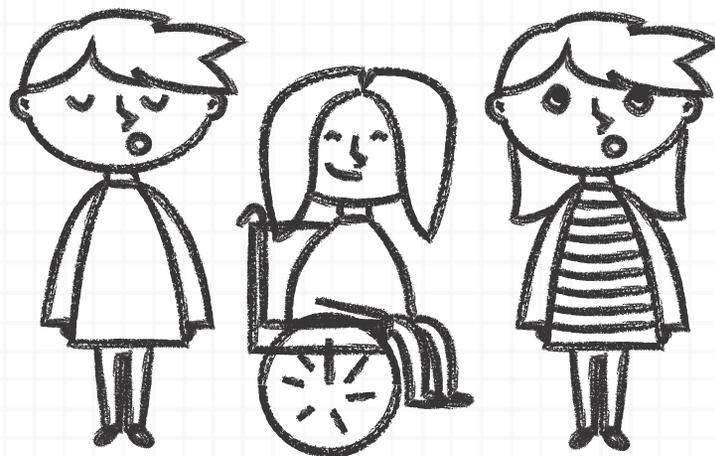


GET TO KNOW OUR RIGHTS!

A children friendly guidebook



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Get to know our rights
A children friendly guidebook

Author:

Qëndresa Ibra-Zariqi

Design by:

Envinion

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INTRODUCTION

This friendly guidebook on child rights is designed to influence your education in the spirit of peace, tolerance, dignity and solidarity, helping you to understand your rights and responsibilities first and to respect the rights and values of family members, friends, classmates and all other people.

This "Guidebook" is designed for you children, for pupils from grades V to IX, and through explaining your basic rights, it aims to help you learn your rights, as well as to recognize and respect these principles:

- **Respect for human dignity;**
- **Appreciation of diversity;**
- **Understanding;**
- **Tolerance;**
- **Providing equal opportunities;**

Since we are all human beings, we need to make sure that we all are appreciated, enjoy equal treatment and have the same opportunities in life. Therefore, no one should treat others harshly, violently or offensively.

However, living with others is not always easy, and there will always be causes for misunderstandings and conflicts. It is important to resolve conflicts in a peaceful way. Dialogue is the most effective way in this regard, because it helps find solutions that are acceptable to everyone.

It isn't possible to ask others to respect and defend your rights, unless you learn and respect them yourself.

Come then, let's learn them together!

YOUR RIGHTS!

Each of us is important. We are all human beings!

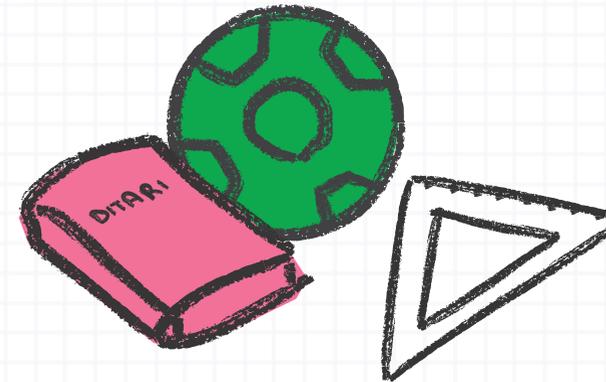


- Every human being has rights. Moreover, as a girl or boy under the age of 18, you have some more specific rights. A list of these rights is set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the leading and most important global document referring to the recognition of children's rights.
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child is a treaty that refers to human rights, and it is the most widely and readily accepted internationally to date. The unequivocal acceptance of the Convention is a clear indication of global efforts to advance the position of children and their rights in society.

- With the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the perception and manner of treatment of children began to change, from passive objects of care and charity to human beings with a certain set of rights.
- Recognizing the irreplaceable importance of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Republic of Kosovo has integrated it into its Constitution, which constitutes the broadest point of legal reference for children's rights. With this step, the Republic of Kosovo has expressed the willingness and political goodwill to commit to fulfilling the international obligations that ensure the realization of all fundamental and inalienable rights for all children in Kosovo.
- Consequently, the Institutions of the Republic of Kosovo ensure that the legislation embodies the principles of the Convention and is fully consistent with them. In this regard, the Convention has become a basic document and guide for the steps/actions undertaken to fulfill these rights.
- The rights deriving from the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which are also included in the domestic legislation, provide for special care and support for children:

Your rights to protection, survival and development

1 You have the right to protect your highest interest in all decisions concerning you, and in no circumstance can you be discriminated.



