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ALKHIDMAT FOUNDATION PAKISTAN

ALKHIDMAT FOUNDATION PAKISTAN & STREET CHILDREN



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Children's Rights in Human Societies

Street Children

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Education plays a fundamental role in building any society or nation. As you know, Pakistan is the sixth most populous country in the world with a population of about 233 million. The number of street children in Pakistan is about 1.5 million which is increasing day by day. Who are the street Children? Street children is a term for children who experience homelessness and live on the streets of big cities, and towns. Mostly Street children live and sleep on the streets. They are often seen in public places, parks, bus stands, and train stations. Children under the age of 15 spend all or most of their time on the streets. Those who have minimal or no contact with their families. Grow under the bridges of the world's great cities. Some children are unable or unwilling to return to their homes due to conflicts with their families, so most of the time they have to stay outside their homes. These children are at an alarming risk for several physical and psychological problems as a result of their pre-homelessness conditions and living directly on the streets.



Types of Street Children

According to the definition of UNICEF, there are three types of street children:

- Street Children: Children who run away from their homes and live alone on the streets.
- Street Working Children: Children who spend most of their time in the street, for their safety, but return home regularly.
- Street Family Children: Children who live on the streets with their families.

Problems and difficulties faced by street children

They lack supervision, protection, and guidance, making them vulnerable to a wide range of health and psychological risks. Problems faced by street children include physical health, lack of education and love, violence, community laziness, police arrests, and lack of security in their pockets. Apart from that, they are suffering from many problems.

- There is no source of clean food, so they are forced to eat food (from expired, dirty, stolen, and garbage) and the available food is not enough to satisfy hunger.
- Problems with shelter (no place to sleep/rest), lack of clothing, difficulty washing/drying clothes
- Clean water and cool air are not available. Basic facilities of health and education are deprived.
- Bullying issues arise from street gangs
- Sexual activity in early childhood and adolescence. Risk of abuse – physical, sexual, psychological, forced into prostitution and later becoming addicted
- Psychological problems, emotional insecurity, and lack of protection due to lack of support are always there.
- Police arrests, judicial custody/criminal activities continue to violate their rights

Health issues

- More than 25 to 30 percent of street children are infected with viral hepatitis B, C.
- HBV, HCV, and HIV infections in the community are increased by street children.
- Fever, skin diseases, diarrhea, dysentery, tuberculosis, diphtheria (cough), tetanus, polio, abdominal pain, etc.
- Fights get injured and the dead die from accidents, murders, drug abuse, mismanagement, etc
- Due to non-registration and lack of identity documents, facilities at the government level are also deprived of health.



Why are street children on the streets?

- Children have become spoiled children based on the following reasons
- Death of parents, family breakdown/family lifestyle, and negligence of parents and family are also major reasons
- Due to parental poverty, low income and lack of education, and ignorance in the family, children are thrown out of their homes
- Running away from school and mosque (due to violence) or dropping out, having mental health problems
- Child abuse (domestic violence, elder abuse) whether by family or at work
- Dispersion and migration of families due to natural calamities (floods, earthquakes) are also a reason for this.
- Armed conflict (war between countries) cultural reasons and most refugee children are also forced to come to the streets.
- Some children come to the city in search of a better life but come here and are ruined by criminals.
- Abusive and alcoholic parents are forced to leave home because of their behavior.

What do street children do?

- Car washing and shoe polishing (cleaning/shine)
- Selling newspapers or food items
- Collecting and selling garbage from dumpsites
- Working temporarily in shops/workshops, begging and cleaning
- Prostitution (rarely), child pornography.
- Theft and extortion, street vending, gang building, and hooliganism
- Used drugs or drug dealing.



