

THE RUSSIAN PUBLIC ORGANIZATION
« **THE UNION OF SOCIAL EDUCATORS AND SOCIAL WORKERS** »
MEMBER OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SOCIAL
WORKERS

**THE ETHICAL GUIDELINE
OF SOCIAL EDUCATOR AND SOCIAL WORKER**

MOSCOW - 2003

The Ethical Guideline of Social worker and Social Educator – the members of the Russian public organization «the Union of social educators and social workers», Moscow, 2003.

The present Guideline is developed on the basis of recommendations of the International Federation of social workers and it represents the document in which the basic, base principles and values of social and social - pedagogical work connected with realization of the professional duties by experts of social sphere are stated.

The overall objective of «the Ethical Guideline of social worker and social educator» is to define and determine ethical principles and moral positions of the person (client), the expert (social worker and social educator) and the society (various institutes of the society) during their interaction in satisfying the client's social needs.

Commission of experts from the Union of social educators and social workers participated in compiling of the given Ethical Guideline of members the Union of social educators and social workers. The commission was headed by the vice-president of the Union of social educators and social workers, the academician of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, doctor of philosophy, professor Lipsky I.A., and N.B.Shmeleva, the professor, the doctor of philosophy, the dean of humanitarian faculty of the Ulyanovsk state university, and also work group of the Union of social educators and social workers headed by A.N.Dashkina, the candidate of pedagogical sciences, the President the Union of social educators and social workers which included the representatives of Kostroma, Kemerovo as well as Leningrad, Moscow, Orenburg regions, Republics Tyva and Moscow.

The project of the Guideline has been distributed in all regions of the Russian Federation for wide discussion on places and in the regional centers, at seminars and conferences. The delegates of Congress of social workers in Saratov at the end of November, 2002 have been acquainted with it.

Suggestions and remarks of regional branches the Union of social educators and social workers have been taken into account during the work on the Guideline. Domestic and international materials developed by known experts for workers of social sphere, including Medvedeva G.P., Jarskaya-Smirnova _ and Ethical Guidelines of Associations of social workers of Australia, Great Britain, Denmark, Lithuania, Poland, the USA and Finland were also used.

The editor: N.A.Kasasa

CONTENTS

Section 1: INTRODUCTION.....	4
Section 2: DEFINITION OF SOCIAL WORK.....	5
Section 3: VALUES OF SOCIAL WORK.....	6
Section 4: PRINCIPLES OF SOCIAL WORK.....	10
Section 5:STANDARDS OF ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR.....	15
Section 6: DEFINITION OF SOCIAL WORK AND COMMENTS OF INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS.....	17
Section 7:INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS ON WHICH PRINCIPLES AND ETHICAL STANDARDS OF SOCIAL WORK ARE BASED.....	19

There is a huge professional space, where everyone can show his best sincere qualities.

Section 1:

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The tasks of the Guideline include the characteristic of the basic ethical standards and rules** by which social workers and social educators are guided in the practical activities. This document is the manifest proclaiming values and principles, promoting maintenance of the high standard of professional work of each worker in social sphere irrespective of his position and membership in the Union of social educators and social workers.
- 1.2. The Guideline contains instructions for workers of social sphere**, members of the Union of social educators and social workers. The Guideline can be used by other people to define professional standards of experts in social sphere and students of social high schools. The given Guideline can be included in the text of hiring contracts, concluded with social workers and social educators by the employers.
- 1.3. Further on, the Union of social educators and social workers will aspire to recognition of the Guideline** by the rest of experts, organizations and institutes related to the given professional environment (the social environment).
- 1.4. Items of the Guideline orient the members of the Union of social educators and social workers** to arrange practical activities according to the client's interests, involving him on equal rights basis in all stages of the process of rendering him social service.
- 1.5. The Guideline demands that practicing workers** should fulfill their duties professionally according to ethical and moral principles.
- 1.6. The Guideline does not give** anybody the right to subject a person to discrimination in any purposes.
- 1.7. The consent with the Ethical Guideline** as well as professional and personal

- 1.8. Additions, revision and updating of the Guideline** is a direct duty of the Board of the Union of social educators and social workers and the commission of experts authorized by the Board.
- 1.9. On questions concerning interpretation or applications of the Guideline** you should address the first instance – the Board of the Union of social educators and social workers.

