

Message by UNICEF Iran Representative on Children's Day

“Let kindness reign”

Dear reader,

UNICEF Iran wishes all children in Iran a Happy Children's Day 2007! We hope that all of them will have an opportunity to celebrate this day with their parents, teachers and everyone else who not only takes careof them but also cares for them!

Iranian Children's Day is generally celebrated as an event when all children receive particular attention and, in particular, presents and sweets. However, there are very special gifts every child can receive on any day of the year, not only on Children's Day: kindness, care and attention.

Sadly, some children do not receive such gifts in their day-to-day lives. Instead, they are neglected by the very same adults that are supposed to take care of them, or are subject to verbal abuse or even physical violence.

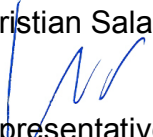
No better day than Children's Day to become more aware of our behavior towards children! It is an ideal opportunity to reflect on the role we play in dealing with children, and to take active steps towards making positive changes. Iranian families in particular have a great potential to make a difference, in light of the humanitarian & religious values rooted in their culture.

This is the last year of UNICEF's five-year campaign “A World Fit for Children”. To celebrate Iranian Children's Day 2007, we have added our own message: “A World Free of Violence”. UNICEF Iran is happy to witness the interest and commitment of Iran's citizens and government to prevent all forms of violence against children in its society.

More can and should be done, and thus we hope that the government will develop and implement a plan of action against child abuse as soon as possible. This would be a highly significant next step to take, and make a real difference for the lives of many children in this country. Such initiative will also need the strong support of civil society, the media, parents, and teachers – in short, everyone who works with and for children.

The real change ultimately has to take place in each individual. So let us start by making time for children, by giving them attention, and first and foremost: by letting kindness reign!

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