Alkhidmat Foundation Pakistan and Street Children

Taking street children to schools. Organization of education and training. This is the accepted duty and also the religious duty. Alkhidmat has organized the Child Protection Center to fulfill this important duty. See how Alkhidmat is implementing advanced projects to secure and brighten the future of the nation. Education plays a fundamental role in building any society and nation. Whichever nation understood the importance of education and made it its slogan, the victorious nations express their ideals, civilization, ethics, society, and life goals only through their educational philosophy. Unfortunately, the education sector in Pakistan is in a state of decay, although according to the Constitution of Pakistan, it is the responsibility of the state to provide free and compulsory education to all children between the ages of 5 and 16. According to government data, 1.5 million Children between the ages of 9 and 16 are out of school.

Alkhidmat Foundation's efforts to educate and help street children.

Because of the importance of education, Alkhidmat Foundation has also done considerable work in the education sector. Under the education department of Alkhidmat, the distribution of stationery, school bags, and uniforms to the poor and needy students is being organized. Apart from this, Alkhidmat schools, youth hostels, and child rotation centers for street children are trying to facilitate education.



Establishment of 57 Child Protection Centers of Alkhidmat across the country:

There are huts covered with straw, bamboo, and banners of political parties in the middle of tall buildings, where it is difficult for humans to live on par with animals, where the idea of life is impossible, but there is life even in these huts made of garbage. But it is fighting for its survival. And make their presence felt by shouting.

Startup Child Protection Centers:

Dr. Altaf Qadir Khattak, Founder of Child Protection Rehabilitation Trust (CPRT-UK), was deeply moved during his visit to Peshawar, Pakistan, witnessing young children toiling in deplorable conditions on garbage heaps. Recognizing that this was not an isolated issue but a manifestation of parental desperation and societal indifference, Dr. Khattak resolved to restore these children's childhood and provide them a chance at a better life. He initiated a child protection program in 2012, opening a Child Protection Project (CPP) center in Peshawar. Through collaboration with Alkhidmat Foundation Pakistan, this effort expanded across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and later to Punjab, with 57 Child Protection Centers nationwide, serving 2,850 children. Driven by the belief that leaving these children to their fate would lead to societal harm, he mobilized resources and contacts from the UK to offer these children a brighter future. The centers offer a range of essential facilities, and the project continues its mission to help street children, having evolved from its beginnings in 2012.



AlKhidmat Foundation engaged in the protection of Surat Children

In this country, 1.5 million out-of-school children reflect a tragic societal irony, craving opportunities to move forward. AlKhidmat Foundation tirelessly provides education and moral guidance to street children, including garbage pickers, workshops, and homes, with many success stories. Abdal-Museeb, a former garbage dump worker, transformed his life through AlKhidmat's support, earning a place in the National Cyber Security Project. Saqib, another child from a poor family forced into garbage picking, excelled in education after AlKhidmat's intervention. Hundreds of similar success stories abound across the nation. AlKhidmat operates 57 Child Protection Centers, educating over 2,500 street children. Over 500 graduates have transitioned to mainstream schools, with an additional 300 joining this year.



AlKhidmat Chownra School Sindh Pakistan

AlKhidmat Foundation initiated water projects during the 1998 Tharparkar famine and identified the need for education in remote desert Goths. Facing financial challenges, Thar residents couldn't afford education, leaving children idle. AlKhidmat established Chownra schools, each with one teacher, offering free basic education to 25-30 children up to fifth grade. Older students transition to distant schools or cities. To support further education, a Mithi hostel was built. These traditional huts cost four lakh rupees, covering construction, teacher salaries, and supplies. Graduates excel in various fields, making the two and a half lakh rupee investment invaluable, transforming not only their lives but also their families and future generations.



AlKhidmat Jhuggi School Peshawar Khyber Pakhtunkhwa:

Under the AlKhidmat Foundation, a project was started to give the shine of knowledge to the Jhuggi stars across the country. A system of schools was created under the name of Jhuggi School for the children living in Jhuggi. Currently, the number of established AlKhidmat Jhuggi schools across the country has increased to 24, where a total of 1000 (one thousand) children are being equipped with fine education.