Section 2:

DEFINITION OF SOCIAL WORK

The constant need for methodical recommendations and social workers staff of a new formation has appeared in connection with the formation of basically new system of social protection and service of the population in Russia, corresponding to the new conditions of development of the Russian society, The adequate material base and professional training system of social work was created in the beginning of the 1990-s in Russia. The specialty « social work » was formed in April 1991 and in the same year « the Qualifying directory of posts of heads, experts and employees » was added to the qualifying characteristic « the expert on social work ». The following definition of social work was accepted after careful discussion in professional environment by Russian experts:

Social work is a set of different kinds of activity (professional and nonprofessional, service and voluntary) on satisfaction of the person's social needs. A person who has turned for the help to the social worker, or to whom such help is offered, is defined as a client (a visitor, a customer) of social and social - pedagogical work. The client can represent an individual, a family, any group or community.

VALUES OF SOCIAL WORK

3.1. Human dignity and tolerance

Social worker and social educator recognize value of each person and his right to realize his abilities, to have worthy life conditions and wealth, his right for free choice of life position so that the rights of one person do not interfere with realization of interests and the rights of other people or groups.

Social workers and social educators:

a) respect the fundamental rights of the person specified in the General Declaration of the United Nations on human rights and in other international agreements, based on this Declaration;

b) show respect and benevolent attitude to all people and respect the clients' convictions, their values, culture, purposes, needs, preferences, mutual relations and communications with other people;

c) protect and support their dignity, take into account individuality, client's interests and social needs on the basis of tolerant relations with them;

d) promote personal wealth and independence of clients, form and support their respect of the rights and freedom of other people;

e) respect the client's rights in decision-making process; guarantee the client's direct participation in decision-making process, providing full information concerning the client in a concrete situation;

f) guarantee protection to the clients with an object of their safety, and safety of their social environment.

3.2. Social justice and humanism

Social justice and humanism are values of social and social - pedagogical work. They include:

- fair and equal distribution of resources for satisfaction of the person's basic social needs;

- creation and observance of guaranteed equal opportunities of using the potential of the state and public social services, organizations, associations;
- maintenance of equal rights and opportunities of their realization at the reference and protection according to the law.

Social workers and social educators:

a) reveal and adequately react to social conditions which result in social contradictions, difficulties and sufferings of people, or prevent their simplification; influence the formation of the social policy promoting fair satisfaction of social needs of people according to their opportunities and the level of professional activity;

b) observe social justice and distribute social resources on equal rights basis and carry out social pedagogical work. The purpose of this work is expansion of choice and opportunities for all clients, including, deprived, socially vulnerable or oppressed, or for those people who require specific help;

c) conduct active work improving the activity of social institutes, political structures, certain political leaders and local heads with the purpose of elimination of infringements of civil, political, economic, social and cultural human rights;

d) convince each client that their actions are not dictated by biases against somebody (a person or any group), including background, ethnic and cultural belonging, class, status, sex, sexual orientation, age, physical condition, beliefs;

e) conduct the practical work directed on development of client's opportunities, help certain persons, families, groups, communities in their aspiration to solve social problems by their own, promote their positive self-fulfillment, independence of their choice and improvement of social welfare;

f) develop first of all volunteers' participation among young people in improving social and social - pedagogical work, social processes and social services, support the activity of public organizations and associations of social orientation, as well as by means of personal participation in them.

3.3. Competence

Competence (professionalism) is a value of social work and social - pedagogical activity which provides qualitative decision of social problems of the person who has turned for help, his society, social environment as a whole and

- provides the belonging of the social educator and the social worker to their professional group;
- determines opportunity for their fast professional growth and recruit for the solving of more complex client's tasks;
- induces constant increase of professional level, gaining new knowledge, development of skills and habits in practical activity, deep understanding of values of social work and studying methods of scientific research of processes in social environment.

Social workers and social educators:

a) study, use, spread and apply knowledge, skills in the practice of social and social - pedagogical work;

b) constantly raise the level of their professionalism, support and expand their competence with a view of service quality improvement, thus carrying out search and an estimation of new approaches and practical methods (techniques, technologies) in the activity;

c) participate in the scientific search of the reasons of infringement of social interests of concrete people and social groups as a whole, determine their character and define the ways to prevent and overcome them;

d) take part in educational process together with the colleagues, students and probationers, publish the results of solving client's concrete social problems or situations on the basis of observing the principle of confidentiality;

e) realize the frameworks of their competence and do not go far in the situations where higher level of problem solving is required; bring management's attention to the question on necessity of the further professionalism.

