



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Module code: BMHP5021

Module title:

**Protecting and Supporting
Families in Health and Care**

WEEK 1

**Introduction to
Children's rights and Parenting**

Trawsnewid Addysg; Trawsnewid Bywydau
Transforming Education; Transforming Lives



www.uwtsd.ac.uk

Aims and Learning outcomes of this module

Aim

To examine multi and inter disciplinary responses and partnership working within health and care when providing protection and support for families in the UK

Learning outcomes

Upon the successful completion of this module, the student should be able to:

- Examine and evaluate multi and inter disciplinary responses and partnership working within the support offered to children, young people and families in the health and care professions
- Examine and analyse the protective services offered to all members of the family by professionals in the health and social care sectors

Week beginning	Topic	Notes
1 2 nd October	Introduction to Children Rights and Parenting	
2 9 th October	Factors influencing the experiences of children and families	
3 16 th October	Safeguarding, assessment of needs and theories of child development	
4 23 rd October	History of children Protection in the UK	
5 30 th October	Policy and Legislation related to Child Protection	
6 6 th November	Multi and inter disciplinary responses and partnership with children, young people and families	
7 13 th November	Factors which impact on the multi and inter disciplinary responses and partnership working with families' practice	Submission of individual reference list for C1: Wednesday 11 th November (2pm)
8 20 th November	ASSESSMENT WEEK	Group discussions – Assignment Component 1
9 27 th November	Impact of emerging digital technologies on the role of practitioner and service user	Assignment Component 2 Submission: Monday 30 th November (2:00pm)
10 4 th December	Assignment Support	Assignment Component 2 Submission: Monday 30 th November (2:00pm)

Learning objectives



- Discuss what children's rights are for
- Explain cases where children do not have children's rights
- Judge and reflect upon why children's rights are not always protected and what can be done about this.

Who is a Child?

What is a social construct?

A social construct is:

- An idea, concept, or category created and accepted by society rather than existing inherently in nature.
- It exists because people agree it exists and functions through shared social, cultural, or legal understanding.

Social Constructionism is a theory which explores how individuals and groups participate in constructing their perceived reality.

It suggests that human interaction, language, and shared knowledge ***shape***, rather than simply ***describe***, the world.

Is childhood a social construct?

The idea that childhood is a **social construct** suggests that "being a child" isn't just a biological stage of life, but a set of ideas, rights, and expectations created by society.

- Historical shifts in labour and schooling
- Cultural differences in responsibility
- Legal protections and rights
- Cultural expectations in daily life
- Evolution of parenting



A child is.....

- According to Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, "child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier"
- Therefore, International Law gives the status of child to young persons who are below eighteen years of age.

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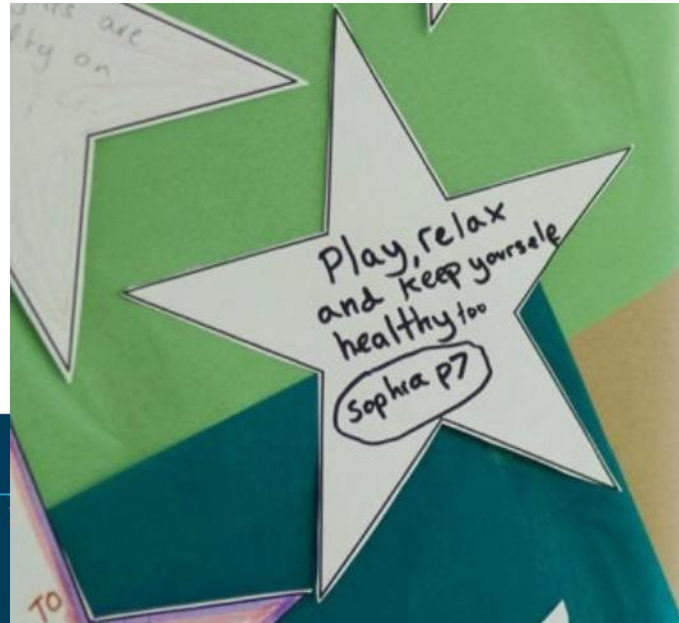
Why do we have children's rights?