AlKhidmat Foundation School:

In areas where there were no government or private schools, AlKhidmat established schools with the support of philanthropists. At present, there are 51 schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab, which are providing free education to poor and deserving children and better education to ordinary children near their homes. Along with this, AlKhidmat occasionally distributes uniforms and stationery to school children intending to reduce the burden of their parents' education expenses. At present, 22 AlKhidmat Foundation schools and 16 Child Protection Centers are running in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, providing education to more than 8000 children with the help of 423 trained teachers. Moreover, 631 orphans and 817

Mission of AlKhidmat school:

- To provide educational facilities in the backward and deprived communities
- Promoting educational quality
- Nurturing and preparing every child with the knowledge and problem solving skills to succeed in an increasingly global community
- Establishing new educational institutions
- Building the capacity of relevant teaching and administrative staff and institutions
- To make them independent and independent to impart culture and character-building education.

Salient Features of AlKhidmat Schools:

- Providing free education to orphan students. The rest of the students are charged a nominal fee to cover school expenses.
- Hire competent staff to ensure quality education. Students are provided with a conducive learning environment.
- Islamic upbringing of children (basic Islamic beliefs in minimum time) Read and understand Quran.
- Co-curricular activities for student's SSC exam preparation in high schools
- Study tours Quality education for children
- Friendly learning environment Career counseling
- Computer classes are often held in school libraries
- Leadership camps for science lab students in most schools
- Character building of students

Skill Development Center:

AlKhidmat Women Trust and AlKhidmat Women Wing jointly operate the Handicraft School for Girls, providing vocational training alongside various skills development programs. Additionally, AlKhidmat Education Department has established 82 Skills Development Centers, offering courses to girls who couldn't continue their education beyond matriculation. AlKhidmat also focuses on skill development for boys. The Vocational Training Centre (VTC) extends technical and technological education in Attock and other regions, benefitting over 3000 students to date. AlKhidmat Foundation is committed to illuminating countless lives, guided by the verse from the Holy Quran, multiplying the rewards for those who spend in the way of Allah, akin to a grain yielding seven ears, echoing Allah's infinite wisdom and knowledge (Al-Baqarah: 261).

AlKhidmat Foundation aims to build a Child Protection Center:

- Selecting children to pick up garbage, labor work and provide them with a clean environment.
- Returning children who collect garbage to their normal childhood.
- Assessing their strengths, abilities, and interests and mapping their future accordingly.
- Creating a safe environment for street children.
- Encouraging children to go to school and providing education to those children who want education.

Procedures for fulfilling the religious duty of helping the needy the various stages of Project implementation are as follows:

- An initial survey has been conducted to identify the most deserving beneficiaries of the project.
- As soon as the proposal is approved, a confirmatory survey will be conducted in various target areas in Pakistan for the establishment of CPC.
- Adequate space for non-formal education will be arranged and a detailed education plan prepared.
- The centers will be established in a suitable building provided by the team of local offices of AlKhidmat Foundation Pakistan.
- Survey forms of street children will be shared with AKFP by the regional team.
- The list of streets children's beneficiaries will be shared with the center by the regional and local team.
- Overall report of the center will be given to the donor every quarter.
- What facilities are provided in the Child Protection Center of AlKhidmat Foundation?
- The main purpose of setting up the center is to provide basic education for out-of-school children.
- To educate the children, with the support of Ataleeq, a curriculum has been compiled in the name of Miraj, which is a fast-track education system.
- Books, copies, and stationery are provided free and timely
- Holy Quran and basic religious teaching (prayer, word, surah).
- Refreshments (biscuits, samosas, chard, juice) are provided to each child daily.
- An excursion to a park or public space is booked every month
- Children are kept busy in various games and sports competitions



