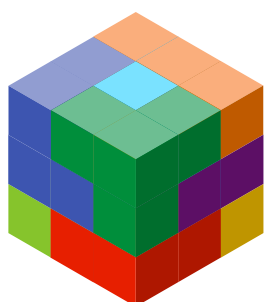


FAQs

RITEC DESIGN TOOLBOX

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Who is the RITEC Design Toolbox for?

The RITEC Design Toolbox is created for design professionals in the online gaming industry who are designing digital play for children. This includes different design professions (product, visual, UX, research, etc.), different management levels, and Trust and Safety professionals supporting the process.

What is RITEC?


The Responsible Innovation in Technology for Children (RITEC) project is a collaboration between UNICEF and The LEGO Group and is funded by The LEGO Foundation. The project's primary objective is to develop, with children from around the world, a framework that maps how the design of children's digital experiences affects their well-being and provides guidance on how informed design choices can promote positive well-being outcomes.

The project is an international, multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral collaboration that includes partners from the Young and Resilient Research Centre at Western Sydney University, the CREATE Lab at New York University, the Graduate Center at City University of New York, the University of Sheffield, the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the Digital Child, and the Joan Ganz Cooney Center.

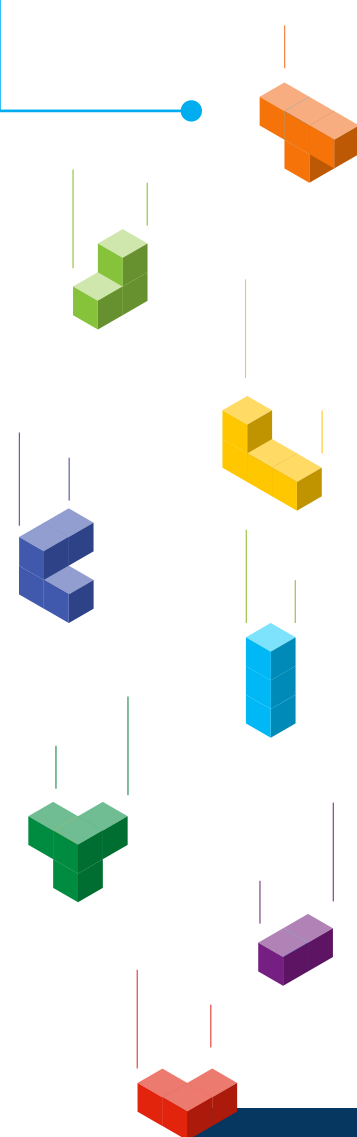
The RITEC project has produced two types of outputs to date: research reports and a Design Toolbox for businesses.

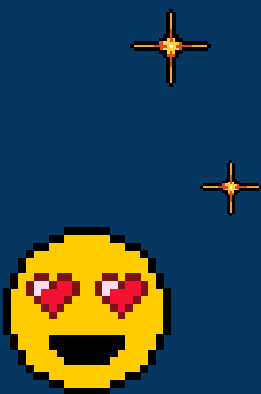
1. **Research reports:** Working with 787 children, focusing on those aged 8–12 years, in 18 countries (Albania, Australia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Cyprus, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Pakistan, South Africa, Taiwan, Tanzania, Tunisia, the United Kingdom, Uruguay, the United States of America) to define the 'RITEC-8' framework for children's well-being in digital play. The eight dimensions of the RITEC-8 framework are: safety and security; diversity, equity and inclusion; autonomy; emotions; competence; relationships; creativity; and identities.

Led by UNICEF Innocenti Office of Research and Foresight.

- a. Phase one report (2022): Creating the (interim) RITEC-8 framework.
 - b. Phase two report (2024): Empirically validating the RITEC-8 framework.
2. **RITEC Design Toolbox** (2024): The RITEC Design Toolbox takes the findings from the RITEC research and creates practical advice and information for businesses to design digital play experiences with children's well-being in mind. 

Led by UNICEF Child Rights and Business.





What is well-being? How is it related to children's rights?

Children's well-being is related to, but distinct from, children's rights.

