



## *Article 31 of The Convention on the Rights of the Child*

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States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

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States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.

**Children must live their childhood.  
We must protect their right to play.**



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**THEIR GAMES /  
OUR DUTY.**

## The Child learns through play, and through playing he learns that learning is fun

Article 31 of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC) recognizes the right of every child to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities and free and full participation in cultural and artistic life.

Rising urban populations, the commercialization of play provision, child labour and increasing educational demands are all affecting children's opportunity to enjoy their article 31 rights.

It is important to create time and space for children to engage in spontaneous play, recreation and creativity, and to promote societal attitudes that support and encourage such activity.

### What is "Play"?

Children's play is any behaviour, activity or process initiated, controlled and structured by children themselves.

Play is non-compulsory, driven by intrinsic motivation and undertaken for its own sake, rather than as a means to an end. It may take infinite forms but the key characteristics of play are fun, uncertainty, challenge, flexibility and non-productivity.

Play is a fundamental and vital dimension of the pleasure of childhood and is an essential component of physical, social, cognitive, emotional and spiritual children's development.

## Play it is not only a right but... it is a Duty

Play is essential to children's growth and development. It is their tool to learn about the world and come to an understanding of their own nature and capabilities.

However, because it is a child's most natural impulse and therefore not necessarily requiring adult intervention or support, this most fundamental and vital part of growing up has been increasingly taken for granted.

In many parts of the world, play is perceived as "deficit" time spent in frivolous or unproductive activity of no intrinsic worth.

Parents, caregivers and public administrators commonly place a higher priority on studying or economic work than on play, which is often considered noisy, dirty, disruptive and intrusive.

The right of the children to play must be considered fundamental for the wellness, the health and the personal growth.

### Play must be for each child:

- Safe
- Public
- Free
- Explorative
- Unstructured

For these reasons it is important that children devote a part of their life to playing.

## Playing is a Right which needs to be Guaranteed

There is now an urgent need for a serious investment of resources to provide our children with the environments, the opportunities, the access and the support to play. Some children face greater obstacles than others do and, in being excluded or denied this basic right, lose part of their childhood.

Consequently, they suffer – emotionally, socially and educationally. Play and recreation are a right of any child, as in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child*.

### How LAB31 can help

LAB31 is a pilot project, funded by European Commission – *Migration and Home Affairs General Direction*.

It is born with the aim to provide an innovative template of PLAY strengthening the active participation and the integration among children from all over the world with the objective to improve their quality of life.

Through the play, LAB31 wants to "bring out" what already exists and, therefore, to express the potential of each individual by recognizing their age and existential condition, their culture, their wealth of experience and the emotional and bodily experience.

Pilot projects were implemented by 9 Organizations from seven Countries: Italy, Czech Republic, Spain, Belgium, Cyprus, United Kingdom and Romania.