- Transport facility is provided for children coming from far away
- On the occasion of Eid, Eid gifts (clothes, shoes, cash) are tied up.
- Ration packs and Iftar parties are given to the family during Ramadan.
- Mutton is sometimes distributed among children
- Children are treated to fun trips and visits to museums, picnics at historical places, and even meals at 5-star hotels.
- Drawing and creative skills competitions are conducted.
- Basic principles of hygiene are followed.
- Basic life skills are taught.
- Special attention is given to guidance and leadership for the future.
- Children are given an environment of love and compassion and are treated with respect
- A teacher is not allowed to punish children nor is there room for humiliating them.
- A winter package is organized on an annual basis, which includes a blanket, chadar, hoodies, pillow, etc.
- Hygiene kit is given to every child quarterly which includes a towel, toothbrush and brush, soap etc.
- Children are medically examined and treated if necessary. Children are given regular check-ups every year and medicines are also provided free of cost.
- Child Protection Centers assess the needs of children and provide the necessary support. Children are educated in formal and non-formal settings. Books, school bags, shoes, clothes, and hygiene kits are being provided to the children. Children are also engaged in curricular and co-curricular activities which play an important role in building the personality of the students
- Special study and fun trips are organized for children where they play various games in parks, enjoy refreshments, and get exposed to the outside world. Apart from academic and sports activities, these children are also provided counseling sessions on an individual basis for guidance and motivation.



Social Impact of Child Protection Center Project:

- Successful completion of this project will encourage street children to pursue education.
- Street children will start going to school and get quality education.
- Street children will be able to get good health care and hygiene awareness.
- These children will be provided with a safe environment and trained to protect themselves.
- Internal skills and social and psychological behavior of street children will be changed.
- Literacy rate of Pakistan will increase and crime rate will decrease in the society.

Success Stories of Child Protection Center Children

100% of school-going children passed their annual exams in March 2023, where 30% of them secured the top 3 positions in their classes. Also, stories of children who achieved success from AlKhidmat Child Protection Centers. For the rest of the children, it brings joy to those who teach and serve. Samiullah a state kid secured 1030 marks out of 1100 in the SSC exam Peshawar board.

The story of Samiullah in his own words:

My name is Samiullah, and my father's name is Payinda Muhammad. I'm 16 years old and live in Akhun Abad. I have five brothers, and I'm the fourth among them. Initially, my family struggled to make ends meet. My father collected donations at the mosque, but it wasn't enough. Later, he started collecting scrap to support our family and my education. However, when expenses increased, I had to drop out of school and focus on scrap collection. That's when I learned about the child protection center in Akhun Abad. There, I saw children engaging in activities, enjoying games, and receiving food, which piqued my interest. I started attending regularly and was encouraged to enroll in school. I excelled in Class 5 and gained admission to Forward School and College, thanks to the AlKhidmat Foundation's support. I passed my matriculation exam with good marks and, with the prayers of my parents and AlKhidmat Foundation's assistance, secured admission to Islamia College University in Pre-Engineering with an impressive score of 1030 out of 1100. Education and training have transformed my life.

Our promising state child **Sami Ullah**, secured **1030/1100** marks in Matric from B.I.S.E Peshawar. Now he is the student of Pre-Engineering in Islamia College Peshawar. He wants to be a Engineer.

Journey towards Success of Sami Ullah



Yasir's story in his own words

I'm Yasir, 19 years old, living near a general bus stand in a poverty-stricken environment. My father's constant illness prevented him from working, so he started collecting scraps to contribute to our household income while continuing my studies. As our expenses increased, I faced the challenge of dropping out of school. One day, I encountered the Al-Khidmat Foundation Team at the General Bus Stand, who invited me to their center. I visited the Child Protection Center there, where I found children engaged in various activities, and gradually, my interest in studying reignited. I began attending regularly, and with the guidance of the staff, I was enrolled in a school. I excelled in the fifth grade and was admitted to Technical High School Gulbahar with the support of the Al-Khidmat Foundation. I passed my matriculation exam with good marks and later completed my FA from Higher Secondary School No.3. Thanks to my parents' prayers and Al-Khidmat Foundation's generosity, I passed the ETA test and joined the police department as a constable. I am immensely grateful to Al Khidmat Foundation and CPART for their invaluable support in my education and training.