Social worker and social educator have no right to use their professional

purposes. They should avoid communication and relations which can do harm their clients; never and under no circumstances should have sexual relations with them.

3.4. Social activity, mobility and flexibility

Social activity, mobility and flexibility are values of social work and they assume interconnected activity of social educator and social worker with the person who has turned for their help. At the same time, social worker and social educator act not only when they are asked. In those cases when they get to know about negative situations in the life of the client (an individual, family, group of people), they tactfully and cautiously contact him, offering their help in the joint solving of these problem situations. Besides studying the society, they predict possible negative situations and aspire to prevent them happening.

Social workers and social educators.

a) assist people in critical situations, with the purpose to jointly solve their social problems, restore their vital forces and social status, to transfer them in social stable groups of population, to warn repeated critical situations;

b) work with each person of their social environment (territory of the professional responsibility) and his family with the purpose to provide them help preventing crisis situations, assisting to mobilize vital forces, transforming in socially perspective groups of the population;

c) help and support people, their families relating to client's perspective groups of population, preserve their social status and full realization of client's opportunities;

d) provide unity and interrelation of cognitive activity (studying of clients, society, their social processes, research work aimed to find the reasons of social conflicts) converting activity (assisting to all people in need, families and other groups) and educational activity (preparation of students, exchange of experience with colleagues, training of clients, etc.).

PRINCIPLES OF SOCIAL WORK

4.1. Acceptance of the person as he is

A client of social work can be a separate person or group of people (for example family), which have individual and group features. Each client has legal and moral right to be listened to by any social worker irrespective of his departmental belonging or occupied position. Each client has the right to receive help in improving his social situation, thus social educator and social worker provide him personal safety observing the principle "do not do much harm".

While solving problems of vital client's situation, social educator and social worker are guided by reasonable character of client's requirements, taking into account, that a measure is the degree of harmonization of relations between the client and the society in their interaction. The main task in practically any situation becomes offering assistance to the client for his prompt independent actions intending to solve his problems.

Neither negative personal qualities, physical defects, mental deviations nor creed, sexual orientation or racial belonging, neither social impracticality nor prejudices and biases can form the basis for social educator and social worker to refuse helping the person, the reason for any form of client's discrimination. All specific client's features should be taken into account at decision-making on offering him social help.

4.2. Respect of client's right to accept independent decision at any stage of joint actions.

The respect of client's right for decision-making shows respect and observance of his rights. The person, who has turned for help to social educator and social worker, has the same rights, as all other people. Social educator and social worker cannot assist the person (or group of people) without his consent with their plan of action. The client has the right to refuse the suggested variant of actions; to continue already started work if his opinion or the situation has changed for some reason or another. He has the right to change his views, opinion, position and beliefs.

Irrespective to the degree of rationality (irrationality) of client's acts social educator and social worker cannot force him (morally or financially, psychologically or physically) to follow their professional logic. Only reasons and arguments, logic of argument, ethical values of the state and a society, norms of the current legislation, opportunities of system of social protection of the population and other social institutes, professional experience of social worker and social educator are tools of their influence on the client.

The client has the right to refuse the interaction at any level of joint work being confident that all information about him will be confidentially preserved.

4.3. Confidentiality of cooperation of social worker and social educator with the client

Confidential (not subjected to disclosure) information is everything, concerning life conditions of the client, his personal qualities and problems, and also everything else that will be determined by the client in interaction with social worker and social teacher. They should guarantee him this confidentiality and take all measures to maintain it.

Social worker and social educator should inform the client that this or that information should be given to other workers of the given social institute (social service), their management in order to accept optimum decision on the social help required by the client at higher administrative level. They are also obliged to inform the client about necessity to involve other organizations and juridical persons, client's nearest and dearest, representatives of social organizations and to give them the necessary information. In any case such information can be given only from the sanction of the client only to those who are involved in solving his problems.

At the client's consent to give part of coordinated information to other persons or organizations the social worker (the social educator) should warn them about conditions of confidentiality: confidentiality has no prescription.

