



November is National Children's Month

- ❖ The Philippines celebrates the **National Children's Month (NCM)** every November by virtue of **Republic Act No. 10661** to recognize children as the nation's most valuable assets and emphasize the importance of their role within the Filipino family and the Philippine society. It commemorates the adoption of the **Convention on the Rights of the Child** by the United Nations General Assembly on **20 November 1989**. It seeks to instill its significance in the Filipino consciousness. The UNCRC is the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history that sets out the rights that must be realized for **every child – the rights to survival, development, protection, and participation**. It offers a vision of the child as an individual and as a member of a family and community, with rights and responsibilities appropriate to his or her age and stage of development.
- ❖ The law tasked the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the National Youth Commission (NYC) to lead the annual celebration and are authorized to call upon any department, bureau, office, agency, or instrumentality of the government, including government-owned or -controlled corporations, for any assistance as may be needed in the discharge of the tasks under this Act.
- ❖ The Department of Education and Commission (DepEd) of Higher Education (CHED) have the role to facilitate and encourage the observance of the NCM in all public and private schools nationwide while the Philippine Information Agency (PIA) to ensure effective information dissemination. It also encouraged the Local Government Units, private, non-government and civil society organizations to support and participate in the NCM activities.
- ❖ The annual month-long celebration is one of the major avenues of CWC to promote the rights of the child and call the attention of various stakeholders on issues and concerns affecting children. It engages duty-bearers and right-holders to further their level of awareness on child rights issues and empower them to take actions to improve their lives and develop the culture of care and protection for, by, and with children.

2020 NATIONAL CHILDREN'S MONTH (NCM)

- ❖ The COVID-19 has disrupted the environments where children thrive and these disruptions affect the rights of the children to survive, develop, to be protected and participate safely and fully. The enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) situation restricted people's movement with overcrowding in the homes, increased the number of people who experienced absence or loss of income to buy basic essentials for the family, and

induced higher stress levels and anxiety brought by the pandemic. By this, children may encounter forms of violence within the family, especially in already violent or dysfunctional families.

- The distress within the families coupled with restricted movement exacerbated the risks of children to neglect, exploitative labor, social exclusion, physical, and offline and online psychological and sexual abuse, which existed long before COVID-19.
- The 2015 Philippine National Baseline Study on Violence Against Children revealed that 80% of Filipino children and youth were experiencing any forms of violence in all settings, whether in the home, school or community. Specifically, 3 in 5 or 66% of children ages 13 to below 18 years experienced physical abuse, 3 in 5 or 58% experienced psychological abuse while 19.1% experienced sexual abuse, which commonly happened in the home perpetrated by either of their parents, siblings, step-parents or by their grandparents or neighbors. A high percentage of our children also witnessed domestic violence, also in the home - 63% witnessed psychological violence, while 41.40% witnessed physical violence.
- The Systematic Literature Review on the drivers of violence in the country showed that social norms around the use of and effectiveness of discipline, authoritarian parenting, parent's levels of education, parental histories of physical abuse when they were growing up combined with financial stress and substance misuse as risk factors for physical violence in the home. While the lack of supervision, single-headed households and absent parents increases the vulnerability of children to sexual violence at home.
- Alarmingly, the duration of quarantine and the further imposition of lockdowns increases the vulnerability of children to violence where they are trapped inside the homes they share with their perpetrators and may not be able to seek immediate protection or help because of their limited access to people whom they trust or usually seek help..
- With the current pandemic, parents and caregivers strive to balance income generation, child – care, and self – care now more than ever.
- This year's celebration that marks the 28th anniversary of the NCM focuses on upholding the rights of children during the pandemic like the COVID-19 with the theme: **"Sama-samang Itaguyod ang Karapatan ng Bawat Bata sa Panahon ng Pandemya"** to promote the protection of all children and their rights, provide practical support to parents and caregivers on how to care for children and themselves during the pandemic, empower children to protect themselves and report the experience of abuse and guide LGUs to efficiently deliver their expected roles and functions.
- It is anchored on the UN CRC and the 3rd National Plan of Action for Children (NPAC) Goals to progressively realize the rights of children:

Goal 1: Children have a better quality and improved way of life;

Goal 3: Children are safe and free from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation; and

Goal 2: Children are well nourished, have healthy lives and are active learners with good quality education;

Goal 4: Children are actively participating in decision-making processes affecting their lives according to their evolving capacities.