2 You have the right to life, to full, healthy and harmonious physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.

3 You have the right to enjoy your basic needs such as: food, clothing, shelter and health care.

4 You have the right to be protected from all forms of exploitation, abuse, physical and psychological violence, neglect and mistreatment.

5 You are entitled to a high standard of education to ensure the fullest development of your personality, talents and capabilities. Your education should teach you to respect the rights and freedoms of others and prepare you for a responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality and friendship among all peoples.

6 You are entitled to a wide range of objective information.

7 If you have a mental or physical disability, you have the right to enjoy a dignified life, to integrate into the society, to develop your personality and to enjoy maximum autonomy.

8 You have the right to rest, to have spare time, to play, participate in recreational, artistic and cultural activities in a suitable environment for your age that respects your rights.

YOUR RIGHTS TO IDENTITY, PRIVACY AND FAMILY

You are entitled to a name, nationality, and protection of your identity. If you belong to an ethnic, religious or linguistic minority, you cannot be deprived of the right to lead your cultural life, practice your religion or use your language.

You have the right to protection of your privacy. Nobody can interfere illegally in your private or family life. Your home, correspondence, honor and reputation are protected by law.

Parents have joint responsibility for your education and development. They have the right and the duty to provide you with instructions on how to exercise your rights and to honor your obligations.

You have the right to know who your parents are and to grow with them, unless this is not in your highest interest.

You have the right to know who your parents are and to move to another location to join them. Your parents have the same right towards you.

If you are separated from both your parents, or one of them, you are entitled to meet them regularly, unless this is not in your best interest.

Adoption can only be authorized if it is in your best interest.

YOUR FREEDOMS

As soon as you are able or when you want, you have the right to express your opinion on anything, except when it is against the rights of other people. Your opinion must be taken into account.

You have the right to freely express yourself, to seek and to receive information, except when it is against the rights of other people.

You have the right to keep the religion of your choice, under the guidance of your parents. Also, you must respect the religion of others.

You have the right to meet with others, to join or to create clubs, except when it is against the rights of other people.

Remember

There are restrictions on these freedoms. You must respect the rights and freedoms of others and you should not in any actions that represent threats to your society or yourself.