Infringement of confidentiality is possible only in conditions of direct danger to

confidentiality should be accompanied by the preliminary notice of the client about compelling conditions, and about duties and responsibility of social worker and the social educator.

4.4. Complete informing the person about actions undertaken in his interests

Observing the principle of protection of client's rights causes the duty of social educator and social worker to inform the person who has turned for their social help about all actions undertaken by them to solve his problems.

Social worker and social educator are responsible for completeness, quality and time of giving all necessary information to the client.

Informing the client is necessary in order to create favorable conditions for the activation of his personal potential.

Besides, lack of the information can negatively affect quality of the decision accepted by the client. Not knowing all circumstances and facts, he can make wrong decision that will lead to the result opposite to the purpose of social work and his personal interests. Taking into account, that questions solved in social and social - pedagogical work are connected with person's fate, with harmonization of his relations with the society, with improvement of his life conditions, the client has the full right to know about all actions which are supposed to be undertaken with his participation or without it.

Taking into account, that interaction between the person (client), the expert (social worker and social educator) and the society is formed on the basis of partner relations, each of them, including, the client, should possess the status of the full subject of this interaction, so he must have the right for initiative, respect of dignity and complete information.

Social workers and social educators should prevent situations of the conflict of interests, which can influence their professional tact, success in solving social problems of the person who has turned for help.

If such conflict arises, they should declare it and take necessary measures,

educators should help a person, families, groups and communities to find ways for the mutually acceptable decision of arising problems or for coordination and balancing of their conflicting or competing needs and interests.

4.5. The responsibility of social worker and social educator for the results of their activity

Social worker and social educator, being engaged in solving client's problems, bear personal responsibility for the results of their activity, for quality and efficiency, time and effectiveness of the social help and for its consequences.

Social worker (social educator) bears the responsibility before the society for the results of their activity. He is called not only to harmonize client's relations with social environment, but also to restore, to raise person's social status decreased because of objective and subjective reasons, to help to restore his active personal and social life.

Social worker (social educator) bears the responsibility before himself and his family. His constant participation in solving client's problems, living through the client's troubles, needs, tragedies, misfortunes objectively results in professional "burning out", decrease his emotional perception, empathy and develop cynicism.

Each social worker is obliged to be able to protect himself in his own interests, and in his client's interests.

Social educators and social workers bear the responsibility for their trade, raising its prestige, the social status in the society, importance in interpersonal and group communication in various kinds and types of society, providing its attractiveness for youth and integration of young experts into trades of social worker and social educator.

Thus it is important to take into account, that in conditions of interaction between the society, the client and the social worker (the social educator) the responsibility for the results of such interaction cannot be assigned only to the worker of social sphere. It is inexpedient to expect that social worker and social educator should be personally responsible for distant results of actions concerted with the client and for their consequences: when the problem is solved, communication with the client can be lost;

his problems independently; the result depends from the type of these problems and moral aspect of the client and it can be various.

4.6. Decency of social worker and social teacher in interaction with the client

Decency of social educator and social worker is rather important principle concerning the necessity to provide balance of interests, both personal, and client's interests and his social environment; professional community of social workers and social educators, the society as a whole. Somebody's interests cannot prevail the interests of others; they cannot be realized with detriment to somebody.

Personal decency of social educator and social worker includes maintenance of reasonable balance, harmonization of interests of all interested sides, the skill to prevent the establishment of someone's priority above others, including the priority of the society above the client's interests and on the contrary, the personal interests above the client's interests and interests of the society.

The important condition of social work is unselfishness of social worker and social educator. Social workers and social educators do everything for the client, that they consider being necessary in order to solve the problem.

Social workers and social educators, being representatives for the state social institutes, public nongovernmental organizations and associations, operate in interests of the person who has turned for help. They often do for the person much more than the duty regulations require.

Social worker and social educator should not be influenced or pressed during their professional work. They must impartially carry out their professional duties.

Goodwill is present at all stages of interaction of social worker and social educator with the client. It provides true tone at teamwork with the person who has turned for help, causes his frankness and interaction. Wishing good to the person who has turned for help, social worker and social educator carry out necessary management of his actions, tactfully specify mistakes and drawbacks, help to solve difficult problems or they take complete care of the client.

Personal decency of social educator and social worker guarantees quality and efficiency of their professional activity and make them follow the requirements of the international and national Ethical Guideline of social worker and social educator.