It is also aligned to the key result areas (KRA) of the Philippine Plan of Action to End Violence Against Children (PPAEVAC):

KRA 1. Parents and caregivers are aware of and practicing evidence-based parenting skills and positive discipline towards building a safe, nurturing and protective environment.

KRA 2. Children and adolescent demonstrate personal skills in managing risks, protecting themselves from violence, reporting their experience of violence, and seeking professional help when needed.

KRA 3. All children in need of special protection have access to appropriate and quality protective, social, mental, health, legal, economic, and judicial services ensuring that violence and trauma are prevented from recurring.

KRA 4. Well-developed and effectively managed monitoring and evaluation system is in-place.

KRA 5. All VAC-related laws are in-place and are effectively enforced.

KRA 6. Multi-stakeholder child protection structures and systems at the national, provincial, municipal, city and barangay levels are operational and effectively functioning.

The celebration generally aims to stimulate advocacy and public information on upholding child rights amid COVID-19. Specifically, it aims to:

- Intensify public awareness and knowledge on children's rights, adequate care and protection for children, and application of positive discipline in daily dealings with children;
- Promote further the institutionalization of a child-friendly environment and governance by promoting implementation and monitoring of child-related protocols at the sub-national levels;
- Provide a platform for discourse on persistent and arising issues pertaining to children's rights to survival, development, protection, and participation during and post COVID -19;
- Empower the children as rights-holders to claim and protect their rights; and
- Equip the duty-bearers to deliver their commitment and fulfil their obligations to protect children and fulfill the right of the children

2020 NCM OFFICIAL ICON

The icon illustrates this year's focus on upholding children's rights during the pandemic like COVID-19 and theme ***Sama-samang Itaguyod Ang Karapatan ng Bawat Bata sa Panahon ng Pandemya!*** (Upholding the Rights of Every Child Together in the Time of Pandemic).



The children in the icon holding a shield depict their rights to be protected in this current health crisis caused by COVID-19 and other emergency situations that threaten their survival, development, protection, and participation. The four (4) categories of rights of children embedded on the shield are surrounded by a silhouette of duty-bearers such as the state, the parents/ caregivers/ family members, the church, law enforcement officers, institutions and professionals from various fields/ sectors of society. These elements on the shield symbolize unity or togetherness of duty-bearers that is essential for protecting and upholding children's rights at all times, in any crisis, and most especially during a certain pandemic like COVID-19. Moreover, the shield transcends in its purpose not only to protect but also to empower children with the knowledge that they can confidently claim and fulfill their rights if they are supported by these duty-bearers through a whole-of-society approach.

2020 NCM ACTIVITIES

Thematic activities shall be conducted for the month-long celebration

Schedule	Thematic Focus	ONLINE ACTIVITIES
October 28 10 AM-12NN	Pre-launch Activity	Talakayang Makabata: The Virtual 2020 NCM Press Conference
November 03 9 AM-11AM	NCM Kick-Off Ceremony	Ecumenical Prayer Singing of the National Anthem Sabayang Panatang Makabata (Video Recitation from Various Agencies, Stakeholders/ Duty – bearers) Message from the 3 Lead Agencies (CWC, DSWD and NYC)

Schedule	Thematic Focus	ONLINE ACTIVITIES
November 03 9 AM-11AM	NCM Kick-Off Ceremony	Launch of Online NCM Contests: #HomeTogether TikTok Challenge and Family Home Mural Contest
November 04 2 PM-4 PM	Survival Rights	Webinar: PandeMIC Check: The Local Experiences of LGUs in Protecting Children and their Rights During COVID-19 Pandemic
November 05 10 AM-12 NN 2:30 PM-4PM		Webinar: Minding Your Mental Health - Minding Me-Time in the Midst of Parenting - Self-care for Children and Adolescents
November 06 2 PM-4 PM		Webinar: Survival Gardening: Grow Your Own Food for Better Health and Nutrition
November 06		Friday Storytelling Session: Ang Katawan Ko at Ako
November 10, Tuesday 1 PM-3 PM	Development Rights	Children's Online Talkshow: MAKABATANG BUHAY! (Coping with Blended and Distance Education for Young Learners)
November 18, Wednesday 1 PM - 3 PM	Participation Rights (National Play Advocacy Week)	The Impact of Child Participation Talkshow: Kasali Ako! (Ang Bunga ng Pakikilahok ng Batang Pilipino)
November 18, Wednesday 5 PM		Watch Party: Traditional and Innovative Indoor Filipino Games (Instructional Video with Children)
November 19, Thursday 7 PM		Free Film Screening: 'Star Na Si Van Damme Stallone'
November 20, Friday 5 PM		Friday Storytelling: 'Ako Ay May Titi'
November 22-28	Protection Rights (Juvenile Justice and Welfare Consciousness Week)	Juvenile Justice and Welfare Consciousness Week Activities
November 24		Ugnayang Bayan 2020: A Human Rights Forum on Protecting Human Lives: State of the Children's Address (SOCA) by CWC

