



Understanding of Children's Rights¹

Adopted by the Board of Directors, April 1, 2009

Self-image of the Pestalozzi Children's Foundation (PCF)

The Pestalozzi Children's Foundation is a Swiss children's charity promoting peaceful cohabitation worldwide by comprehensively strengthening the competencies and rights of disadvantaged children and adolescents.

Legitimization for PCF's interventions in the field of Child Rights

With the adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) by the UN General Assembly in 1989, children and young people under the age of 18 years were conferred an internationally accepted legal status. By ratifying the CRC, a State Party commits itself to integrate the provisions of the CRC into its national legislation and implement them. Responsibility for the implementation of CRC's principles lies mainly with public entities such as municipalities and schools, but private institutions such as children's homes and care facilities, and private individuals such as parents and legal guardians are equally responsible.

The legitimization for PCF's interventions in the field of children's rights is the CRC, which was signed by all countries in which PCF is active, and other human rights treaties enshrining children's rights, in particular the right to education.

Understanding of Child Rights

PCF recognizes its responsibility as an internationally active Swiss children's charity and applies the principles and provisions of the CRC in its organisation and programmes.² The four principles of the CRC are the following: the right to survival and development; the right to non-discrimination and equal treatment; the best interests of the child; and the right to participate and to be heard.

PCF considers the CRC to be a holistic concept for the development, protection and participation of children and young people. Children and young people have the right to development and protection in line with their age and maturity, and they ought to have the possibility to participate in decisions concerning them. PCF actively involves children and young people in the design, implementation and evaluation of its programmes in education.

PCF is committed to raising public awareness of the rights of the child. It works together with other stakeholders engaged in the field of children's rights. Projects aimed at raising public awareness are implemented within Programmes in Switzerland and International Programmes. PCF had a leading role in setting up the Child Rights Network Switzerland³. It continues to be an active member and promotes similar networks in the countries in which it is active.

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¹ The Understanding of Child Rights is based on our former Position paper on Child Rights (2002), our Policy paper on Child Rights (2005) and on Strategy 2012.

² See PCF's Understanding of Child Rights-based Programming.

³ The network (founded in 2003) unites over 50 Swiss organisations active in the fields of child rights, children's policy and child protection which are committed to implementing child rights in Switzerland. Further information under www.netzwerk-kinderrechte.ch