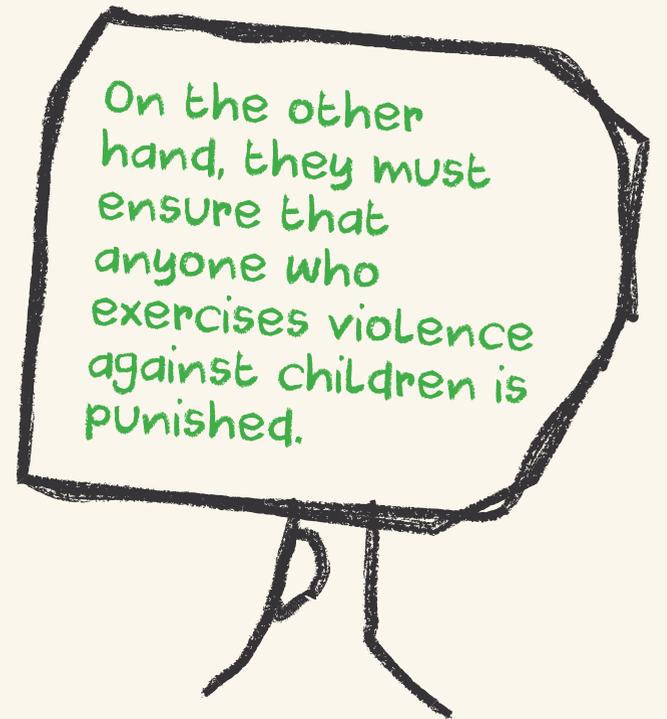
YOU AND THE STATE

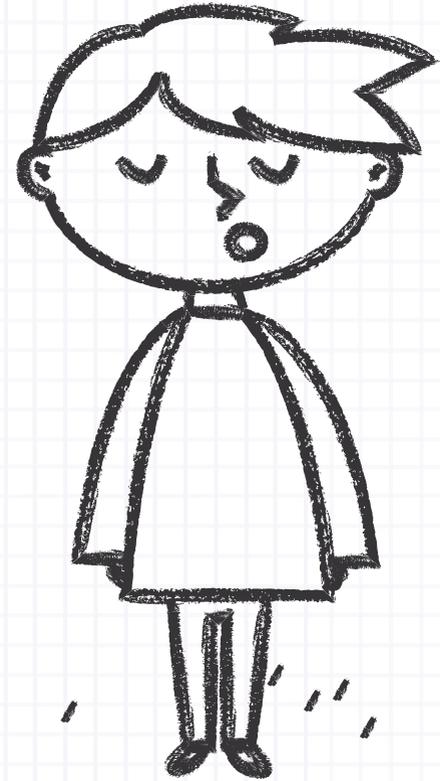
- 1 The state must do whatever necessary to enable you to exercise your guaranteed rights and freedoms.
- 2 The state must protect and secure your well-being. It must help parents or persons caring for you by creating institutions and services to look after your interests and well-being.
- 3 The state should take measures to protect against the risks associated with illicit and negative phenomena.
- 4 You have the right for justice. The state needs to ensure that the justice system is adapted to your specific rights and needs.
- 5 You must be protected from torture, cruel or degrading punishment.
- 6 You must be protected from death sentence or life imprisonment.
- 7 You cannot be illegally arrested. Detention should be the last possible option. It should be as short as possible and take into account your needs and age. In detention, you should be separated from adult detainees or prisoners, unless this is not in your highest interest. Also, while in detention, you have the right to stay in touch with your family.
- 8 In times of war, the state must protect and care for you. If you are under the age of 15 you cannot be recruited in any armed force.

WE MUST LEARN HOW TO PROTECT OURSELVES

Violence against children is a violation of human rights. Children experience violence in all countries of the world, regardless of culture, faith, origin or ethnic group, and it does not matter whether their families are well-educated or not, rich or poor... violence can take place everywhere.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child states that state institutions have the primary responsibility to promote and protect children's rights, so that children have access to health care services, education, social services and other necessary services. These services should also help families and ensure that children are growing in an educational and healthy environment. On the other hand, they must ensure that anyone who exercises violence against children is punished.





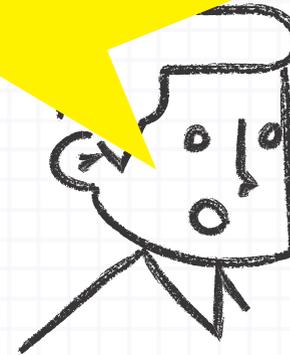
This means that no one, not even the parents or guardians, can cause any harm to children or treat them in a bad way. Whereas, parents, leaders, civil servants, educators, teachers and all adults are obliged to ensure that no form of violence is caused against us. While we, the children, must respect ourselves and others, be polite and productive.

... some children are more vulnerable or more exposed to violence than others, because of gender, race, culture, ethnic group, social and economic origin or because of some form of disability, and these children should be offered special support and protection.

One of the most important things is to educate children how to live with integrity in peace, to be committed and to be protected from violence. To protect ourselves from violence we must know "what is violence?", what are the "types of violence?", and where "can violence manifest itself"?

Although at varying degrees, violence can deprive children of their well-being and the ability to learn and socialize, and may have devastating effects in their lives when they grow up

"Violence" includes but is not limited to intentional acts or actions of a person on another person, such as: use of physical force, psychological pressure, any action that causes or threatens with physical and mental pain; causing a sense of fear, personal danger, violation of dignity; physical attack with no regard for the consequences; offenses, curses, calling offensive names and other ways of harsh harassment; constant repetition of behaviors in order to humiliate another person; putting another person in a position to be afraid of the physical, emotional and economic conditions.



This means that if a person threatens to hurt, offend, humiliate, intimidate, ignore, strike, pull someone's hair, throw strong objects from a distance, use vulgar gender-based words, the person has exercised "violence".



VIOLENCE APPEARS IN VARIOUS FORMS

EMOTIONAL/ PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE:

...if someone uses their power or position of power, to frighten or threaten you with words or using different objects (stick, knife, gun, etc.) in order to cause harm.

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE:

...if someone intentionally uses force to hurt someone else, including delivering blows with hands or any other object, all types of beating, wrestling, pulling of hair or any other action that hurts the body and feelings.