What are rights?

What rights do children have?

Make a list of as many as you can think of under the subtitle 'Rights I think children have'



United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

- This is an international agreement that protects the rights of children and provides a child-centred framework for the development of services to children.
- The UK Government ratified the UNCRC in 1991



Cont.

- The Convention must be seen as a whole: all the rights are linked, and no right is more important than another.
- The right to relax and play (Article 31) and the right to freedom of expression (Article 13) have equal importance as the right to be safe from violence (Article 19) and the right to education (Article 28).
- The charity UNICEF works to promote and ensure children's rights are achieved.



Video:



The United Nation convention on the rights of the child

<https://www.cypcs.org.uk/rights/uncrc/>



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Video: What are Childrens Rights



<https://youtu.be/COjVj9czgrY?si=MPjNn986ixPkPRo5>

WHO'S RIGHT?

CHILD RIGHTS QUIZ

Child's Rights Quiz

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| 1a. The UN recognises any young person below the age of 18 as a child under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. | T ☐
F ☐ | 6a. The government must listen to the voice of a child and take the opinion of a young person seriously even if they are not old enough to vote. | T ☐
F ☐ |
| 1b. Once a young person passes the age of 18, they have new human rights that are just for adults. | T ☐
F ☐ | 6b. Governments must only consider the opinions of children if the opinion is shared and expressed by their parents who are old enough to vote. | T ☐
F ☐ |
| 2a. The rights that each child has are determined by the government where they live. These rights can change as governments change. | T ☐
F ☐ | 7a. All children in the UK are guaranteed the right to use the internet to access information because information is a right for children. | T ☐
F ☐ |
| 2b. Children's rights, as stated in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, are timeless and do not change. | T ☐
F ☐ | 7b. Having access to information is a right for children, and governments should encourage the media to provide information that children can understand. | T ☐
F ☐ |
| 3a. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was written 30 years ago. Because it has not been changed it is becoming less relevant and important for children in modern times. | T ☐
F ☐ | 8a. The UK has signed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and this makes the articles part of the UK law. | T ☐
F ☐ |
| 3b. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was written 30 years ago. Although it has not changed since then, it is a living document which continues to adapt itself to the new realities that children face. | T ☐
F ☐ | 8b. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is not part of the UK law, which means legally it has no power. | T ☐
F ☐ |
| 4a. Children's rights in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child are linked with responsibilities and can be taken away if a responsibility has not been met. | T ☐
F ☐ | 9a. All children have the rights to be loved, to be happy and to have friends. | T ☐
F ☐ |
| 4b. Children's rights, like all human rights, are unconditional. | T ☐
F ☐ | 9b. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is about the conditions, resources, protections and freedoms that a child needs to grow up feeling happy and loved. | T ☐
F ☐ |
| 5a. Children have a right to know information that is important for their health and well-being. | T ☐
F ☐ | 10a. Health, education and free speech are the most important rights, while the other rights in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child are not as important. | T ☐
F ☐ |
| 5b. Children should be protected from information about their health and well-being because it might frighten them. | T ☐
F ☐ | 10b. All of the rights in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child are connected, and no right is more important than another right. | T ☐
F ☐ |

Group Activity

- In your group, select and analyse 3 articles of the UNCRC.
- Each group should present their findings, focusing on the practical implications of the selected articles.

Relax and play (Article 31)

Freedom of expression (Article 13)

Be safe from violence (Article 19)

An education (Article 28)

Protection of identity (Article 8)

Sufficient standard of living (Article 27)

Know their rights (Article 42)

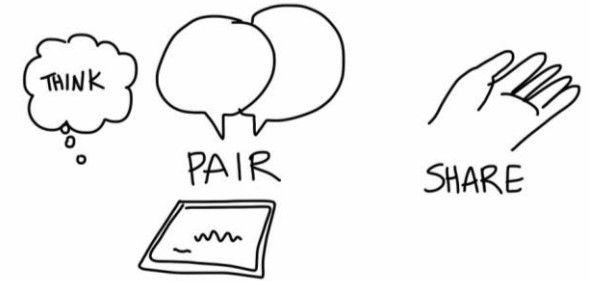
Health services (Article 24)

The right to survive and develop (Article 6)

<https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention>

<https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text-childrens-version>

Think – Pair – Share



- Think of how child's rights relate to protecting and supporting families?
- Can you name situations where children's rights are not protected?
- How many examples can you think of where children do not achieve all the rights on the UNCRC?