Muhammad Jasim's story in his own words:

I'm Muhammad Jasim, 16 years old, from Sarki Charsadda. My father, Imtiaz Khan, is a farmer, and I have four siblings. We come from a humble background. I began my primary education at Alkhidmat Foundation School Sarki Charsadda. In my 9th-grade Matriculation exam, I achieved an impressive 546 out of 550 marks, securing the second position in the Peshawar Board. In the 10th-grade exam, I scored 1060 out of 1100 marks, clinching the top position in my school. Thanks to my parents' prayers and the dedication of my teachers, I earned a spot in Pre-Medical at Islamia College University on open merit. I'm extremely grateful and happy for this opportunity. Currently, my two younger brothers are also studying at AlKhidmat Foundation School Sarki, benefiting from its quality education at affordable fees. I'm proud to be a part of Islamia College University in Peshawar.



The story of Muhammad Abbas in his own words:

I am Muhammad Abbas, aged 16, hailing from Sarki Charsada. My father, Fazli Subhan, is a farmer, and we are a financially disadvantaged family. I received my primary education at AlKhidmat Foundation School Sarki Charsadda, where I excelled in the matriculation exam, securing an impressive 1059 out of 1100 marks. After matriculation, I applied to Islamia College Peshawar and received a recommendation but couldn't afford admission due to our financial constraints. Thanks to my parents' prayers and the hard work of my teachers, I gained admission to Pre-Medical at Government College Peshawar through open merit and now reside in the hostel there. Alhamdulillah, I am immensely grateful and happy for this opportunity. AlKhidmat Foundation's commitment to providing quality education at low and affordable fees has made a significant difference in my life.



Abdul Rahman's story in his own words:

I am Abdul Rahman, the second among eight siblings, and my father, Tor Jaan, worked as a laborer. His meager income barely supported our family. To improve my education, I used to sell chickpeas on the streets. Witnessing this environment ignited a desire for more education within me. After a year of academic and moral training at a center, I gained admission to the fourth grade at Government Primary School Beri Bagh Peshawar. Meanwhile, the center's teachers prepared me for the Aghosh College Murree test, where I secured the first position in the class 6th examination. Today, I am studying at Aghosh College Murree, and I am incredibly happy. I owe all of this to my parents and the support of AIKhidmat Foundation.

The story of Muhammad Owais in his own words:

I am Muhammad Owais, with eleven siblings, and my father, Habib-ur-Rehman, works as a laborer in a factory, struggling to make ends meet. To support my family, I used to sell food items on the streets. However, after encountering the educational environment at a center, I felt a strong desire to pursue further education. I was admitted to Class IV at Ton Public School Peshawar. Simultaneously, the center's teachers helped me prepare for the Aghosh College Murree test for class 6th. I successfully passed the test and am now studying at Aghosh College Murree, feeling immensely grateful and happy. I owe all of this to my parents and the support of AIKhidmat Foundation.



What should we do for the future of street children?

- Encourage the involvement of government agencies to start working on street children, and make them realize that they are all our children too.
- Give love and compassion and take the responsibility of educating and settling at least one child into a normal life and try to give that child the facilities that you give to your children.
- Mobilizing the public by creating awareness among university teachers and students, mobilizing children and youth to convey the message to the public (family, community, and institutions) and the business community as well. These street children are our children.
- Encourage NGOs to set up mobile schools to provide education to street children.
- Survey and register the street children and give the list to the government and those who strive for the betterment of society.
- Gradually prepare children for social family integration.
- Share food and other amenities with street children for the sake of Allah.
- If street children do not have parents, we can place them in an orphanage.

Laws and policies related to street children:

- The Constitution guarantees the right to compulsory education for children aged 5 to 16 years.
- According to Pakistani labor laws, children should not work in hazardous occupations or long hours if they are below 12 years of age. WFCL
- Pakistani law violates the consent of a child below 16 years of age. In other words, he cannot consent to the sexual act, regardless of how willing and mature he may appear.
- Pakistani law requires all births to be registered, yet most births are unregistered, jeopardizing a child's ability to enjoy basic citizenship rights.
- The Constitution guarantees the child's right to food and drink. Yet of the 1.4 million children born each year, 0.6 million are malnourished.

