

UN Guidelines on Justice in Matters Involving Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime

Key Principles

- (a) *Dignity*. Every child is a unique and valuable human being and as such his or her individual dignity, special needs, interests and privacy should be respected and protected;
- (b) *Non-discrimination*. Every child has the right to be treated fairly and equally, regardless of his or her or the parent or legal guardian's race, ethnicity, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability and birth or other status;
- (c) *Best interests of the child*. Every child has the right to have his or her best interests given primary consideration. This includes the right to protection and to a chance for harmonious development:
- (i) *Protection*. Every child has the right to life and survival and to be shielded from any form of hardship, abuse or neglect, including physical, psychological, mental and emotional abuse and neglect;
 - (ii) *Harmonious development*. Every child has the right to a chance for harmonious development and to a standard of living adequate for physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social growth. In the case of a child who has been traumatized, every step should be taken to enable the child to enjoy healthy development;
- (d) *Right to participation*. Every child has the right to express his or her views, opinions and beliefs freely, in his or her own words, and to contribute especially to the decisions affecting his or her life, including those taken in any judicial processes, and to have those views taken into consideration according to his or her abilities and evolving capacity.

Guidelines

- The right to be treated with dignity and compassion
- The right to be protected from discrimination
- The right to be informed
- The right to effective assistance
- The right to privacy
- The right to be protected from hardship during the justice process
- The right to safety
- The right to reparation
- The right to special preventive measures (for children victims and witnesses who are particularly vulnerable to recurring victimisation or offending)