



**together**  
Scottish Alliance for  
Children's Rights

# THE RIGHTS DETECTIVES

## Mission Update #002

### child-friendly version

### June 2023





**We are the Rights Detectives!** A group of six children and young people aged 11-17 who are passionate about defending human rights.

Welcome to our mission update #002, where we'll tell you about our latest Investigations! If you want to read our first mission update #001 you can [click this link here.](#)



## What are human rights?

Human rights are the things that children and young people need to grow up healthy, happy and safe. They are written down in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (or 'UNCRC' for short).

Children and young people have lots of rights in the UNCRC, including the right to be involved in decisions that affect us. We also have rights under other special agreements that the UK has signed.



## What are we investigating?

Scottish Government wants to make a new human rights law for Scotland. The new law will create extra protections for disabled people, Black, Brown, and minority ethnic people, women and girls, older people and LGBTQ+ people. It will also protect the right to a healthy environment! Scottish Government asked if we could help them to involve children and young people in making this new law.



## How did we carry out our investigations?

To do this, we designed special investigative workshops. We used activities like drawing, drama, group discussions, building Minecraft worlds and creating collages to ask questions about fairness, rights, and how we can take care of the environment.



## Results from our missions!

We ran investigative workshops with children and young people in....

**105**

**EDINBURGH**

**ABERDEENSHIRE**

**FIFE, HIGHLANDS**

**& EAST LOTHIAN**



here's some of what they had to say....



# What do children and young people need to be healthy, happy and safe?



"making sure my friends are safe"



"keeping animals safe makes me happy, especially endangered species"



"staying at home with my family makes me happy"

***"You need food and clean water."***

***"Nice parents" and "a loving family."***

***"You need exercise... and fitness...and football!"***

***"You need medicine and somewhere to go if you are sick."***

***"Paramedics and the NHS will help you."***

***"You need protected from harm."***

Lots of the children and young people we spoke to said it was important for everyone to have a good education, safer communities, reliable public transport and things to do in rural areas.

***Colleges are a bit better, but not schools. The education system needs to have more life skills, finances, bills, taxes and cooking.***

Children in Fife told us they felt happy when helping others, especially those with additional support needs. They enjoyed giving gifts, sharing toys and food, and seeing people smile.







Can you think of some examples when children and young people's rights might get broken?

## Bullying



"go away.....no one likes you!!"  
Image by young person in Fife

**"Bullying is a big problem in schools and nothing gets done."**

**"Schools don't listen and they just shut you down, we don't have the power to change it."**

**"Schools need to do something different, not just move people"**

**"Children need safer online services"**

## War

We listened to children and young people's worries about war and how this affects people, animals and the environment...

**"Not protecting children from war and invasions"**

**"A young child put into war"**

**"I don't want UK to have a war with Russia and Ukraine"**

**"War damages the environment a lot, like Syria and the chemical attacks. They're harmful, it damages the environment, so stop wars!"**

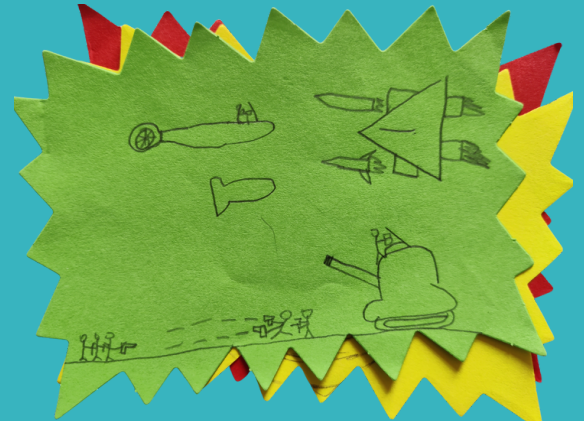


Image by young person in East Lothian

**"If government really wanted to protect people and the environment, they would find a more environmentally friendly way of disposing of nuclear weaponry."**



# Rights for all

*"There's a lot of biases against people, especially people with different coloured skin."*