Section 5:

STANDARDS OF ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR

Standards of ethical behaviour of social educator and social worker determine the norms of their professional activity according to ethical values, principles and rules of social work. These standards do not have exhaustive character.

5.1. Ethical behaviour in relation to the trade of social educator and social worker

Social worker and social educator

a) observe the ethical Guideline, assert values and rules, principles and standards of ethical behaviour, protect, improve and popularize them;

b) raise quality and efficiency of social services given to people, develop professionalism of social work, inviting nonprofessionals to assist social educators and social workers in solving feasible problems;

c) raise the status of social and social - pedagogical work, protect it from unreasonable criticism and strengthen the belief in its necessity among people of various social groups ;

d) take part and encourage others for creative search of new approaches, technologies, methods and techniques of social work and social - pedagogical activity;

e) critically estimate the results achieved in personal practical work, do not exaggerate their professional and personal opportunities;

f) explain in intelligible form the aim, the objects and tasks of professional social and social - pedagogical work to other people, both as the representative of these trades, and as representatives of the Union of social educators and social workers of Russian Federation.

5.2. Ethical behaviour in relation to people which use social services

Social worker and social educator:

a) observe principles of social work concerning the clients: accept the person as he is; involve him in active teamwork; provide confidentiality of cooperation, information and access to it; bear the responsibility for the results of the work with the client; show personal decency in relation to him;

b) appreciate and respect personal aspirations, individual features, initiative and the client's creative approach to the joint actions in solving his problems; assist clients in order to restore and develop their own potential opportunities observing equal rights of other people and social groups;

c) give a priority to support client's basic interests, but thus respect and take into account interests of other people; in case there is a conflict of various client's interests or the conflict of the client's interests and the legislation operating in Russia, warn the client that his interests and requests can be rejected;

d) minimize the use of legal, psychological, economic or other kinds of compulsion; in cases when such compulsion is inevitable, it should be ethically, professionally and legally justified;

e) reject any forms of the discrimination based on nationality, sexual relations, age, creed, marital status, political orientation, intellectual or physical defects, privileges, personal characteristics.

5.3. Ethical behaviour in relation to colleagues

Social worker and social educator:

a) treat the colleagues with respect in spite of their speciality and specialization, professional level and work experience, providing them assistance to achieve high efficiency of their work in the field of social and social - pedagogical activity;

b) respect various opinions and approaches of colleagues and other experts, taking up the responsibility for validity of their criticism, addressed them from various

c) protect their colleagues from any forms and kinds of pressure for the part of clients, a management, state organizations or public associations in the cases when such influence is unreasonable;

c) follow advice and consultations of colleagues and instructors if they serve common interests.

5.4. Ethical behaviour in relation to the cooperating organizations

Social worker and social educator:

a) build mutual relations with other organizations on the basis of goodwill, orientation on interests of people who have turned for help, taking into account opportunities and purpose of these organizations in accordance of activity of these organizations with Ethical Guideline of social worker and social educator;

b) adhere to the obligations given to the cooperating organizations, and make these organizations perform their own obligations using their resources for the needs, these resources are intended for;

d) develop command, inter-institutional and interdepartmental forms of social and social - pedagogical work, preserve working atmosphere in collectives and teams, supporting acceptable conditions for activity of each employee.

Section 6:

THE DEFINITION OF SOCIAL WORK AND COMMENTS OF INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS

Social worker and social educator are representatives of certain delicate and humane profession. Their professional duty is coordination of personal and social interests of clients, harmonization of these relations. They act as middlemen in interaction between person, family and society, supporting this interaction by means of social development of the client and transformation of the society. Their activity is arranged taking into account economic, political, legislative and social context and on the basis of moral values, principles and rules.

Profession “Social work” serves to realize social changes in the society, to solve problems of human relations and strengthen person’s freedom and his right for decent life. Using theories of human behaviour and social systems, social work is involved in the process of the stage when people interact with the environment. **Principles of observing human rights and social justice are considered to be fundamental for social work.** (Accepted at the meeting of International Federation of social workers in Monreal, Canada, July, 2000).