VERBAL VIOLENCE:

...use of offensive words for the sake of injury, including insult, labeling, shaming, shouting, humiliation, ..., and the use of derogatory language among forms of communication.

PEER HARASSMENT:

...occurs when a pupil or group of pupils with more power, repeatedly and deliberately cause injury or harm to another pupil or group of pupils who feel helpless to oppose them. Harassment can continue over time, is often kept secret from adults, and it continues unless action is taken. These include behaviors such as rumors, insult, labeling among friends, kicking, striking, damaging property, etc."

DIGITAL VIOLENCE:

...when during any form of communication using information technology you receive calls, messages, videos, photographs that carry messages intended to cause distress, injury or misuse of the child.

AND TAKES PLACE IN DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS

AT HOME:

...when physical punishment, mistreatment and verbal abuse are used to educate and discipline children

IN THE STREETS:

...when you face violence during play, they hit, insult or mistreat you in the street.

AT SCHOOL:

...harassment among peers, anger and distress by schoolmates. Violence used by teachers or other school staff.

IN INSTITUTIONS:

...responsible for caring for children, where children live without their families, violence against children is exercised by guardians.

ON THE INTERNET:

...the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) involves many risks, e.g., pedophiles or people who intentionally use networks or information media to sexually abuse children.

Remember!

The use of violence is a learned behavior... every child can be in a position to experience these types of violence from others, or may use these types of violence against others, or see them every day when one uses these types of violence against peers or other children, so these misguided behaviors can be learned. You never have to imitate and behave violently

IMPACT OF VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN

Violence can have a major impact on children, and its consequences may be felt many years later ... such as:

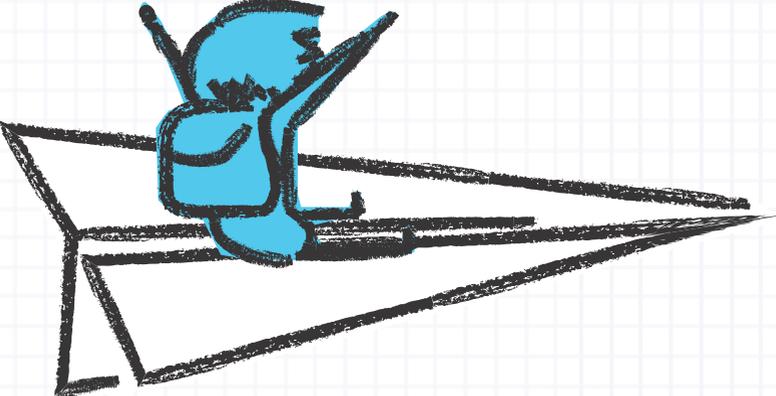
- 1 Difficulties in establishing friendly relationships with others.
- 2 Difficulty in learning, which is manifested in poor learning outcomes.
- 3 Difficulty expressing feelings in a way that is easy to be understood by others.
- 4 Emotional/psychological health problems, including aggressive and self-destructive behavior, anxiety, depression, withdrawal or hyperactivity.
- 5 Physical health problems, such as changes in brain development, injuries, wounds and fractures.
- 6 Health problems expressed through various, imaginary illnesses such as: headache, abdominal pain, faster heartbeat, and so on.
- 7 Higher chances for involvement in dangerous actions, such as the use of narcotics, alcohol, the commission of offenses in violation of law or sexual intercourse at a very young age.

LIVE IN PEACE

Remember!

It is a fatal mistake to understand violence as a "normal" way to educate and discipline children.

Children are less likely to have long-term problems resulting from violence if they have a parent or other family members who make them feel safe and loved. Or if they have friends who provide them with help and support and do not involve them in actions that can lead them to dangerous and offensive behaviors.



RULES AND COURTESY

Every family, every school and every society must have rules that are decided in accordance with the laws of the state and with the consent of the members, entities or stakeholders. You know that at home we have the unwritten domestic order, set by our grandparents and parents, or not? We go from food time to work time, rest time, sleep time, and in most households everyone knows the final time for locking the home door before bedtime, when no one of the family members, especially the children, can stay out. Then we have the habits that are derived from the tradition and culture we belong to.

Similarly, in schools and other institutions, there are rules. However, unlike home rules there rules are written, because we are now talking about an institution where actions and everything else is documented.