*"Where we live there is less ethnicity/diversity, it's predominantly white mainly Scottish, English and Polish people which means they blend in more."*

*"Access for disabled people - lifts can be broken and you can't go up them."*

*"There is stigma around people with disabilities and the way they are judged."*

*"People should be paid on the quality of the work, not based on your gender."*

*"When boys are allowed to do something that girls can't."*

*"We need reliable and affordable transport in the rural areas."*

## Mental health

*"It feels unsafe in school and the community, it's so bad for our mental health."*

*"Mental health services are hard to get. There should be more services that are faster because a lot of people are taking their lives."*

*"When a family member died and the hospitals are too busy."*

We heard from one young person who was advised (by a health professional) to "have a bath and a cup of tea" when they were having a mental health crisis.

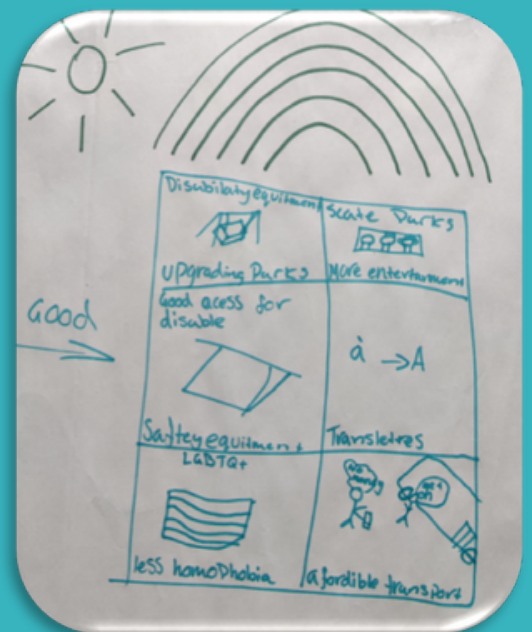


Image: Storyboard by young people in Moray

## Alcohol, drugs & violence

*"Being hit on the face."      "putting people on fire"*

*"On Friday nights, there's so much drinking, drugs, and violence. It's not safe to be in [certain parts of the town] after 10 pm."*

*"Girls may not feel safe, especially if they are outnumbered by boys. Men are biologically more powerful, and that could raise the threat."*



## Who should help and what should they do?

We heard that adults and **"people in power"** should listen to children and young people and **"do something to make things change"** when rights are broken.



Children and young people told us it was good to have child-friendly complaints they could use **BUT** they wanted easier ways to get things sorted when their rights were broken.

### Children and young people's advice to Scottish Government about the new law...

- Listen to children and families and include their ideas when you make the new Human Rights law.
- Work hard to stop bullying and violence, especially against girls and women. Everyone deserves to be treated with kindness and respect.
- Have special rules that help families who are struggling with not having enough money and feeling sad or worried. Make sure that all subjects in school, like music, woodwork, and cooking, are available for everyone to learn and don't cost any money.
- Make sure children have safe and easy ways to tell someone if they have a problem or something is not right.







Children and young people had a LOT to say to us about the right to a healthy environment!



**"We need more bins and no bin strikes, they were terrible. Litter makes you dizzy and sick"**



**"Repurposing to stop non-biodegradable materials destroying our planet."**



**"Keep the parks clean, have swings and slides to have fun at the park."**



**"There would be lots of trees and plants as science is showing they produce hormones and endorphins for mental health."**



**"Bring farmers markets back on the scene a bit more rather than processing food."**



**"Demolish fast fashion industries, use clothes that are filling up landfills and dumps, and stop overproducing for the sake of profit."**



Images: Minecraft worlds created by one of the Detectives



**"We should have proper roads that are well taken care of as the potholes are really bad and they hurt when you're on the bus"**



