTS. 123, 131-34, 136 (2004); Wallberg & Kahn, *supra* note 132, at 34; Monique Lacharite & Zopito A. Marini, *Bullying Prevention and the Rights of Children: Psychological and Democratic Aspects*, in CHILDREN'S RIGHTS: MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES TO PARTICIPATION AND PROTECTION 297, 315-17 (Tom O'Neill & Dawn Zinga eds., 2008) (detailing the research on

empowering children to stand up for their own rights and to speak out when the rights of others are threatened, human rights education helps foster a community that cares about and fulfills the rights of all individuals. In short, as articulated in the U.N. Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, “[h]uman rights education and training is essential for the promotion of universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all.”<sup>134</sup>

The value of human rights education is clear. This article highlights, however, that school-based human rights education is only one piece, albeit a critical piece, of the puzzle. All sectors of society have a role to play. Equally important, the mandate of CRC Article 42 is simultaneously more focused and broader than the requirement of human rights education; it insists that states make *children’s* rights widely known to *all members of society*. That goal, if achieved, can engrain children’s rights in society at a level which should spur more organic support for and realization of the rights of all children.

---

the benefits of human rights education for children, including findings that show a link between children’s exposure to human rights education and greater tolerance and respect for others). Wallberg and Kahn show the potential impact of human rights education for young children; reporting that rights education in an early childhood program of four-year-old children in British Columbia over a three-month period led children to understand that “[i]n order to protect one’s own rights, it was . . . necessary to protect the rights of others.” Wallberg and Kahn, *supra* note 132, at 34.

134. U.N. Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, *supra* note 77, art. 1(2).

**TABLE 1.**

The table below lists the 107 Concluding Observations published by the U.N. Committee on the Rights of the Child during the five year period from June 13, 2013 to June 27, 2018, and indicates whether the Committee made any reference to: “widely known” (W), dissemination (D), training (T), or rights education in school curricula (E) either in its evaluation of states parties’ efforts to implement the CRC or in its recommendations to the state party under review.<sup>135</sup>

All reports are available at U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *U.N. Treaty Body Database, Treaty Bodies Search*, [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en) (select “CRC” under “Filter by Committee and “Concluding Observations” under “Filter by Document Type” and search; study included concluding observations published from June 13, 2013 to June 27, 2018).

	<b>State Party Reviewed</b>	<b>U.N. Doc.</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>E</b>
1	Angola	CRC/C/AGO/CO/5-7	2018		X	X	
2	Lesotho	CRC/C/LSO/CO/2	2018		X	X	
3	Montenegro	CRC/C/MNE/CO/2-3	2018		X	X	X <sup>2</sup>
4	Spain	CRC/C/ESP/CO/5-6	2018			X	
5	Seychelles	CRC/C/SYC/CO/5-6	2018		X	X	
6	Sri Lanka	CRC/C/LKA/CO/5-6	2018		X	X	
7	Panama	CRC/C/PAN/CO/5-6	2018		X	X	
8	Guatemala	CRC/C/GTM/CO/5-6	2018		X	X	
9	Solomon Islands	CRC/C/SLB/CO/2-3	2018		X	X	
10	Palau	CRC/C/PLW/CO/2	2018		X		
11	Marshall Islands	CRC/C/MHL/CO/3-4	2018		X	X	X
12	Denmark	CRC/C/DNK/CO/5	2017			X	X
13	Ecuador	CRC/C/ECU/CO/5-6	2017	X	X	X	
14	Democratic People’s Republic of Korea	CRC/C/PRK/CO/5	2017	X	X	X	X