Since you are at school age, let us talk about school rules and of course you know that they are written by school representatives: leaders, teachers and pupils and then approved by the municipality.

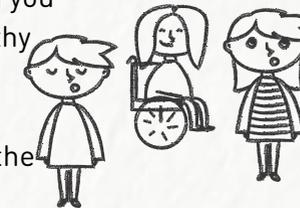
"If so far, pupils have not been involved in drafting the school rules, address this with the school authorities, because the voice of the child/pupil must be listened to.

THE SCHOOL INSTITUTION IS IN THE SERVICE OF PUPILS AND ALL WITHIN IT SHOULD FEEL GOOD."

EQUALITY

I have the right to live without experiencing any kind of violence.... I have the responsibility to make sure I do not hurt others in any way...

Every child, in the family and in the school, and everywhere else, should feel equal to their friends because this is determined by the rules of every healthy society. Parents have the same kind of love for each child, because each child has their own value, love and beauty. Even you teacher has beautiful, loving and worthy children, and it is not by chance that your teacher is considered a second parent and the school also looks like the second family for each child.



So, you have to understand that you are the most valuable and worthy person for your family and school. And value is something important, that must always be preserved and protected. When you grow up and get an education, when you develop yourself intellectually and learn from the lessons and experiences of your life, you will be aware of the weight of these word and of every piece of advice and information you will get from this guidebook, whose messages you will relay to other children.

Right now we want you to know that children must be treated equally, without distinctions. You yourself have to equally respect your peers, because you will feel good everywhere, both during lessons and during play and recreation. Equality and understanding make you stronger and happier, because nobody feels overlooked and humiliated. Then, the fact that you feel equal with others gives you pleasure, spiritual calmness, confidence, and courage to move forward with your lessons and your ambitions for development. Thus, there should be no room for harassment and violent elements among you.

You have to grow in the spirit of equality and understanding. You need to contribute to these human values, so they are cultivated and developed in your society and beyond!

Remember!

COMMUNICATION

The culture of good communication should be established from a young age. You have to start from the family and then the school, which has a major role in your educational and intellectual development. However, communication is a key pillar that helps each segment to achieve the full implementation of the school's role in education and teaching.

Thus, acquiring writing, oral and coded communication skills is part of the results you have to achieve at any educational level, so help yourself and others by communicating well and become part of the success that each person is seeking.

Good communication prevents misunderstandings. Do not insult anyone! Insults, ridicule and humiliation lead to violence, which harms you and everyone involved in the case."

Remember!

Success is not achieved without reading, because reading is the foundation of the culture of expression. Reading and Learning also help to increase your creativity and gain skills and values in every respect, including good communication.

AVOID VIOLENCE

Now start from yourself. If you don't like bad word or the fact that someone underestimates and harasses you, you must not become a cause of bad and harmful behaviors for your friends or social circle! Sometimes your friend may behave badly, because there is a problem that disturbs him/her, so you should try to help him/her and not increase

the problem! This is how you get away from violence and conflict, and how you try to help, becoming a mediator. You can also play this role in cases when bullying or violence has nothing to do with you, but with friends who show signs of violence, as perpetrator or victim.

MEDIATION

Mediation can occur in different situations and circumstances within the school, on the road, during school activities, under circumstances of activities with neighborhood peers, etc. You can be a contributor to peace, tolerance and understanding between peers and even beyond. You will distinguish yourself for positive qualities and values.

How can you help! ... Cooperate with your teacher and classmate to approach and understand his/her situation, seeking the support of his/her family and other school services (psychologist, pedagogue). If the family is not cooperative and the problem cannot be resolved with the school authorities, then you should refer the case to the services or to other institutions.

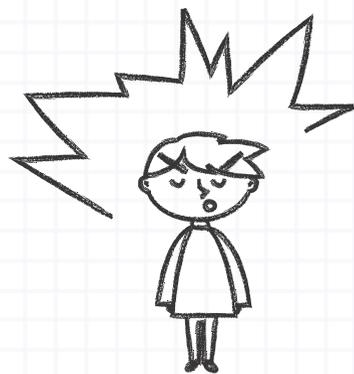
Remember!

When you see a case of violence among your friends, try to reconcile them and help to reverse the situation as if nothing happened

HOW TO ACT IF YOUR RIGHTS ARE NOT RESPECTED?

