

# Children's rights and freedom of expression



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## General principles

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- Children have rights and liberties like adults. Same general principles apply as well → *favor libertatis*, restrictions only where needed and less restrictive as possible.
- Both specific and general provisions apply to children's freedom of expression → art. 13 CRCh, art. 19 ICCPR, art. 10 ECHR.
- Universal right protected and defined at the national level. International standards are very important.

## Basic content of children's right to freedom of expression

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- Children have the right to hold and express their own opinions, even if they are different from their parents → pressures are not acceptable in this field.
- Children have the right to have access (active and passive) to all kind of information means → mass media and other forms of electronic communication.
- Children have the right to access to information.
- Children have the right to freely express within “social life” → schools, demonstrations, associations, etc.

## Limitation of children's freedom of expression

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- As much freedom as possible, only those rules that are strictly needed.
- All restrictions must be clearly justified → vulnerability.
- Restrictions should take into account relevant factors like age, maturity, gender, etc.
- We are not talking about restrictions imposed to adults.
- Presence of children in the mass media remains a very conflictive matter: Human chain for the independence of Catalonia
- The most important role of public authorities is not imposing restrictions.

## Further Information

[www.osce.org/fom/](http://www.osce.org/fom/)

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