Child rights are fundamental legal principles that explain how all children should or should not be treated. Children are entitled to general human rights and, in addition, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child ([CRC](#)), 1989, defines the basic rights of children and is the most ratified treaty in [history](#). The CRC places primary responsibility on States and acknowledges the role of parents, teachers, institutions – and [businesses](#). Children's rights apply [equally](#) in online and offline spaces (United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, [General Comment No. 25](#) on children's rights in relation to the digital environment, as adopted on 2 March 2021).

Although children's rights are related to children's well-being, these concepts are not equivalent.

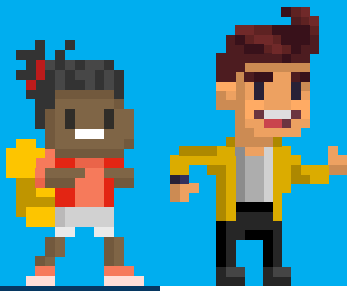
Well-being is a concept that describes the individual state of how a child is experiencing life and to what extent is it good and desirable. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines [well-being](#) as a positive state experienced by individuals and societies. Well-being can be objective or subjective.

The RITEC research adopts a subjective definition of well-being and places the spotlight on a child's own individual feelings and experiences. The research focused on how children experience or evaluate their own lives and to what extent their life and current situation are positive and desirable versus negative and undesirable.

For example, as mentioned in the [RITEC Phase 2 report](#), it is possible for children to live in an affluent household and have access to quality education (often used as objective indicators of high well-being) while still not feeling happy or hopeful about the future. The aim of this work is to enhance child well-being as the end goal.

The RITEC-8 well-being framework was developed by asking children worldwide about their experiences and feelings in digital play. These eight dimensions can be incorporated in the design of products and experiences to promote well-being outcomes of children's digital play. Our focus on subjective well-being puts children's own feelings and experiences front and centre.





Which age groups does RITEC focus on?

In this project we worked with 787 children in 18 countries, focusing on children aged **8–12 years**, an age group in transition from childhood to adolescence (also known as pre-adolescence, or ‘tweens’).

The Convention on the Rights of the Child defines children as every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier (article 1). From a developmental perspective, each age group has its own unique abilities and motivations across the physical, cognitive, social and emotional dimensions. This means each age group’s needs and motivations in digital play may differ dramatically.

Additional factors that can impact children’s needs and delights, in addition to developmental stage, include cultural norms, context, gender, experience, physical challenges and personal differences.

How can RITEC aid design teams in designing children’s digital play?

The RITEC project provides several benefits and practical tools for design teams:

- An evidence-based framework and concepts to help promote children’s well-being in digital play.
- A shared **vocabulary** for game designers to discuss both children’s needs and desires for well-being, as well as online gaming features to promote it.
- An interactive card deck of **game-design features** that our research suggests can promote well-being in digital play.
- Quotes and **examples** from children captured during play experiences.
- Printable posters for the home/office displaying the framework and examples.
- A summary for executives discussing the **ROI** of designing for well-being.
- Design **guidelines** on implementing the RITEC-8 framework.
- A list of Digital **Play Drivers** to aid in defining audience motivation, desires and needs.

How were the RITEC-8 framework and RITEC Design Toolbox developed?

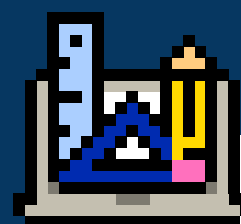
The RITEC-8 framework was developed by UNICEF and academic partners, by research and consultations with 787 children, focusing on those aged 8–12 years, in 18 countries (Albania, Australia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Cyprus, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Pakistan, South Africa, Taiwan, Tanzania, Tunisia, UK, Uruguay, USA). The research defined and validated the 'RITEC-8' framework for children's well-being in digital play. The eight dimensions of the RITEC-8 framework are: safety and security; diversity, equity and inclusion; autonomy; emotions; competence; relationships; creativity; and identities.

