

Note for the child

No one has the right to hurt or humiliate you, to punish you physically, to kidnap, sell or give you away as a gift.

If you experience misconduct towards yourself, tell this to an adult you trust. Don't be silent and don't be afraid.

You can always turn for help to people who work in the place where you are staying. An interpreter should help you communicate.



You can apply for help to:

- ✓ people who work in the place where you are staying, including representatives of humanitarian organisations;
- ✓ the Lithuanian police around a clock, by calling the telephone number 112;
- ✓ the State Child Rights Protection Service on working days from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, by calling the telephone number +370 5 231 0928 or by sending an e-mail to: info@vaikoteises.lt (languages spoken – Lithuanian, English, Russian), website in English: <https://vaikoteises.lt/home/>



Lietuvos Respublikos
socialinės apsaugos
ir darbo ministerija

Information about child rights protection in Lithuania



This information is provided to make you familiar with protection of the rights of the child in the Republic of Lithuania. Legal acts on the protection of the rights of the child, that are in force in the Republic of Lithuania, are in line with European Union law and international law. The child has the right to protection against adverse and harmful effects on him. The child is also entitled to assistance in the event of violation of the child's rights.

A child is an individual under 18 years of age.

Fundamental rights of the child

- ✓ Feel safe from any violence*.
- ✓ Learn.
- ✓ Have a rest and free time, and ability to play.
- ✓ Access to treatment in case of getting sick.
- ✓ To be heard on all matters pertaining to him, and his opinion must be taken into account, if this is not against the interests of the child.
- ✓ Retain his forename, surname, language, culture, religion.
- ✓ Be protected from alcohol, tobacco and drugs.

Parents and custodians are responsible for ensuring the rights of the child, and if they cannot fulfil this duty, then it falls on the public authorities.

***Violence** – shall mean intentional acts that pose a threat to the health, life, safety or dignity of the child.

There are 4 possible types of violence:

- ✓ **physical violence** – physical actions against the child, including physical punishment. No physical punishment can be imposed in any possible way, including for upbringing purposes;
- ✓ **psychological violence** – humiliation, bullying, threatening, intimidation and similar acts against the child;
- ✓ **sexual violence** – such crimes as rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, involvement of the child in prostitution and/or prostitution, other forms of sexual exploitation of the child;
- ✓ **neglect** – persistent failure to meet the physical, emotional, and social needs of the child, or meeting them in a negligent manner. Poverty is not considered neglect.

There are two institutions that respond to a report received of possible violation of the rights of the child and/or of violence used against the child: the Service, which arrives at the scene and assesses the circumstances of the incident, and the Police, which arrives if a criminal offense is suspected. If necessary, a pre-trial investigation is initiated. In cases where it is found that there is a risk to the health or life of the child, or to protect the child from significant harm to his health, and it is not possible to protect the child in other ways, the child may be separated from his biological parents and placed into care of the custodian.

The main responsibilities of the child

- ✓ Respect his parents and other family members.
- ✓ Abide by the rules and agreements at his place of residence, school or elsewhere.
- ✓ Protect his health, take care of cleanliness.
- ✓ Attend school, learn diligently.
- ✓ Respect teachers and other adults or children, not violate their rights.
- ✓ Respect other people's language, origin and culture.
- ✓ Protect nature and the environment.
- ✓ Not act in a violent way and not mock other children or adults.

The child may be disciplined for failure to comply with his responsibilities, but no physical punishment or other violence against the child can be used.

Main responsibilities of parents or custodians

- ✓ Take care of the child's upbringing, take proper care of the child, maintain the child materially, and create conditions for the child to grow, develop and improve.
- ✓ Ensure an emotionally and physically safe environment and protect the child against any violence
- ✓ Provide the child with information about the rights and fundamental freedoms, duties and responsibilities of the child.
- ✓ Ensure that the child can exercise all the rights conferred on him: the right to learn, the right of access to appropriate health care,

the right to be heard, etc.

- ✓ Take care of developing the child's sense of duty and responsibility and of preparing the child for independent living in the family and society.
- ✓ Represent own child without a separate power of attorney and obtain information related to the child, participate and be heard on decisions that affect the child.
- ✓ Be guided, in making any decision related to the child, by what is best for the child, listen to and take account of the child's opinion, if this is not against the interests of the child.
- ✓ Make sure that the child under 6 years of age, as well as the child with disability, taking into account his special needs and maturity, is not left, without objective necessity, alone but with a trusted person over 14 years of age.

The implementation and protection of the rights of the child are firstly ensured by the parents or custodians of the child, and the state assists them if they cannot ensure the conditions necessary for the welfare of the child.

If you face difficulties or cannot ensure the safety of your child and/or ensure adequately the rights and legitimate interests of the child, you can contact the State Child Rights Protection Service by calling the telephone number +370 5 231 0928 or can send an e-mail to: info@vaikoteises.lt (on working days from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, languages spoken – Lithuanian, English, Russian).

The State Child Rights Protection Service is the independent national authority that implements the protection of the rights of the child. It employs specialists in the field of child rights protection, who have the goal to protect children against a variety of threats. The specialists in the field of child rights protection arrive to meet the child and his family, when the child himself or any other person reports that the child's rights are possibly being violated. The specialist talks to the child and his family, finds out if the child is safe, and what help the child and his family need. In Lithuania, the aim is to ensure that all children stay with their parents or custodians, and if the health or life of the child is in danger when in family, then the specialists in the field of child rights protection have the right to take the child away from the family. After the child is taken away from the family, efforts are made to help the family, the institutions aim to ensure that the child can return to the family and be safe. The child, who has been taken away from the family, is temporarily placed in the family of the custodian or in the childcare facility, where the safety of the child must be ensured.