The Right to develop

- Article 6 of the UNCRC recognises that all children and young people have the right to survive and the right to develop.
- It says the Governments should do as much as they can to prevent the deaths of children and young people.
- This Article also says that children and young people should be able to grow up in conditions that don't impact negatively their physical and mental well-being.



The importance of Healthy Development

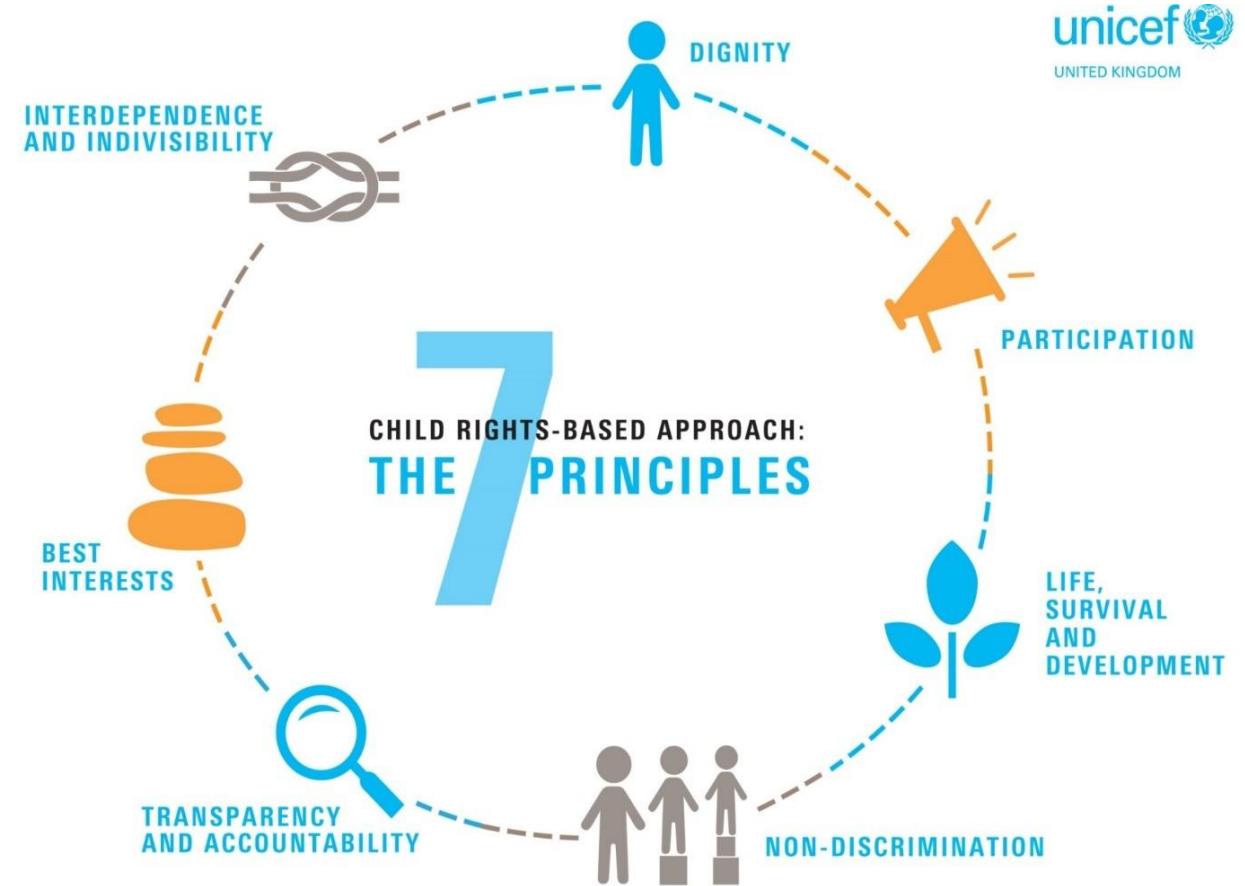
Healthy development in the early years provides the building blocks for educational achievement, economic productivity, responsible citizenship, lifelong health, strong communities, and successful parenting of the next generation.



UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Child Rights-Based Approach (CRBA)

Read more [here](#)



What do children need?

Needs of children

Family?

Protection?

Knowledge?

Understanding?

Development?

Food?

Home?



**Who makes sure that these needs
are met?**

UNCRC Article 6 guarantees every child the inherent right to life and requires governments to ensure the survival and development of the child to the maximum extent possible

Key Points of Article 6

- **Right to Life:** Every child has a legal and inherent right to be alive. Governments must prevent harm, violence, abuse, and preventable illnesses.
- **Survival:** Governments must provide the basic essentials needed to stay alive and healthy, such as clean water, nutritious food, adequate housing, and medical care.
- **Development:** Children are entitled to grow up in conditions that support their physical, mental, spiritual, moral, and social well-being so they can reach their full potential.

General Principle: It is one of the four foundational general principles of the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#), guiding how all other rights are interpreted and applied.

Parenting and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

- The UNCRC highlights the role of parents and the family in ensuring a child's rights and care.
- It specifically states that: "the family, as the fundamental group in society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community"

 UNCRC Article 9

I have a right to live with a family who cares for me

The Important Role of a Nurturing Family Environment

‘The child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding’ (UNCRC Preamble)



What Does Family Mean To You?



Family....

- A basic social group, generally connected by kinship or marriage.
- Aims to provide its members with mutual social, emotional and economic security.
- Family structure varies widely – some sort of communal living arrangement exists in all societies (McDowall Clark 2013).
- Usually, the unit of provision and care for the child (Wright, 2015).

Family Diversity

- Nuclear family
- Blended or reconstituted families
- Lone parent
- Same-sex
- Ethnic diversity
- Cohabitation
- Singlehood



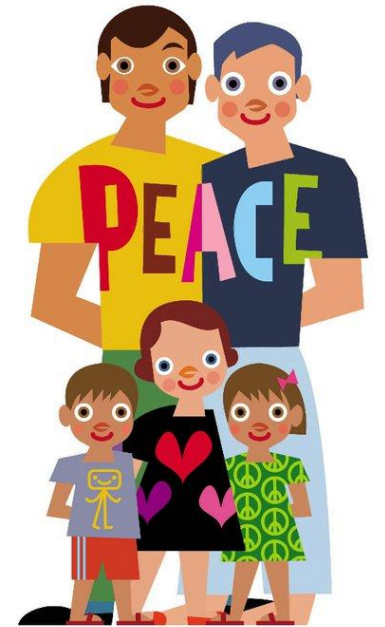
Changes in Family Structure



Conceptual, legal, and practical.

- Concept of the 'family of choice' rather than legality (Wright, 2013).
- Greater recognition and acceptance of **family diversity** (Silva and Smart 1999, cited in McDowall Clark, 2013).
- Divorce and remarriage are more common.
- Many more lone-parent families – mothers or fathers.
- More 'blended' or 'reconstituted families' – children growing up with half-siblings and step-parents (McDowall Clark, 2013).

- No longer a stigma attached to having a child outside marriage – many cohabiting couples bring up happy, stable families.
- Increased acceptance of homosexual lifestyles – same-sex couples starting families.
- Immigration and greater cultural diversity in the UK – higher number of dual-heritage children.
- Extended families include grandparents and other family members – some living within the same household (McDowall Clark, 2013).



Looked After Children (LAC): State Intervention and Diverse Care Solutions for Child Welfare

- Not all children are brought up within their family of birth.
- When family circumstances make this impossible the State steps in.
- This can be temporary, voluntary permanent, or due to court order under Children Act 1989 if the child is deemed to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.
- Children may be cared for by foster parents, in residential care, or adopted (Wright, 2015).

