

Honorable chairs and fellow delegates,

In the world, there are 240 million children with impairments. The majority of them are no longer in school. Many people are invisible, with their families hiding them and their governments abandoning them. Children with disabilities are one of the most excluded and marginalized groups, and achieving their human rights can be difficult. UNICEF engages children with disabilities in all aspects of its programming, guided by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and linked with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

There are three main laws that address the rights of students with disabilities in public schools:

- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

In United States, children are marginalized; however, specific groups of children, such as disabled children, girls, and children from ethnic minorities, are subjected to even more prejudice. Children with disabilities are more vulnerable to discrimination because 1) they have a handicap and 2) they are children, making them more susceptible to marginalization, exploitation, and abuse. These groups may be denied the protections and assurances of the general children's human rights agenda, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, unless they are specifically listed in human rights treaties (CRPD). As a result, children with impairments are mentioned in the CRPD in a separate article. The protection of their human rights is crucial for them, as it is for all children.

Personal characteristics, gender, class, ethnicity, culture, religion, (dis)ability, socio-economic position, geography, family situation, environment, education, work, and sexual orientation are all factors that define a child's childhood. When it comes to ensuring the human rights and fundamental freedoms of children with disabilities, these experiences must be taken into account.

Also the 504 Plan is a plan developed to ensure that **a child who has a disability identified under the law** and is attending an elementary or secondary educational institution receives accommodations that will ensure their academic success and access to the learning environment.

I'd like to give barriers about children with disabilities:

Barriers to Children with Disabilities

Before Birth

- Poor maternal health and nutrition
- Poverty
- Inadequate prenatal care
- Prenatal screening and termination of pregnancy

At Birth

- Euthanization
- Denial of appropriate medical treatment
- Risk of rejection by parents
- Institutional placement

After Birth

- Institutional placement
- Isolation in the home and isolation from the community
- Denial of the right to education and many other human rights
- Risk of continual medical treatments, some painful and unnecessary
- Denial of the right to participate in decisions that effect their lives

And here is a story about a parent who has a disabled child ;

One Parent's Story

I am a parent of a disabled child. I am also a community worker with a good understanding of our early intervention program.

I felt great about this opportunity to increase awareness about disability (the START Program at the Sunshine Centre). I also wanted to help and support the parents of disabled children in this area. Often such parents do not trust people who have not had the same experiences. I know they can feel very isolated and ignored. I understand from my own experience that many of them do not get support from their families because there is no understanding of the needs of their disabled children.

Many fathers of the disabled children do not give their support. My husband had great difficulty in accepting that our son was disabled. I was not supposed to walk in the street with my child. His father could not believe that other people could see the beauty of this child. I struggled because he refused to give me any money for the special food our child needed.

I know how lonely and frightened these parents can feel. I worried about who would be responsible for our child if something happened to me. I even believed it would be the best thing if my child died before me.

I became a community worker because I saw how parents of disabled children really need support. I knew that with training, parents could help each other. They do not need people who feel ashamed of disabled children. They need to talk to someone who can understand that even though the child is disabled, he is still a human being. He does not have a disease that can affect other people.⁵

(Perrin JM, 2007) (TD, 2010)