

Making Rights Real

A Simple Guide to the UN CRPD Articles

Welcome to our **simple guide** to the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD)**.

This guide is designed to make the UN CRPD accessible and easy to understand. We'll go through the most important parts of the agreement and explain what they mean for us in simple language.

What is the UN CRPD?

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) is an **international human rights agreement**. It was created to make sure that **people with disabilities have the same rights and freedoms as everyone else**. The UN CRPD is a **legally binding document**, which means that when a country accepts it, they agree to follow its rules and work to protect the rights it outlines.

This isn't a law you can use to take someone to a local court. Instead, legally binding means the **Australia is obligated to review and change its own national laws, policies and systems to match the standards set by the UN CRPD**. It's a commitment to systemic, long-term change.

Australia's relationship with the UN CRPD:

- **Signed:** Australia was one of the first countries to sign the UN CRPD on March 30, 2007.
- **Ratified:** Australia formally ratified the convention on July 17, 2008. This is the official step that makes the agreement legally binding for the country.
- Ratified is a legal term that simply means Australia's government formally signed and agreed to accept the treaty's rules.

How this Guide is Structured?

This guide is broken down into three main sections to help you navigate the 41 articles:

- **The Foundation:** We'll start with the main purpose, principles, and key definitions of the agreement.
- **Our Rights:** This is the biggest part, covering specific rights from health and education to work and community life.
- **Making it Happen:** This section explains how countries and a special committee work together to put the agreement into action.

What are 'Articles'?

Think of the UN CRPD as a 'rule book' for our rights. The articles are the individual, numbered rules inside. Each article outlines a specific right or principle that countries must follow. By referencing these articles, we can be clear and specific about the changes we want to see.

The Articles: What's in the Rule Book?

Here is a summary of the 41 articles within the UN CRPD.

Part One - The Foundation

- **Article 1: Purpose**

- **What this agreement is about.**
- This agreement sets out what countries have to do to make sure that disabled people have the same rights as everybody else.

- **Article 2: Definitions**

- **What some of the words mean.**
- Communication means ways that help disabled people to talk and understand information, for example computers, easy read, or Braille.
- Discrimination means being treated unfairly or not getting the changes you need because you are disabled.
- Language means any way people talk to each other including sign language.

- **Article 3: General Principles**

- **What is important about this agreement.**
- This agreement says everyone has the right to be treated with respect. It says everyone has the right to make their own choices.

- **Article 4: General Obligations**

- **What countries have to do.**
- Countries (like Australia) that agree to this must change laws and services to make sure disabled people can have their rights.

- **Article 5: Equality and non-discrimination**
 - **Everyone is the same.**
 - All people are equal and should be treated the same by the law.
- **Article 6: Women with disabilities**
 - **Women and girls with disabilities.**
 - Countries must make sure disabled women and girls have the same rights as everyone else.
- **Article 7: Children with disabilities**
 - **Children with disabilities.**
 - Countries must make sure disabled children have the same rights as other children.

Part 2: Our Rights

- **Article 8: Awareness-raising**
 - **Challenging the way people think.**
 - Countries should have campaigns to help everyone understand that disabled people have the same rights.
- **Article 9: Accessibility**
 - **Getting to places and using services.**
 - Countries must make sure that it is easy for disabled people to get to places like buildings and transport. It should also be easy to use services like the internet and phones.
- **Article 10: Right to life**
 - **Life.**
 - Countries must make sure disabled people have the right to life.
- **Article 11: Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies**
 - **Safety.**
 - Countries must make sure disabled people are safe in dangerous situations.

- **Article 12: Equal recognition before the law**
 - **Making our own decisions.**
 - This means we have the right to be treated equally by the law and to make our own decisions.
- **Article 13: Access to justice**
 - **Having a say in court.**
 - Countries must make sure that disabled people get the help they need to have a say in court.
- **Article 14: Liberty and security of person**
 - **Our freedom.**
 - Countries must make sure that disabled people have the right to their freedom.
- **Article 15: Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment**
 - **No torture or bad treatment.**
 - Countries must make sure no one hurts or tortures disabled people.
- **Article 16: Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse**
 - **No abuse.**
 - Countries must make sure disabled people are protected from abuse.