Social work in its different aspects is addressed for many-sided necessary, complex interaction of people. Its mission is to give all people the opportunity to use their potential, make their lives richer and prevent its damage. Professional social work is concentrated on solving problems and making changes. Social workers are those who bring changes in the society, and in the life of an individual, family, and community. **Social work is an interrelated system of values, theory and practice.**

Social work was formed on the ideas of humanism and democracy and these values are basic in the respect of equality, importance and dignity of all people. From its very beginning 100 years ago social work has been concentrated on realization of human needs and development of human potential. **Values of social work are stated in the Ethical Guidelines of professional international and national organizations.**

Methodology of social work is based on systematic knowledge, which is based on facts according to local specification and certain context. It accepts complexity of interaction between human being and his environment, ability of people to be influenced by different factors, including biopsychology.

Social work faces barriers, inequality and injustice in the society. It **gives answer on crisis and extraordinary situations, as well as on every day personal and social problems.** Social work has at its disposal different skills, technologies, methods and acts according to integral approach to a person and his environment. Social work is done on different levels, starting from getting into psychological social processes of a person, finishing with social policy, planning and development. It means consultancy,

clinical social work, group work, social pedagogy, family therapy and help people to receive social service and access recourses in the society.

Managing structures, local organizations, influencing the formation of social policy and economic development are involved in this process. **Integral approach in social work is universal, so priorities of social work may change according to the cultural specification of the country, time and also cultural, historical and social economic conditions.**

There is no denying the fact that social work in the 21st century becomes more dynamic and it develops intensively, so no definition can be completely accepted.

Section 7:

INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS ON WHICH PRINCIPLES AND ETHICAL STANDARDS OF SOCIAL WORK ARE BASED

Human rights and social justice serve as motivation and legal ground of social work. In solidarity with those who is offended by destiny, people of this profession try to overcome poverty, to help vulnerable and oppressed people, make for providing social service to everyone in need.

7.1 International declaration of ethical principles of social work. International ethical standards of social workers, 1994.

The International Federation of social workers postponed acceptance of these documents as it was caused by distinctions in culture, religion, traditions and history of developing social work, and also with political system in the countries whose representatives are members of the International Federation of social workers. After long discussion and coordination on the general meeting the International Federation of social workers in 1994 accepted the document « **Ethics of social work: principles and standards** » which consists of two parts: « International declaration of ethical principles of social work » and « International ethical standards of social workers ». For example, « the International ethical standards of social work » contain 5 groups of standards:

Mutual relations with clients

Mutual relations with agencies and the organizations

Mutual relations with colleagues

The attitude to a trade.

7.2 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948

The declaration consists of 30 articles, which define fundamental rights (civil, political, economic, social and cultural) and freedom of all people.

The declaration has no validity, but it represents a unit of moral norms that are included in internal legislations of the majority of the countries in the world.

7.3 The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966

The document fixes the following rights:

- for life, freedom and inviolability of a person;
- not to be exposed to tortures, and severe, brutal or humiliating the person's dignity treatment;
- prohibition of slavery;
- not to be exposed to arrest and detention;
- for the freedom of speech, religions, assemblies and associations, including membership in trade unions;
- for the freedom of movement and choice of residence;
- to vote on the basis of system of general suffrage;
- for free proceeding;
- for protection of minority.

7.4 The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1965

The convention guarantees full realization of the principle of equality and exception of discrimination for each person. The document is directed on liquidation of racial discrimination in its forms and displays, prevention and eradication of racist theories and practice of their realization and creation of the international community, free from all forms of racial segregation and racial discrimination.

7.5 The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, 1976

In the Convention discrimination against women is defined as:

" Any distinction, exclusion or restriction on the basis of sex which is directed on elimination of recognition, using or realization of human rights by women and their basic freedom in political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other area ".

7.6 The Convention on the Rights of Children, 1989

The overall objective of the Convention is maximum protection of children's interests. According to the convention, the child is a person, aged up to 18 if only the national legislation does not establish earlier age of maturity. The convention:

- calls the states ratifying the given convention, to create conditions at which children can accept active and creative participation in sociopolitical life of the countries;
- protects children from all forms of exploitation, considering the question on children of representatives of national minorities and groups of indigenous population;
- considers problems of abusing drugs and absence of child care;
- contains specific proposals directed on protection of the rights of children, involved in criminal activity;
- recognizes a paramount role of family and parents in child care and protection, and also the duty of the state to help parents to perform their duties.