The RITEC Design Toolbox (RDT) builds on the content of the research reports to create practical tools for design teams, for supporting well-being outcomes in the design of children's digital play. The toolbox was designed together with designers from 35 online gaming companies of different sizes, and from 15 countries (Canada, China, Croatia, Finland, Israel, France, Malaysia, Philippines, Serbia, Singapore, Sweden, Tanzania, UK, USA, Vietnam) to align with their needs and challenges in designing for children's well-being. In the Discovery stage, 30 informant interviews were held, as well as three industry feedback events in collaboration with the Joan Ganz Cooney Center and the Fair Play Alliance. A co-design ideation workshop was conducted in the Definition stage, and a prototype feedback round and wording feedback round were held with 10 design teams in the Development stage.

The creation of the game-design features list and categories were developed in collaboration with both our academic partners and design support community. The illustrations in the game-design features card deck and the poster were carefully developed with the research team, and are based on authentic representations of the children who took part in this work and shared their quotes, to provide representation of diverse backgrounds and contexts.

How can my company use the resources developed by RITEC?

To increase awareness and adoption of the RITEC-8 Framework and Design Toolbox, the Child Rights and Business page on [unicef.org](https://www.unicef.org) will serve as a central source of information for game designers. The RITEC Design Toolbox, including a guide for game design features, posters, and FAQ resource, will be available for designers and the gaming sector to access. External reference to UNICEF, the RITEC-8 Framework, and Design Toolbox in conjunction with a specific game is not permitted as UNICEF does not endorse any company, brand, product, or service. ➡



How are UNICEF and The LEGO Group related to this project?

The Responsible Innovation in Technology for Children (RITEC) project is a multi-year **collaboration** between [UNICEF](#) and [The LEGO Group](#) funded by [The LEGO Foundation](#). The partners work together to develop the project's goals and aspirations and to support it with community engagement. UNICEF has led the research in creating and validating the RITEC-8 framework as well as the development of the RITEC Design Toolbox.

If a product has more RITEC dimensions in it, is it better for children's well-being?

No.

- No single game can do everything at once for all children, just as children do not all have the same needs.
- Not all games are equal in their potential to contribute to children's well-being.
- Different games may support different dimensions of well-being depending on their design and use.
- The eight dimensions of the RITEC framework are **not a checklist** to be completed for each digital play experience. While safety and security are mandatory and diversity, equity and inclusion is fundamental for children's well-being, the other dimensions stand on their own and support different aspects and digital play experiences. Designers may focus on one dimension or use a combination of a few of the dimensions. However, designers should avoid creating games that negatively impact any of the well-being dimensions.

If my company has its own design framework, can I still incorporate the RITEC Design Toolbox?

RITEC is not a framework that must be implemented in isolation, **it can be merged** with other methods and approaches. Its goal is to inspire, reveal and support design dimensions for children's well-being in digital play and to engage the design community in raising the standards of designing for children in ways that support and promote their well-being.

RITEC also introduces a shared vocabulary for game designers to discuss children's needs and desires for well-being, as well as online gaming features to promote it. This can be used **in addition** to any other design goals and company frameworks. ➡



How is the RITEC Design Toolbox related to other design frameworks for children’s digital content?

From its inception, the RITEC project aimed to adopt a collaborative approach to build on past efforts and welcome other like-minded actors and organizations to replicate and improve on the project’s work.

The different tools and frameworks listed below vary in their target audience, age-groups, theoretical assumptions and real-world applications. They all recognize the importance of supporting children’s well-being outcomes by informing the design and development process of digital products and services.

We believe that by sharing related initiatives, we are helping teams to find the tools or combination of tools best suited to their work and to improve the overall design of digital play for children’s well-being. 🟢



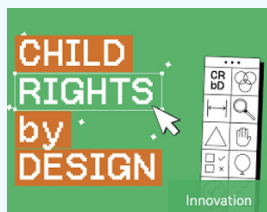
RITEC
(Responsible Innovation in Technology for Children)
The RITEC-8 framework & The RITEC Design Toolbox
UNICEF & The LEGO Group

A framework, developed with children from around the world that maps how the design of children’s digital experiences affects their well-being and provides guidance as to how informed design choices can promote positive well-being outcomes.



Playful by Design Toolkit
Digital Futures Commission
5 Rights Foundation

Created to support designers to improve children’s opportunities for free play in a digital world, and to tackle the challenges in developing digital products and services that respect children’s rights.