The exercise of certain rights may be limited for valid reasons, for example to protect you from significant risk, or to take into account your maturity or age. Some rights, such as the right to life, education,

health and protection from violence or exploitation, can never be restricted by anyone, even by parents or teachers.



PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS FROM VIOLENCE

Reporting violence is when we show someone an event that we have seen, heard, experienced and that we consider as a negative phenomenon.

Everyone, adult or child should report if they experience, see or recognize a case of violence, and regardless of whether you are a victim or a witness to violence, you must report it. The main reason for reporting violence is the proper handling of the case by the responsible institutions. Timely and proper reporting also helps prevent escalation of violence, but it also avoids new cases. If no violence is reported, it can grow bigger and its consequences may be even greater.

When violence occurs, it should be reported in order for the child involved to be helped and to prevent other children from being abused in the same way or by the same person. Reporting can be made via the mobile phone number 192, the toll free line of the Kosovo Police.

No one feels good in the event of violence. The victim and the witness suffer significant consequences, so don't take part of violence!

If you are experiencing domestic violence, or violence in the street, school, institution, Internet or anywhere else, you should report it.

When reporting violence to either the school or other responsible institutions, you must know that you will be treated with kindness and all your personal information and on your family will be kept secret. They are only shared with the responsible professionals to ensure that the child who has suffered violence is helped.

Reporting can be made via the mobile phone number 192, the toll free line of the Kosovo Police.



WHEN VIOLENCE OCCURS AT HOME:

...if you are continuously offended or mistreated by your brother, sister or other family member you must tell your parents or an adult person you trust. However, if you experience violence from your parents, then you should tell an adult person you trust, the teacher, the police.

WHEN VIOLENCE OCCURS IN THE STREET:

...if you experience violence from a neighborhood child, neighbor or other unknown person on the street, you must immediately tell your parents, police or an adult person you trust.

WHEN VIOLENCE OCCURS AT SCHOOL:

...if you experience violence from your peers, school staff, you must immediately notify the class tutor or school leader.

WHEN VIOLENCE OCCURS IN INSTITUTIONS:

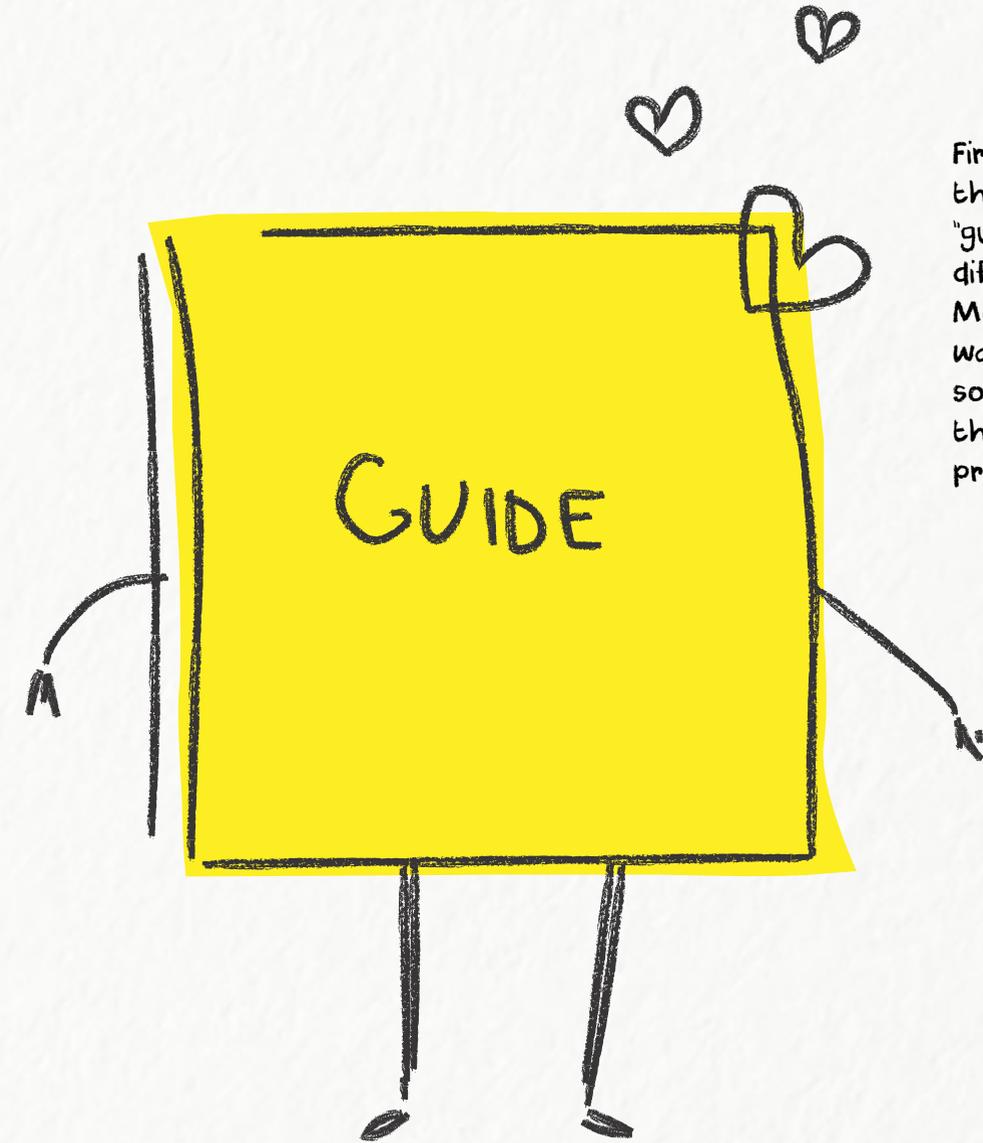
...if you are experiencing violence from your peers you should notify the head of the institution and your legal guardian. But if you experience violence from the staff of the institution, you should notify the police, the social worker, the teacher, or an adult person you trust.

