

Student Voice: Making Sure Youth are at the Decision-Making Table

Background/Historical Information

A rights-respecting school (RRS) is a community where children's rights and responsibilities are learned, taught, practiced, respected, protected. RRS promotes conflict resolution, communication, and creating a sense of community. The principles come from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN-CRC).

Why is this relevant? Why should others in the community care?

Children achieve when they feel included, like they belong, and feel their opinions matter. When the school community embraces a rights-respecting approach:

<u>Children:</u>	<u>Teachers:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decline in bullying and less disruption Less adversarial conflict Greater concern for themselves, each other & children in other communities Children are more likely to use higher order thinking Less likely to be excluded More likely to attend school Children learn the rights and responsibilities of citizenship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feel empowered and many are reminded about why they started teaching More time to teach, achieve good progress & higher standards for children There is less low level disruption Healthier classroom & school atmosphere Greater job satisfaction

Common Questions:

Why Children's Rights in schools? Rights-respecting educational practices promote safe, inclusive, and respectful environments

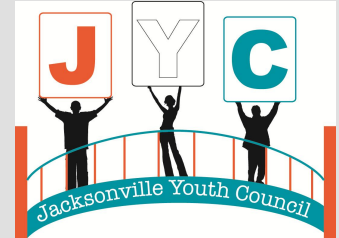
Why become a Rights Respecting School? A focus on children's rights provides schools with tools for keeping students actively engaged in responsible decision-making and gives the whole school has a concrete approach to improving student-to-student and teacher to-student relationships.

What is the UN-CRC? The CRC is an internationally agreed upon set of non-negotiable standards and obligations, that set minimum entitlements and freedoms based on respect for the dignity and worth of each child. It has not been ratified in the United States.

Where does the Rights Respecting School come from? Implementing the CRC at the school level



Partnership
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Important Resources

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (document and articles):

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>

Rights Respecting Schools Canada:

<https://rrscanada.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/2-pg-rrs-overview-unicef.pdf> (source for some of the information on this page)

Get Involved:

1. Learn about RRS
2. Advocate for RRS at PTA, SAC, and DCPS meetings
3. Start small with rights-respecting classrooms, meetings, student groups, and/or organizations.

Session Leaders

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