Child Rights by Design
Digital Futures Commission
5 Rights Foundation

Created to inspire innovators to help realize children’s rights when designing digital products and services.



Designing for Children’s Rights Guide
D4CR Association

Works to create awareness about the importance of keeping children’s rights in mind when building products and services. Points out what’s right, not what’s wrong.



Digital Thriving Playbook
Thriving in Games Group (TIGG) & The
Joan Ganz Cooney Center

A resource for best practices in creating
online gaming online spaces that help
people thrive.



Digital Design Principles for Kids
The LEGO Group

A toolkit to enable team activities for
child-centred design, the LEGO® way.



Industry Toolkit on Advancing
Diversity, Equity, and
Inclusion: Children's Rights
and Online Gaming
Child Rights and Business team
UNICEF

Designed to inspire action, the toolkit
provides practical advice on the topics of
inclusive communities; representation
in and around games; access to online
gaming environments; and attracting and
involving diverse talent.



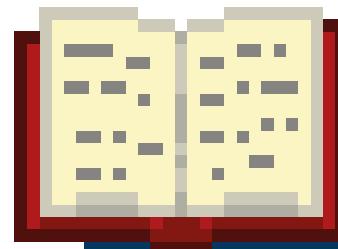
Child Rights Impact
Assessment tool (CRIA)
Child Rights and
Business team
UNICEF

A global child rights impact assessment
tool tailored specifically to the digital
environment.



The GDI Playbook
Geena Davis Insitute

A research-driven, free digital resource
designed to foster cultural competency
and inclusivity in game development.



Acknowledgements

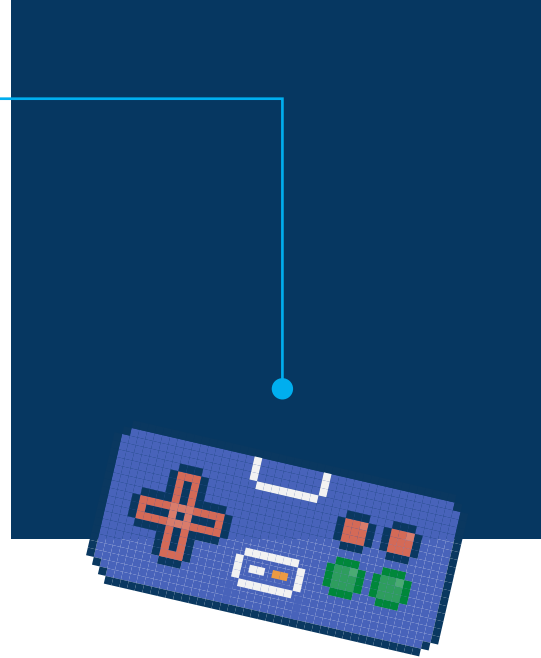
This toolkit was developed by Shuli Gilutz, Programme Officer, Child Rights and Digital Business, and Josianne Galea Baron from the UNICEF Business Engagement and Child Rights team (UNICEF Programme Group). The development of this toolkit deeply benefitted from insights and **collaboration** from a wide range of stakeholders from industry, civil society and academia. UNICEF would like to acknowledge in particular the contributions of Jon Mason (Jollywise), Lady San Pedro (Mrs. Wordsmith), Luc Delany (k-ID), Chris Lindgren and Petter Karlsson (TocaBoca), Kathryn Hymes (University of Oxford), Nathan Sawatzky (Supercell), Anna Wendelin, Ulrika Silfverstolpe (Mojang), Corinne Brenner (Killer Snails), Tobie Abad (TAKTYL Studios), Kiley Sobel (Duolingo), Tif Gagnon and Maria Janelli (Scratch Foundation), Barbara Leal (Futureplay Games), Stephen Boustred (Ubongo), Kimberly Voll (Thriving in Games Group / Brace Yourself Games), Raul Gutierrez (Tinybop Inc.), Glenn Gillis (Sea Monster, Games for Change Africa), Sabine Witting and Emma Day (Tech Legality), and Sonia Livingstone (Digital Futures for Children, LSE).

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