United Nations Convention on the Fundamental Rights of the Child (1989):

The United Nations Convention on Fundamental Rights of the Child (1989) held on rights such as violence, disease, discrimination, sexual abuse and exploitation, emotional deprivation, child labor, torture, access to education, and lack of health care. 54 rights of children were determined. The details of which are available in a separate file.

In 1999, the ILO Convention, WFCL commits to take immediate steps to prevent, prohibit and eliminate the "worst forms of child labor" and binds all countries of the world.

UNCRC protocols have been created at the world level to protect children's rights and to hear complaints:

- The Convention also includes several agreements that are optional for countries to include additional, unique rights for children. They are called "optional protocols" and include:
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography: This provides detailed requirements for governments to end the sexual exploitation and abuse of children. It also protects children from being sold for non-sexual purposes, such as other forms of forced labor, illegal adoption, and organ donation.
- Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict: This requires governments to raise the minimum age for children to join the armed forces from 15 years. It ensures that members of their armed forces under the age of 18 do not take direct part in armed conflict
- Optional Protocol on Communication Procedures: This allows children to submit complaints to the United Nations when their rights have been violated and their own country's legal system is unable to provide a remedy
- because of my parents and AlKhidmat Foundation.

UNCRC The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) was held in 1989, in which the following are the rights set forth by the UNCRC:

- Protection from violence, abuse, and neglect
- Eliminating traditional practices that are bad for children's health
- Protection from all forms of sexual exploitation
- Protection from inhuman or degrading treatment
- Trauma Recovery and Reintegration

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child - UNICEF UK:

According to this convention, every child is entitled to fundamental rights without discrimination of any kind, regardless of another status, race, color, sex, language, religion, political, national, or other status of the child or his parents or legal guardian. Ethnic or social origin, property, disability, how born.

What are the 4 principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child?

1. Non-discrimination
2. Dedication to the best interests of the child.
3. Right to life, survival, and development.
4. Respect the child's views. Rights are detailed at the end

What is Child Protection Act 2017 in Pakistan?

The Child Protection Bill, of 2017 was enacted in Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan, in compliance with the constitutional provisions of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and international obligations, which provides for the protection and care of children from violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect. And it needs to be implemented.

What are Pakistan's Children Act 1991?

- Whoever employs a child or allows a child to work in contravention of the provisions of section 3 shall be liable to imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year or to a fine which may extend to twenty thousand rupees or to both.
- Article 11(3) of the Constitution of Pakistan, 1973 expressly prohibits the employment of children below fourteen years of age in any factory, mine, or other hazardous occupation.

What is Article 37 of the Constitution of Pakistan 1973?

Article 37(e) directs the State to make arrangements to ensure just and humane conditions of work, that children and women are not employed in occupations unsuited to their age or sex, and that women in employment Therefore, maternity benefits should be ensured.

What are the children's issues in Pakistan?

The challenge. Children in Pakistan suffer from many forms of violence (physical, psychological, sexual) and exploitation, including economic exploitation and child trafficking.

What are the 5 most important rights of children in the world?

Children's rights include the right to health, education, family life, play and recreation, an adequate standard of living, and protection from abuse and harm.

What are the 10 most important rights of children?

1. The right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health.
2. Right to non-discrimination.
3. The right to be protected from economic exploitation.
4. The right to be protected from unnecessary treatment and investigation.
5. Right to freedom from pain, fear, and stress.
6. The right to keep your parents with you.
7. Right to privacy.
8. The right to be informed
9. The right to listen means that their words should be heard.
10. The right to care and basic education.

What are the 12 rights of South African children?

This clause guarantees certain rights of children, including the right to nationality from birth, parental care, basic nutrition, shelter, basic health care services, social services, protection from abuse, exploitative labor practices, and detention. From, among others.