- **Article 17: Protecting the integrity of the person**
 - **Respect for our bodies.**
 - Countries must make sure that we are in control of our own bodies and our own health care.
- **Article 18: Liberty of movement and nationality**
 - **Moving around.**
 - Countries must make sure that disabled people can move around and have a passport and a nationality.
- **Article 19: Living independently and being included in the community**
 - **Independent living and being a part of the community.**
 - Countries must make sure we have the right to live where and with whom we want.
- **Article 20: Personal mobility**
 - **Getting about.**
 - Countries must make sure that disabled people can get the help they need to get about.
- **Article 21: Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information**
 - **Saying what you want and access to information.**
 - Countries must make sure we can find and give information and say what we want, in ways that work for us.

- **Article 22: Respect for privacy**

- **Privacy.**
- Countries must make sure disabled people have the right to privacy.

- **Article 23: Respect for home and the family**

- **Respect for the home and the family.**
- Countries must make sure that disabled people can have a home and a family, just like everyone else.

- **Article 24: Education**

- **Education.**
- Countries must make sure disabled people have a right to education.

- **Article 25: Health**

- **Health.**
- Countries must make sure disabled people have a right to health care.

- **Article 26: Habilitation and rehabilitation**

- **Services to help you recover.**
- Countries must make sure disabled people get the services they need to recover and be a part of their community.

- **Article 27: Work and employment**

- **Work.**
- Countries must make sure disabled people have a right to work and are treated fairly.

- **Article 28: Adequate standard of living and social protection**

- **Standards of living.**
- Countries must make sure disabled people have a decent life and get support if they need it.

- **Article 29: Participation in political and public life**

- **Being involved in politics.**
- Countries must make sure disabled people can vote and get involved in politics.

- **Article 30: Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport**

- **Sport and leisure.**
- Countries must make sure disabled people can take part in sports and leisure activities.

Part 3: Making it Happen

- **Article 31: Statistics and data collection**
 - **Information.**
 - Countries must collect information about disabled people to make better plans.
- **Article 32: International cooperation**
 - **Countries working together.**
 - Countries must work together to make sure disabled people's rights are protected all over the world.
- **Article 33: National implementation and monitoring**
 - **Making this agreement happen.**
 - Countries must make sure there are people in government who make sure this agreement is followed.
- **Article 34: Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**
 - **Committee on the rights of disabled people.**
 - This is a group of experts that makes sure countries are following the agreement.
- **Article 35: Reports by States Parties**
 - **Reports by Countries involved.**
 - Countries have to write reports to the committee about how they are making sure disabled people have their rights.

- **Article 36: Consideration of reports**
 - **What happens to the reports?**
 - The committee reads the reports and talks to the countries about them.
- **Article 37: Cooperation between States Parties and the Committee**
 - **The Committee and Countries working together.**
 - The committee and countries work together to make things better.
- **Article 38: Relationship of the Committee with other bodies**
 - **How the Committee will work with other organisations.**
 - The committee works with other organisations like the United Nations to protect rights.
- **Article 39: Committee report**
 - **The Committee Report.**
 - The committee writes a report every year about its work.
- **Article 40: Conference of States Parties**
 - **Meetings for the Countries involved.**
 - All the countries that have signed the agreement meet to talk about it.
- **Article 41: Depositary**
 - **Keeping hold of all the reports and information.**
 - There is a place that keeps all the official documents for the agreement.

A Tool for Advocacy

The UN CRPD is a crucial tool for advocacy because it **gives us the language to challenge existing systems**. It's designed to change the mindset from seeing disability as a personal problem to a human rights issue.

Instead of a model that focuses on "fixing" disabled people, the **UN CRPD shifts the focus to making sure society is accessible and inclusive**. When we advocate using the Articles in this convention, we're not asking for charity or special treatment; we're demanding our universal, inherent human rights. This empowers us to speak up, hold our countries accountable and ultimately create a world where all people are treated with dignity and respect.

UN CRPD Resources

- **Easy Read Version**
 - This version was created by Enable to make the content of the UN CRPD as simple and accessible as possible (Click here [here](#).)
- **Original UN CRPD Document**
 - This is the full, official text of the UN CRPD, available in various accessible formats directly from the United Nations (Click [here](#) or visit their website [here](#)).