Schedule	Thematic Focus	ONLINE ACTIVITIES
November 25 2 PM-4 PM	Protection Rights (Juvenile Justice and Welfare Consciousness Week)	3 rd Conference on Digital Parenting
November 26		Advocacy video on positive discipline
November 27		Launch of Children's Books Announcement of Winners: #HomeTogether TikTok Challenge and Family Home Mural Contest Friday Film Viewing Session

2020 NCM ACTIVITIES

- ❖ **Share/ post NCM** – related advocacy materials on the websites and official social media accounts;
- ❖ **Recite the “Panatang Makabata”** a solemn oath on the promotion and protection of the rights of a child during flag ceremonies every Mondays of November;
- ❖ **Develop, produce and distribute Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials** and other collaterals to include those developed by CWC;
- ❖ **Conduct of organizational activity** related to the focus and theme of the 2019 NCM and submission of activity details by emailing at paio@cw.gov.ph for inclusion in the NCM Calendar of Activities; and
- ❖ **Support and participate in all NCM major activities** and NCM-related activities nationwide.

Convention on the Rights of the Child: The children's version

1. Definition of a child

A child is any person under the age of 18.

2. No discrimination

All children have all these rights, no matter who they are, where they live, what language they speak, what their religion is, what they think, what they look like, if they are a boy or girl, if they have a disability, if they are rich or poor, and no matter who their parents or families are or what their parents or families believe or do. No child should be treated unfairly for any reason.

3. Best interests of the child

When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children. All adults should do what is best for children. Governments should make sure children are protected and looked after by their parents, or by other people when this is needed. Governments should make sure that people and places responsible for looking after children are doing a good job.

4. Making rights real

Governments must do all they can to make sure that every child in their countries can enjoy all the rights in this Convention.

5. Family guidance as children develop

Governments should let families and communities guide their children so that, as they grow up, they learn to use their rights in the best way. The more children grow, the less guidance they will need.

6. Life survival and development

Every child has the right to be alive. Governments must make sure that children survive and develop in the best possible way.

7. Name and nationality

Children must be registered when they are born and given a name which is officially recognized by the government. Children must have a nationality (belong to a country). Whenever possible, children should know their parents and be looked after by them.

8. Identity

Children have the right to their own identity – an official record of who they are which includes their name, nationality and family relations. No one should take this away from them, but if this happens, governments must help children to quickly get their identity back.

9. Keeping families together

Children should not be separated from their parents unless they are not being properly looked after – for example, if a parent hurts or does not take care of a child. Children whose parents don't live together should stay in contact with both parents unless this might harm the child.

10. Contact with parents across countries

If a child lives in a different country than their parents, governments must let the child and parents travel so that they can stay in contact and be together.

11. Protection from kidnapping

Governments must stop children being taken out of the country when this is against the law – for example, being kidnapped by someone or held abroad by a parent when the other parent does not agree.

12. Respect for children's views

Children have the right to give their opinions freely on issues that affect them. Adults should listen and take children seriously.

13. Sharing thoughts freely

Children have the right to share freely with others what they learn, think and feel, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way unless it harms other people.

14. Freedom of thought and religion

Children can choose their own thoughts, opinions and religion, but this should not stop other people from enjoying their rights. Parents can guide children so that as they grow up, they learn to properly use this right.

15. Setting up or joining groups

Children can join or set up groups or organizations, and they can meet with others, as long as this does not harm other people.