Government Initiatives: Some governments around the world have implemented programs to deal with street children, usually involving placement of children in orphanages, madrassas, homes for the destitute, or correctional institutions. Efforts have been made to educate and house them in collaboration or partnership. They have become an anti-social group by the national police because they are perceived as drug users and criminals.

There are four types or models of how societies deal with street children:

Correctional Model: Primarily utilized by governments and law enforcement agencies, this model views street children as potential threats to public safety and aims to protect both the general public and the children themselves. It relies on the juvenile justice system and specialized agencies to deter children from a life of crime.

Outreach Strategy: Supported by street teachers, NGOs, and religious organizations, this strategy perceives street children as marginalized individuals in need of community assistance. The Outreach Strategy seeks to empower street children by offering outreach education and training programs.

Preventive Approach: Backed by NGOs, street children's coalitions, and government lobbying efforts, this approach recognizes street children's circumstances as a result of negative social and economic factors. It focuses on addressing the root causes of children leaving their homes and ending up on the streets, such as parental unemployment and poor housing, while advocating for children's rights.

Restoration Model: Supported by religious organizations and NGOs, this model regards street children as individuals in need of assistance due to past harm. Its goal is to reintegrate these children into mainstream society by providing education, drug de-addiction programs, and a nurturing family-like environment. The Restoration Model addresses the factors that drive children from their homes to the streets, including parental unemployment.

THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD: THE CHILDREN'S VERSION



1
DEFINITION OF A CHILD
A child is any person under the age of 18.



2
NO DISCRIMINATION
All children have all these rights, no matter who they are, where they live, what language they speak, what their religion is, what they think, what they look like, if they are a boy or girl, if they have a disability, if they are rich or poor, and no matter who their parents or families are or what their parents or families believe or do. No child should be treated unfairly for any reason.



3
BEST INTERESTS OF THE CHILD
When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children. All adults should do what is best for children. Governments should make sure children are protected and looked after by their parents, or by other people when this is needed. Governments should make sure that people and places responsible for looking after children are doing a good job.



4
MAKING RIGHTS REAL
Governments must do all they can to make sure that every child in their countries can enjoy all the rights in this Convention.



5
FAMILY GUIDANCE AS CHILDREN DEVELOP
Governments should let families and communities guide their children so that, as they grow up, they learn to use their rights in the best way. The more children grow, the less guidance they will need.



6
LIFE, SURVIVAL AND DEVELOPMENT
Every child has the right to be alive. Governments must make sure that children survive and develop in the best possible way.



7
NAME AND NATIONALITY
Children must be registered when they are born and given a name which is officially recognized by the government. Children must have a nationality (belong to a country). Whenever possible, children should know their parents and be looked after by them.



8
IDENTITY
Children have the right to their own identity – an official record of who they are which includes their name, nationality and family relations. No one should take this away from them, but if this happens, governments must help children to quickly get their identity back.

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9
KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER
Children should not be separated from their parents unless they are not being properly looked after – for example, if a parent hurts or does not take care of a child. Children whose parents don't live together should stay in contact with both parents unless this might harm the child.



10
CONTACT WITH PARENTS ACROSS COUNTRIES
If a child lives in a different country than their parents, governments must let the child and parents travel so that they can stay in contact and be together.



11
PROTECTION FROM KIDNAPPING
Governments must stop children being taken out of the country when this is against the law – for example, being kidnapped by someone or held abroad by a parent when the other parent does not agree.



12
RESPECT FOR CHILDREN'S VIEWS
Children have the right to give their opinions freely on issues that affect them. Adults should listen and take children seriously.



13
SHARING THOUGHTS FREELY
Children have the right to share freely with others what they learn, think and feel, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way unless it harms other people.



14
FREEDOM OF THOUGHT AND RELIGION
Children can choose their own thoughts, opinions and religion, but this should not stop other people from enjoying their rights. Parents can guide children so that as they grow up, they learn to properly use this right.



