

Do you know your rights



Voices of Youth  
[www.unicef.org/voy/](http://www.unicef.org/voy/)

<http://www.unicef.org/voy/>

## The UN Study on Violence Against Children

13 September 2005 / New York / Geneva – The study commissioned by the UN Secretary-General on violence against children has been using the discussion forums on *Voices of Youth* to get ideas from young people about how we can take real action to prevent and end this violence. In one month, there have been just under 1,000 views for the discussion in English and 350 views for the discussion in French.

“Give us the right to make the world a better place for everyone.” (boy, Nigeria)

### The importance of making a joint effort

According to young people, the fight against violence requires a joint effort between children and adults. Raising awareness, they say, is very important.

“The most important thing is AWARENESS because it is essential to make people understand how this violence can result in future [problems]...” (girl, India)

Though they realize that talking to an adult about violence is sometimes necessary, young people think that children need to speak to each other because it can be easier than talking to an adult. More importantly, young people see a clear link between childhood and parenthood. They are conscious that if a child is exposed to violence, he or she can become violent later in life. As an Indian girl says, “a child today is going to be a father tomorrow.”

Young people also think that the media should play a part in the fight against violence; they believe that children should be protected from seeing violent scenes. “Children practice what they see on the T.V.,” says one Filipino boy.

### The role of children’s rights

Young people acknowledge that children’s rights are important in the fight against violence, but point out that some factors keep these rights from being respected, poverty, for example. According to young people, education about children’s rights is necessary, particularly for parents. “The only action we can do is to EDUCATE,” says a boy from Philippines.

### Fighting female infanticide and early marriage

One participant started a survey asking why female infanticide is still prevalent. Fifty-five percent of the respondents give illiteracy as an explanation, 22% think people see female children as a burden and 22% point to superstitious reasons. To fight this problem, young people insist on the importance of awareness.

“You and I know it is prostitution, but sadly, it is made legal in the name of marriage.” (boy, India)

“The government has the power to spread the awareness that a girl child is not a burden, she is the angel that god sends to your house.” (boy, India)

---

You can read more of the *Voices of Youth* discussions on the *Voices of Youth* discussion forums at: <http://www.unicef.org/voy/discussions/>. We request you to please use available channels to publicise this e-space with your staff, partner organizations and especially youth organizations and networks in your country and region.