135. See *supra* note 16 for search terms.

## 2020] MAKING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS WIDELY KNOWN 147

15	Tajikistan	CRC/TJK/CO/3-5	2017		X	X	
16	Republic of Moldova	CRC/MDA/CO/4-5	2017		X	X	
17	Vanuatu	CRC/C/VUT/CO/2	2017		X	X	
18	Romania	CRC/C/ROU/CO/5	2017	X <sup>1</sup>		X	X
19	Mongolia	CRC/C/MNG/CO/5	2017	X	X	X	
20	Cameroon	CRC/C/CMR/CO/3-5	2017			X	
21	Bhutan	CRC/C/BTN/CO/3-5	2017		X	X	X <sup>2</sup>
22	Antigua and Barbuda	CRC/C/ATG/CO/2-4	2017		X	X	X
23	Lebanon	CRC/C/LBN/CO/4-5	2017		X	X	X
24	Qatar	CRC/C/QAT/CO/3-4	2017		X	X	X
25	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	CRC/C/VCT/CO/2-3	2017			X	
26	Georgia	CRC/C/GEO/CO/4	2017		X	X	
27	Estonia	CRC/C/EST/CO/2-4	2017		X	X	X
28	Central African Republic	CRC/C/CAF/CO/2	2017		X	X	X
29	Serbia	CRC/C/SRB/CO/2-3	2017		X	X	X
30	Malawi	CRC/C/MWI/CO/3-5	2017		X	X	X <sup>2</sup>
31	Barbados	CRC/C/BRB/CO/2	2017		X		X
32	Democratic Republic of the Congo	CRC/C/COD/CO/3-5	2017		X		
33	Bulgaria	CRC/C/BGR/CO/3-5	2016		X	X	X
34	Suriname	CRC/C/SUR/CO/3-4	2016		X	X	X
35	Sierra Leone	CRC/C/SLE/CO/3-5	2016		X	X	X <sup>2</sup>
36	Nauru	CRC/C/NRU/CO/1	2016		X	X	X
37	South Africa	CRC/C/ZAF/CO/2	2016				
38	Saudi Arabia	CRC/C/SAU/CO/3-4	2016		X		
39	New Zealand	CRC/C/NZL/CO/5	2016	X	X	X	
40	Slovakia	CRC/C/SVK/CO/3-5	2016			X	X <sup>2</sup>
41	Samoa	CRC/C/WSM/CO/2-4	2016		X	X	
42	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	CRC/C/GBR/CO/5	2016				
43	Pakistan	CRC/C/PAK/CO/5	2016		X <sup>1</sup>	X	
44	Nepal	CRC/C/NPL/CO/3-5	2016		X	X	
45	Gabon	CRC/C/GAB/CO/2	2016		X	X	



46	Kenya	CRC/C/KEN/CO/3-5	2016				
47	Zambia	CRC/C/ZMB/CO/2-4	2016	X	X		
48	Oman	CRC/C/OMN/CO/3-4	2016		X	X	
49	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	CRC/C/IRN/CO/3-4	2016		X	X	X
50	Maldives	CRC/C/MDV/CO/4-5	2016		X	X	X
51	Senegal	CRC/C/SEN/CO/3-5	2016		X <sup>1</sup>	X	
52	Ireland	CRC/C/IRL/CO/3-4	2016	X	X	X	X
53	Peru	CRC/C/PER/CO/4-5	2016		X		
54	France	CRC/C/FRA/CO/5	2016		X	X	
55	Bangladesh	CRC/C/BGD/CO/5	2015		X	X	
56	Timor-Leste	CRC/C/TLS/CO/2-3	2015		X <sup>1</sup>	X	
57	Poland	CRC/C/POL/CO/3-4	2015				
58	United Arab Emirates	CRC/C/ARE/CO/2	2015		X	X	X <sup>2</sup>
59	Brazil	CRC/C/BRA/CO/2-4	2015		X	X	X
60	Chile	CRC/C/CHL/CO/4-5	2015			X	X
61	Honduras	CRC/C/HND/CO/4-5	2015		X	X	X
62	Jamaica	CRC/C/JAM/CO/3-4	2015		X	X	
63	Turkmenistan	CRC/C/TKM/CO/2-4	2015			X	
64	Colombia	CRC/C/COL/CO/4-5	2015		X <sup>1</sup>	X	X <sup>2</sup>
65	Dominican Republic	CRC/C/DOM/CO/3-5	2015		X <sup>1</sup>	X	X <sup>2</sup>
66	Sweden	CRC/C/SWE/CO/5	2015			X	
67	Uruguay	CRC/C/URY/CO/3-5	2015		X <sup>1</sup>	X	
68	Iraq	CRC/C/IRQ/CO/2-4	2015				
69	United Republic of Tanzania	CRC/C/TZA/CO/3-5	2015		X	X	
70	Mauritius	CRC/C/MUS/CO/3-5	2015		X	X	X
71	Switzerland	CRC/C/CHE/CO/2-4	2015		X	X	X
72	Gambia	CRC/C/GMB/CO/2-3	2015		X	X	
73	Hungary	CRC/C/HUN/CO/3-5	2014		X		
74	Morocco	CRC/C/MAR/CO/3-4	2014		X <sup>1</sup>	X	X <sup>2</sup>
75	Croatia	CRC/C/HRV/CO/3-4	2014		X	X	X <sup>2</sup>
76	Fiji	CRC/C/FJI/CO/2-4	2014		X	X	
77	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	CRC/C/VEN/CO/3-5	2014		X	X	X <sup>2</sup>
78	Indonesia	CRC/C/IDN/CO/3-4	2014		X	X	
79	Jordan	CRC/C/JOR/CO/4-5	2014		X	X	X
80	Saint Lucia	CRC/C/LCA/CO/2-4	2014		X	X	X
81	Kyrgyzstan	CRC/C/KGZ/CO/3-4	2014	X	X	X	