15
SETTING UP OR JOINING GROUPS
Children can join or set up groups or organisations, and they can meet with others, as long as this does not harm other people.



16
PROTECTION OF PRIVACY
Every child has the right to privacy. The law must protect children's privacy, family, home, communications and reputation (or good name) from any attack.



17
ACCESS TO INFORMATION
Children have the right to get information from the Internet, radio, television, newspapers, books and other sources. Adults should make sure the information they are getting is not harmful. Governments should encourage the media to share information from lots of different sources, in languages that all children can understand.

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Parents are the main people responsible for bringing up a child. When the child does not have any parents, another adult will have this responsibility and they are called a "guardian". Parents and guardians should always consider what is best for that child. Governments should help them. Where a child has both parents, both of them should be responsible for bringing up the child.



Governments must protect children from violence, abuse and being neglected by anyone who looks after them.



Every child who cannot be looked after by their own family has the right to be looked after properly by people who respect the child's religion, culture, language and other aspects of their life.



When children are adopted, the most important thing is to do what is best for them. If a child cannot be properly looked after in their own country – for example by living with another family – then they might be adopted in another country.

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Children who move from their home country to another country as refugees (because it was not safe for them to stay there) should get help and protection and have the same rights as children born in that country.



Every child with a disability should enjoy the best possible life in society. Governments should remove all obstacles for children with disabilities to become independent and to participate actively in the community.



Children have the right to the best health care possible, clean water to drink, healthy food and a clean and safe environment to live in. All adults and children should have information about how to stay safe and healthy.



Every child who has been placed somewhere away from home – for their care, protection or health – should have their situation checked regularly to see if everything is going well and if this is still the best place for the child to be.



Governments should provide money or other support to help children from poor families.



Children have the right to food, clothing and a safe place to live so they can develop in the best possible way. The government should help families and children who cannot afford this.



Every child has the right to an education. Primary education should be free. Secondary and higher education should be available to every child. Children should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level possible. Discipline in schools should respect children's rights and never use violence.



Children's education should help them fully develop their personalities, talents and abilities. It should teach them to understand their own rights, and to respect other people's rights, cultures and differences. It should help them to live peacefully and protect the environment.

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Children have the right to use their own language, culture and religion – even if these are not shared by most people in the country where they live.



Every child has the right to rest, relax, play and to take part in cultural and creative activities.



Children have the right to be protected from doing work that is dangerous or bad for their education, health or development. If children work, they have the right to be safe and paid fairly.



Governments must protect children from taking, making, carrying or selling harmful drugs.



The government should protect children from sexual exploitation (being taken advantage of) and sexual abuse, including by people forcing children to have sex for money, or making sexual pictures or films of them.



Governments must make sure that children are not kidnapped or sold, or taken to other countries or places to be exploited (taken advantage of).



Children have the right to be protected from all other kinds of exploitation (being taken advantage of), even if these are not specifically mentioned in this Convention.



Children who are accused of breaking the law should not be killed, tortured, treated cruelly, put in prison forever, or put in prison with adults. Prison should always be the last choice and only for the shortest possible time. Children in prison should have legal help and be able to stay in contact with their family.

 <p>38 Children have the right to be protected during war. No child under 15 can join the army or take part in war.</p>	 <p>39 Children have the right to get help if they have been hurt, neglected, treated badly or affected by war, so they can get back their health and dignity.</p>	 <p>40 Children accused of breaking the law have the right to legal help and fair treatment. There should be lots of solutions to help these children become good members of their communities. Prison should only be the last choice.</p>
 <p>41 If the laws of a country protect children's rights better than this Convention, then those laws should be used.</p>	 <p>42 Governments should actively tell children and adults about this Convention so that everyone knows about children's rights.</p>	 <p>43-54 These articles explain how governments, the United Nations – including the Committee on the Rights of the Child and UNICEF – and other organisations work to make sure all children enjoy all their rights.</p>

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AlKhidmat Foundation's Child Protection team pictured after a training session



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