**"Free transport for everyone, including adults as well."**



**"No cars, no pollution as batteries are bad for the environment."**



**"We should have cycle lanes that are separate from the road."**



**"No transport except bikes and walking."**

**"I would ride a horse rather than a car. Instead of buying petrol, we buy horse food."**

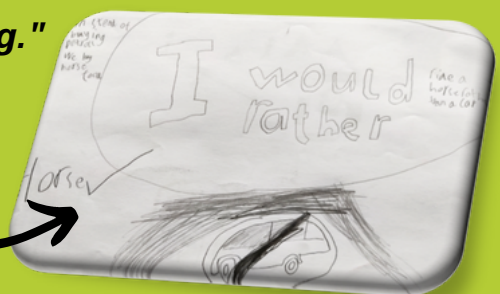


Image created by child in East Lothian





*"We need kinder people, because people make up the environment as well, even the language they use."*



*"Everyone in an equal position in living standards which is always more environmentally friendly."*



*"There should be government funded retreats – giving people the opportunity to go out into nature a couple of times a year for overall healthier mind, body and soul."*



*"We need more affordable housing, and homes for homeless people."*



*"There should be more support services for children, young people, older people, young carers etc."*



*"Environment = community for people to be together, learn, have fun and eat etc."*



*"It can be more difficult to live sustainably in some places that don't have a strong sense of community e.g. cycling, sharing materials etc."*

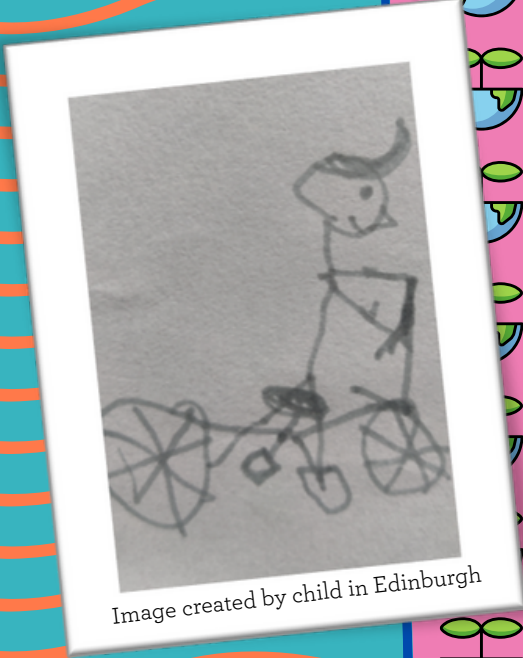
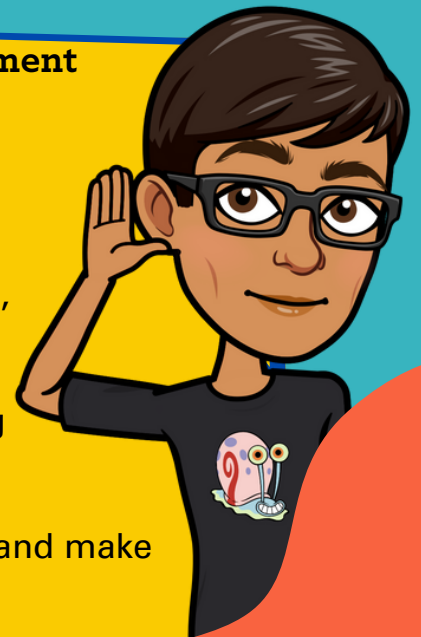


Image created by child in Edinburgh

### Children and young people's advice to Scottish Government about the new law...

- Say that everyone has the right to be healthy, including their mental health.
- Schools should be places where everyone feels included, healthy and safe.
- People who work with children should get better training to help with mental health and stopping bullying.
- Make sure everyone can use eco-friendly ways to travel and make it easier for people to afford electric cars.
- Encourage practices like recycling and saving energy.



# Thank you!

to all the children and young people who took part in our Investigations!

Finally, please take some time to enjoy all the art work created by children and young people during this mission by [clicking HERE](#)

To find out more about the Rights Detectives please [click here](#)

If you'd like to learn more about our investigations please get in touch with Jacqui,  
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