

Recognising childrens' rights in responses to COVID-19, by AphaLuck Bhatiasevi

We are all trying our best to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, be it from governments seeking to protect public health and livelihoods, to key workers trying to ensure essential services are maintained, to many of us trying to maintain social distancing and self-isolating as individuals and for our families. But in the immediacy of responding to the crisis, adults can focus on protection and overlook the part children can and do play in the fightback to the crisis.

Why does it matter?

In emergency contexts, it is easy to concentrate solely on children's physical protection, and overlook the importance of emotional and social protection, which is critical both during times of emergencies and in post-emergency situations. It is also easy to ignore children's participation rights – rights to have information, to provide information, to have their views considered and enacted in decisions that affect them. The University of Edinburgh's Childhood and Youth Studies Research Group works on a project in partnership with the International and Canadian Children's Rights Partnership (ICCRP). This project often works in sites of immediate and ongoing fragility. The project demonstrates that not involving children leads to poorer decision-making and thus poorer outcomes for both children and their communities.

The partnership of the Childhood and Youth Studies Research Group and ICCRP works with children and young people, civic society and government stakeholders and academic institutions in Brazil, Canada, China, South Africa and the UK on children's human rights in situations of international child

protection.

For further information on the project, please visit:
<https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/cysrg/2020/04/09/recognise-children-rights-covid-19/>