## 2020] MAKING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS WIDELY KNOWN 149

82	India	CRC/C/IND/CO/3-4	2014		X	X	X
83	Holy See	CRC/C/VAT/CO/2	2014	X	X	X	X
84	Portugal	CRC/C/PRT/CO/3-4	2014		X	X	X
85	Germany	CRC/C/DEU/CO/3-4	2014		X	X	X
86	Russian Federation	CRC/C/RUS/CO/4-5	2014	X		X	
87	Yemen	CRC/C/YEM/CO/4	2014		X	X	
88	Congo	CRC/C/COG/CO/2-4	2014		X	X	X
89	Tuvalu	CRC/C/TUV/CO/1	2013		X	X	X <sup>2</sup>
90	Lithuania	CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4	2013		X	X	
91	Luxembourg	CRC/C/LUX/CO/3-4	2013		X		
92	Monaco	CRC/C/MCO/CO/2-3	2013		X	X	X <sup>2</sup>
93	China	CRC/C/CHN/CO/3-4	2013		X		
94	China (Hong Kong)	CRC/C/CHN/CO/3-4	2013		X		
95	China (Macau)	CRC/C/CHN/CO/3-4	2013		X		
96	Kuwait	CRC/C/KWT/CO/2	2013		X		X <sup>2</sup>
97	Sao Tome and Principe	CRC/C/STP/CO/2-4	2013		X	X	X
98	Uzbekistan	CRC/C/UZB/CO/3-4	2013		X	X	X
99	Armenia	CRC/C/ARM/CO/3-4	2013		X	X	
100	Guinea-Bissau	CRC/C/GNB/CO/2-4	2013		X	X	X
101	Rwanda	CRC/C/RWA/CO/3-4	2013			X	
102	Slovenia	CRC/C/SVN/CO/3-4	2013		X	X	X
103	Israel	CRC/C/ISR/CO/2-4	2013		X	X	
104	Niue	CRC/C/NIU/CO/1	2013		X	X	
105	Malta	CRC/C/MLT/CO/2	2013	X	X	X	X
106	Guyana	CRC/C/GUY/CO/2-4	2013		X	X	X <sup>2</sup>
107	Guinea	CRC/C/GIN/CO/2	2013		X	X	

<sup>1</sup> Mentioned only in reference to recommendations made during previous reporting cycles.

<sup>2</sup> Referenced human rights education but did not specifically call for education about children's rights, as Article 42 mandates.