WHAT IF? THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF RIGHTS

Goal: To demonstrate that children’s rights are interdependent, and that the loss or realization of one right may directly impact many other rights.

Materials:
- Copies of Handout #2, Summary of the CRC
- Copies of Handout 4A, Effects Wheel

Procedure:

1. Introduce the activity by explaining that human rights, including children’s rights, are generally considered to be:
   - **Universal**: rights are held by all people equally.
   - **Inalienable**: you cannot have your rights taken away from you, or lose them, for any reason.
   - **Indivisible**: all rights are equally important; rights cannot be denied because someone decides that some are “non-essential”
   - **Interdependent**: rights are linked to each other. Certain rights enable you practice other rights, and the loss of one right may lead to the loss of other rights.

2. Divide the class into small groups. Give each group a copy of the Effects Wheel and Handout #2. Assign each group a key article of the CRC such as:
   - **Article 12**: The child has the right to express his or her opinion freely and to have that opinion taken into account in any matter or procedure affecting the child.
   - **Article 17**: The State shall ensure the accessibility to children of information and material from a diversity of sources, and it shall encourage the mass media to disseminate information which is of social and cultural benefit to the child, and take steps to protect him or her from harmful materials.
   - **Article 24**: The child has a right to the highest standard of health and medical care attainable.
   - **Article 27**: Every child has the right to a standard of living adequate for his or her physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.
   - **Article 30**: Children of minority communities and indigenous populations have the right to enjoy their own culture and to practice their own religion and language.
   - **Article 32**: The child has the right to be protected from work that threatens his or her health, education or development.

3. Ask each group to list other articles of the CRC that support or are necessary for the realization of their assigned right (e.g., Article 12, rights to an opinion, relates to Article 17, right to information and Articles 27 and 29 on education). Ask each group to explain their finding. Ask the rest of the class for other possible interrelated articles.
Learning Activity 4

4. Explain the Effects Wheel:
   a) Write a negative statement of their assigned right in the center of their Effects Wheel (e.g., *The child does not have adequate health care*).
   b) In the first circle write three possible results from this failure to realize the right named in the center.
   c) In the outer circle write three results from each result in the inner circle.

5. Have students present their Effects Wheel to the whole class.

6. Discuss why the concept of interdependence of rights is critical to promoting children’s rights.

**Follow-up activity:**

1. The CRC allows countries to enter “reservations” when they ratify, meaning that they can stipulate that certain provisions do not apply, if they are considered inappropriate, not feasible, or incompatible with local cultural practices or national law. Older students may wish to research reservations that some country have entered. These are listed on the website of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights: http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/6/crc/treaties/declare-crc.htm.

Source: Nancy Flowers, HRE US
Learning Activity 4

Handout 4A, Effects Wheel