Culture: the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society

- Why would parenting be similar across cultures?
- Why would parenting be different across cultures?

Key Aspects of Culture and Parenting

Cultural Values and Goals: Parenting goals are driven by cultural values. In Western contexts, this often means nurturing independence and self-esteem, while in many Eastern or indigenous cultures, it may focus on interdependence, compliance, and family honour.

Parenting Styles and Norms: What is considered "effective" parenting is culturally defined e.g. Authoritarian, Authoritative, permissive

Interdependence vs. Independence: Some cultures prioritise close physical contact (e.g., baby-wearing in South America) and group cooperation, while others encourage earlier self-reliance and individual achievement.

- **Environmental and Social Context:** Parenting practices are reinforced by the community and societal norms. Children often receive consistent (or inconsistent) messages at home, school, and within their community that align (or clash) with their cultural background.
- **Acculturation and Change:** With migration and global media, many parents must navigate multiple cultures, leading to acculturative stress, particularly in balancing collectivist traditions with individualist Western models.

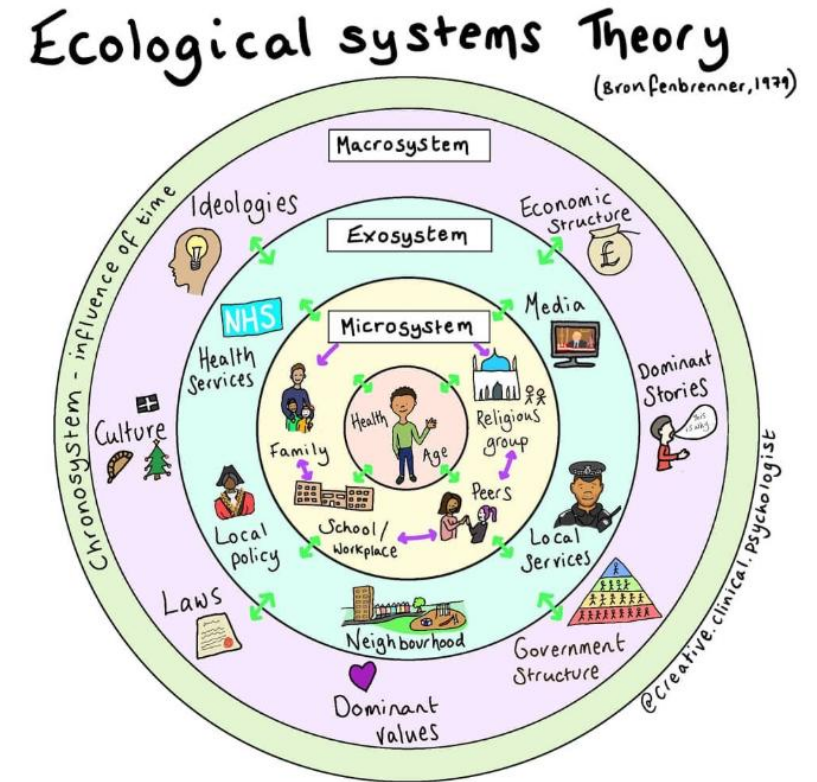
Some suggest that understanding these differences allows for recognizing that there is no single "right" way to parent, but rather multiple, culturally valid approaches that prepare children for their specific environments.

Lee, E., Bristow, J., Faircloth, C. and Macvarish, J. (2023). *Parenting Culture Studies*. Springer eBooks. Springer Nature.