WHEN DIGITAL VIOLENCE OCCURS:

...if you are experiencing violence through the use of information technology tools, you should immediately inform your parents, teachers, police or an adult person you trust.



HOW SHOULD YOU REACT



First of all, you will promise me that you will not be scared of this "guide", but you will realize that different people live in this world. Most people are good, loving and want to take care of you. But some of them may hurt you, so the "guide" will teach you how to protect yourself.

SAY "NO"

You have the right to say "NO" to anyone who tries to touch you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable or frightened.

SOME SECRETS MUST NEVER BE KEPT

There are some secrets you should never keep, even if you have promised to keep them. No perpetrator should ask you to keep the harassment "secret". Often, people who do bad things to children, and they ask the children not to tell anyone what happened, because they know they have done something wrong and are afraid they will be punished.

"Today a friend and tomorrow you can be the victim of that secret, or that violence!"

Hugs and kisses are pleasing, especially from the people we like. No one should ask you to give a kiss, hug or secret touch. Adults can tell you that this is just a small secret between us, but if an adult, even a person you know well, tells you so you should immediately tell your parents or an adult you trust.

YOUR BODY BELONGS TO YOU

Learn the names of your body parts and try to learn the difference between "good touch" and "bad touch".

No one should touch you in ways or places that make you feel bad. Also, you should not touch anyone else to make them feel bad or repulsive. Talk to parents or an adult you trust whenever you are unsure of someone's touch or behavior.

YELL

It's better to yell and call if someone tries to hurt you. You should not feel embarrassed or ashamed if you

need to yell out loudly for help when you're in trouble.

DO NOT TAKE GIFTS

It is common to receive gifts from friends and family. However, it is not common to receive items from unknown persons. Therefore, do not take any dessert, money or gift from anyone without telling

your parents or any other person caring for you. Be careful, even some adults whom you know and trust can give you gifts and money to deceive you and to urge you to do something wrong.

RUN OR LEAVE

If a stranger or someone you know tries to hurt you, immediately run or leave that location and seek help.

Make sure you always go to places where there are more people.

TELL SOMEONE

If you are physically, verbally, sexually abused or harassed by your peers, you must immediately tell

your teacher, parents, or any other adult you trust.

