



VALIDITY



International Disability Alliance



Children's right to live in a family

Call to action to protect the right to family life and stop children living in institutions



easy read

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In this easy read document, difficult words are in **bold**. We explain what these words mean in the sentence after they have been used.

Introduction



A group of organisations have come together to ask the United Nations and countries around the world to make sure that children are given the **right** to a family life.



A **right** is a thing that every person should have or be able to do, by law.



The organisations in our group are:

- **Autism Europe** - working with autistic people in Europe
- **Disability Rights International** - working for human rights for persons with disabilities around the world
- **ENIL - European Network for Independent Living** - helping disabled people to live independently





- **Inclusion International** - a network of organisations of persons with intellectual disabilities and their families



- **International Disability Alliance** - a group of 14 global and regional organisations of persons with disabilities who work with the United Nations



- **International Federation for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus (IFSBH)** - an organisation that supports people with **Spina Bifida** and **Hydrocephalus** Spina Bifida worldwide.

Spina Bifida is a birth defect that happens when a baby's backbone (spine) does not form normally.

Babies born with Spina Bifida can get **hydrocephalus** (often called water on the brain).

This means that there is extra fluid in and around the brain.



- **Validity Foundation** - lawyers who defend the rights of people with disabilities around the world



- **Women Enabled International** - working for the rights of women with disabilities around the world



- **U.S. International Council on Disabilities** - working for the rights of persons with disabilities around the world



- **Stahili** - working in Kenya, the Netherlands and USA to protect the rights of children



- **Lori E. Talsky Center for Human Rights of Women and Children** at Michigan State University College of Law.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child



Governments around the world have agreed to the United Nations **Convention on the Rights of the Child**.



The **Convention on the Rights of the Child** is a document that explains all the rights that children should have.



This convention includes an agreement that children should grow up in a family.

All children need families

People from universities around the world have shown that:



- living in an **institution** is bad for the way children grow

An **institution** is a organised place where people live. It is usually run by a part of the government.



- all children can live safely and do well in a family. This includes children with disabilities and children who need a lot of support.



Institutions

An institution can be:

- large and may be called a hospital or residential care



- small and may be called a group home.



More support at home

Most children have families. They are usually put into an institution because their family does not have enough money.



It would be better to give the family the support they need to look after their child.



Moving children out of institutions

Millions of children with disabilities are living in institutions.



Children are being moved out of large institutions - but into smaller institutions.



It would be better if children were moved to live in a family.



Abuse and violence

There is a lot of abuse and violence against children with disabilities who live in institutions.



The abuse and violence happens especially to girls and children who are not male or female.



Left behind

If there is no support from a family, children with disabilities may get left in institutions.

Human Rights



Human rights are the things that every person around the world should have or be able to do, by law.



Organisations that protect people's human rights around the world should make it clear that:

- family life for a child means growing up over years with someone who cares for you



- there are many different types of families



- institutions could be dangerous for children



- children should grow up in a family.

Guidance

Organisations that protect people's human rights around the world should help governments to:

- support families and parents to look after their children properly



- protect children from the dangers of living in an institution



- make sure that all children are listened to - including children with disabilities.



What the United Nations and countries should do



We want the United Nations and countries around the world to:

- help families to look after their children so that children don't go to live in an institution



- agree that if a child is not living with a family, that means they are living in a type of institution



- find new and better ways to help children with disabilities living at home with their families



- make sure that children can carry on living with their family in times of emergency - like a war, flood or earthquake.



- make sure that children can carry on living with a family when their own family is having a hard time



- make sure that children with disabilities are treated with respect in the same fair way as everyone else



- make it easier for disabled people to take part in things like everyone else



- make sure that the families of children with disabilities can get the things they need like:
 - proper health care services
 - a good school



- make sure people are able to go to court to get their rights if they need to



- set up good support services so that children with disabilities can live and take part in their local communities.