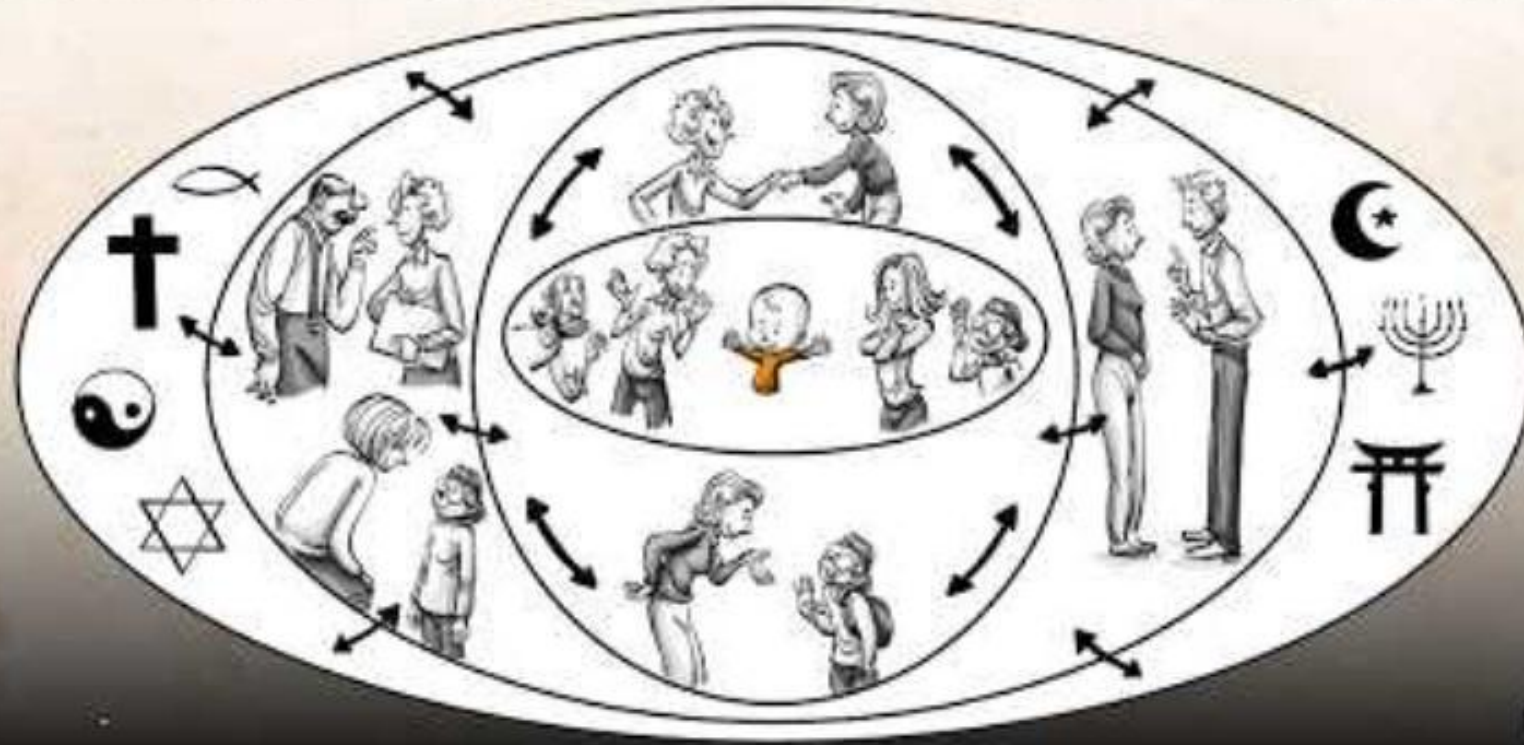
Ecology is the study of the relationships between living organisms, including humans, and their physical environment

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological systems theory

- Bronfenbrenner (1977) suggested that the environment of the child is a nested arrangement of structures, each contained within the next. He organised them in order of how much of an impact they have on a child.
- Because the five systems are interrelated, the influence of one system on a child's development depends on its relationship with the others.



ECOLOGICAL SYSTEM THEORY



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6pUQ4EDHeQ>

Reflection



Reflect on what you have learnt and how it applies to your understanding of children's rights and family dynamics.

Reference List:

- McDowall Clark, R. (2013) *Childhood in Society for Early Childhood Studies*. 2nd Edition. London: Sage
- United Nations (1989) *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/> (Accessed: 30th September 2026).
- Wright, H. R. (2015) *The Child in Society*. London: Sage