



Children's Rights Plan

2025-2029



A guide for children and young people to what we're doing, why it matters, and how it helps you



What is this about?

This is about your rights.

Everyone under 18 has special rights called **children's rights**. These come from something called the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**.

Children's rights are the things every child needs to be safe, happy, healthy, and heard.

In Scotland, these rights are now part of the law. This means organisations like **NHS Lothian** must:

- respect your rights
- protect your rights
- help make your rights real in everyday life

This plan explains **how we will do that** when we work with children, young people and families.



Who is this for?

This plan is for:

- **children and young people aged 0–17**
- **brothers and sisters** of children who use health services
- **families and carers**
- **the adults who work in health services**

But this version is **especially for you**, so you know:

- what your rights are
- what we are promising to do
- how you can have a say



Why did we make this plan?

We made this plan because:

-  **Children and young people told us what matters to them**
-  **We want health services to be safe, fair and kind for everyone**
-  **Having a plan is part of the law**

We listened to children and young people across Lothian. They told us:

- what is working well
- what could be better
- that they want adults to **listen, explain and act**

Your views helped shape this plan.



Our big promise (our vision)

We promise to respect and protect your rights in everything we do.

We will work to make sure all children and young people can:

- be **safe**
- be **healthy**
- be **heard**
- be **treated fairly**
- get the **support they need to grow and thrive**

Making promises is important but keeping them is even more important.

We will:

- Ask children and young people about their experiences of health services
- Check whether we are doing what we said we would do
- Look at what is working well and what needs to improve
- Share updates on the progress we are making
- Be honest when things need to get better and explain what we will do about it



The values we follow (our principles)

Whenever adults make decisions that affect children and young people, we will:

- 👂 **Listen to you and take you seriously**
- 🧠 **Use good information and evidence**
- 🤝 **Work together with other services**
- 🌈 **Treat everyone fairly and without discrimination**
- 👦 **Put children's best interests first**
- 🔒 **Respect your privacy and dignity**
- 💡 **Explain things in ways you can understand**

Children's rights are **everyone's job**, not just children's services.

Our main priorities

These are the **four things we are focusing on most**.



1. Helping people understand children's rights

Doctors, nurses and other staff will receive training so they understand how to listen to you, explain things clearly and respect your rights.

We will:

- make sure adults feel confident talking about rights
- explain children's rights clearly to families
- use child-friendly language to help you understand your rights

Why this matters:

If everyone knows about rights, they are more likely to respect them. This helps you to enjoy Article 42 of the UNCRC - *Everybody should know about children's rights*.



2. Sharing information clearly

We will:

- give clear information about health services and care
- share information in ways you can understand
- use words, pictures and videos
- make sure information is easy to find

Why this matters:

You have the right to know what is happening and what help is available. This helps you to enjoy Article 13 of the UNCRC - *I have the right to get information and share my views*.



3. Listening and responding to children and young people

We will:

- make it easier for you to share your views
- listen when you speak up – in whatever way works for you
- explain what we did because of your feedback
- support you to get help if something is not right
- make it safer, kinder and easier to tell us when things are not working well

Why this matters:

This helps you enjoy Article 12 of the UNCRC - *You have the right to be listened to and taken seriously.*



4. Checking how well we are doing

We will check if we are keeping our promises and tell people what we have improved and what still needs to get better.

Why this matters:

We need to show that our promises lead to real change. This helps you to enjoy Article 24 of the UNCRC - *I have the right to be as healthy as possible.*



How will this happen?

- Adults working in health services will get training and support
- Different teams will work together
- There will be clear plans and regular updates
- Children and young people will continue to be involved



How can *you* be involved?

You can:

- ask questions
- share your thoughts and experiences
- give feedback about care or services
- ask for help if something doesn't feel right
- talk to a trusted adult if you need support

Your voice matters.



Our final message to you

- **You have rights.**
- **Your views matter.**
- **You deserve to be treated with care, respect and fairness.**

We are committed to: **listening to you, learning from you, and doing better because of you.**

You can find out more about your rights on our website by scanning the QR Code or following the link below.



<https://org.nhsllothian.scot/equality-human-rights/childrens-rights/>