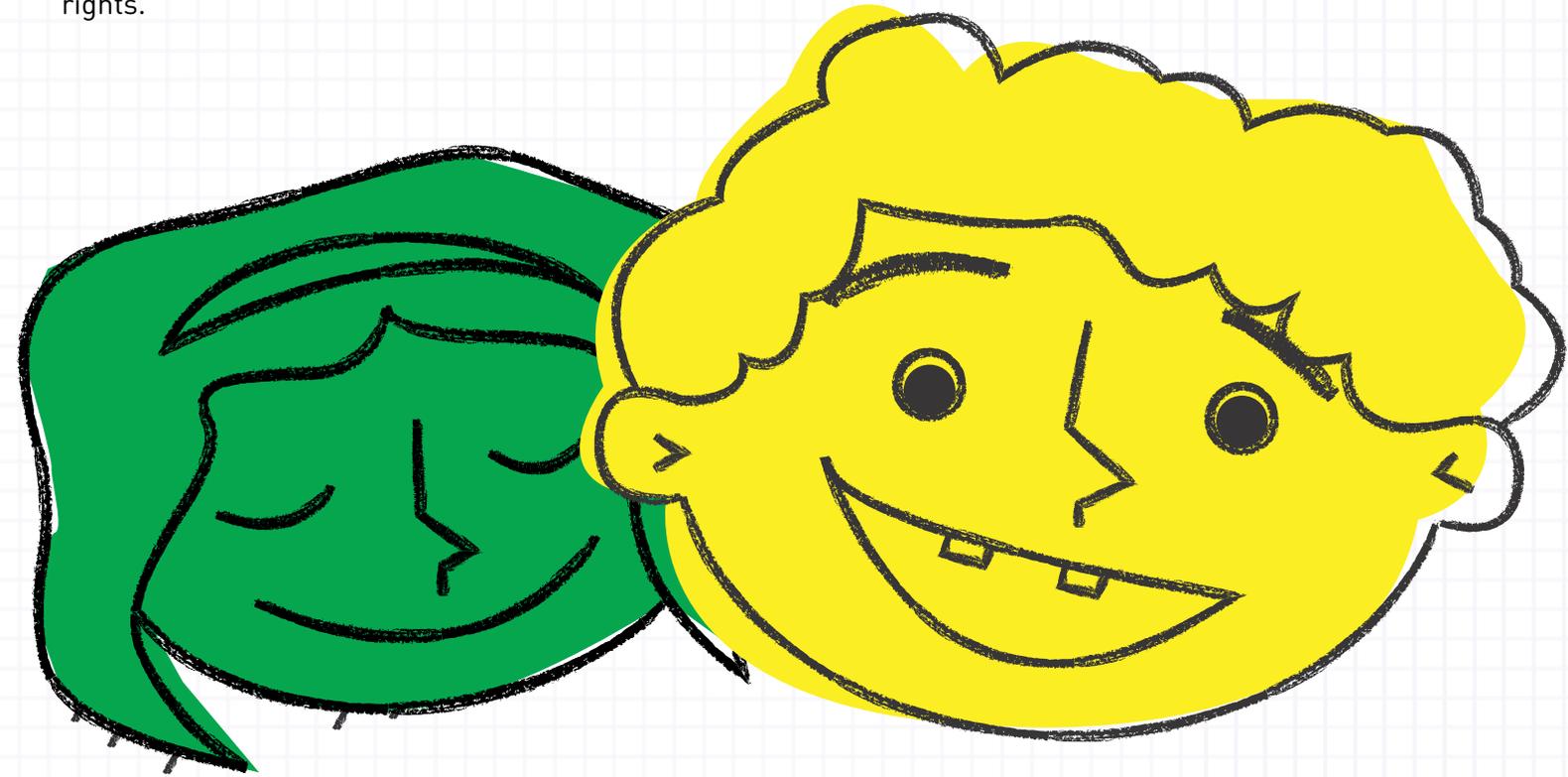
Remember!

Do not forget to tell an adult if you are injured. If anyone harms you, it is never your fault.

CONCLUSION

Violence can occur in families, streets, schools and other places, as we see all around us. As already said, forms of violence are varied and you should know how to keep away from violent behaviors with good manners and healthy communication, while together with family members, peers, and teachers, you must contribute to awareness and response against violence, which is detrimental to everyone and severely affects the human and child rights.

The world needs new ideas and approaches, and by respecting ourselves and others we add light and positivity to our lives and the lives of future generations. In such a way, you help in the building of the Republic of Kosovo, a state that provides equal opportunities for all and guarantees the rights of children.





Express Yourself