16. Protection of privacy

Every child has the right to privacy. The law must protect children's privacy, family, home, communications and reputation (or good name) from any attack.

17. Access to information

Children have the right to get information from the Internet, radio, television, newspapers, books and other sources. Adults should make sure the information they are getting is not harmful. Governments should encourage the media to share information from lots of different sources, in languages that all children can understand.

18. Responsibility of parents

Parents are the main people responsible for bringing up a child. When the child does not have any parents, another adult will have this responsibility and they are called a "guardian". Parents and guardians should always consider what is best for that child. Governments should help them. Where a child has both parents, both of them should be responsible for bringing up the child.

19. Protection from violence

Governments must protect children from violence, abuse and being neglected by anyone who looks after them.

20. Children without families

Every child who cannot be looked after by their own family has the right to be looked after properly by people who respect the child's religion, culture, language and other aspects of their life.

21. Children who are adopted

When children are adopted, the most important thing is to do what is best for them. If a child cannot be properly looked after in their own country – for example by living with another family – then they might be adopted in another country.

22. Refugee children

Children who move from their home country to another country as refugees (because it was not safe for them to stay there) should get help and protection and have the same rights as children born in that country.

23. Children with disabilities

Every child with a disability should enjoy the best possible life in society. Governments should remove all obstacles for children with disabilities to become independent and to participate actively in the community.

24. Health, water, food, environment

Children have the right to the best health care possible, clean water to drink, healthy food and a clean and safe environment to live in. All adults and children should have information about how to stay safe and healthy.

25. Review of a child's placement

Every child who has been placed somewhere away from home - for their care, protection or health – should have their situation checked regularly to see if everything is going well and if this is still the best place for the child to be.

26. Social and economic help

Governments should provide money or other support to help children from poor families.

27. Food, clothing, a safe home

Children have the right to food, clothing and a safe place to live so they can develop in the best possible way. The government should help families and children who cannot afford this.

28. Access to education

Every child has the right to an education. Primary education should be free. Secondary and higher education should be available to every child. Children should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level possible. Discipline in schools should respect children's rights and never use violence.

29. Aims of education

Children's education should help them fully develop their personalities, talents and abilities. It should teach them to understand their own rights, and to respect other people's rights, cultures and differences. It should help them to live peacefully and protect the environment.

30. Minority culture, language and religion

Children have the right to use their own language, culture and religion - even if these are not shared by most people in the country where they live.

31. Rest, play, culture, arts

Every child has the right to rest, relax, play and to take part in cultural and creative activities.

32. Protection from harmful work

Children have the right to be protected from doing work that is dangerous or bad for their education, health or development. If children work, they have the right to be safe and paid fairly.

33. Protection from harmful drugs

Governments must protect children from taking, making, carrying or selling harmful drugs.

34. Protection from sexual abuse

The government should protect children from sexual exploitation (being taken advantage of) and sexual abuse, including by people forcing children to have sex for money, or making sexual pictures or films of them.

35. Prevention of sale and trafficking

Governments must make sure that children are not kidnapped or sold, or taken to other countries or places to be exploited (taken advantage of).

36. Protection from exploitation

Children have the right to be protected from all other kinds of exploitation (being taken advantage of), even if these are not specifically mentioned in this Convention.

37. Children in detention

Children who are accused of breaking the law should not be killed, tortured, treated cruelly, put in prison forever, or put in prison with adults. Prison should always be the last choice and only for the shortest possible time. Children in prison should have legal help and be able to stay in contact with their family.

38. Protection in war

Children have the right to be protected during war. No child under 15 can join the army or take part in war.

39. Recovery and reintegration

Children have the right to get help if they have been hurt, neglected, treated badly or affected by war, so they can get back their health and dignity.

40. Children who break the law

Children accused of breaking the law have the right to legal help and fair treatment. There should be lots of solutions to help these children become good members of their communities. Prison should only be the last choice.

41. Best law for children applies

If the laws of a country protect children's rights better than this Convention, then those laws should be used.

42. Everyone must know children's rights

Governments should actively tell children and adults about this Convention so that everyone knows about children's rights.

43 to 54. How the Convention works

These articles explain how governments, the United Nations – including the Committee on the Rights of Child and UNICEF - and other organizations' work to make sure all children enjoy all their rights.

To know more about CWC visit:

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