Child and Youth Human Rights

Extension Certificate – Online

Course Sample
1.0 Convention on the Rights of the Child

This section introduces the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC), which was internationally adopted in 1989, when the global community took a significant step forwards in the way it values and respects every child and youth, as well as the human rights of children and youth.

The CRC is a human rights treaty that identifies minimum internationally acceptable standards for each of the world's children. While the CRC outlines the rights of the child, it also reinforces responsibilities of state parties and adult members of society to respect and ensure those special rights. By recognizing children and youth as individuals with special rights and freedoms, all young people as human beings must be ensured equitable access to rights of protection, provision, and participation without discrimination.

This document was unanimously adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on November 20, 1989 and went into force on September 20, 1990, after ratification by the first twenty member countries—in less time than any other human rights treaty. Within a year, more than 90 countries had signed up to the CRC, and to date 192 of the world's 194 countries have formally ratified it. The CRC is the most universally accepted human rights instrument in history, having been signed and ratified by every country in the world except the United States of America and Somalia. This widespread acceptance is remarkable in that no other human rights instrument has ever been so quickly ratified by the international community. This support by so many countries gives children and youth a unique place in terms of human rights.

Canada ratified the CRC on December 11, 1991, which coincided with the 45th anniversary of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). By ratifying the CRC in 1991, Canada committed itself to protecting and ensuring human rights of children and youth, and has agreed to hold itself accountable to this commitment before the international community. Since its ratification by the Government of Canada, steps have been taken by our federal, provincial, and territorial governments to recognize or incorporate children's rights into child related laws, policies, and services.

The CRC is a consensus document in that its standards were negotiated for a decade (1979–1989) by governments, non-governmental organizations, child development experts, lawyers, educators, religious leaders and others around the world. Consequently, this international treaty takes into account the importance of tradition and cultural values for the protection and
healthy development of the child, while it reflects the principal legal systems of the world and acknowledges the specific needs of developing countries.

MAJOR ASSIGNMENT PART I: Taking First Steps Towards Advocacy

The primary purpose of this assignment is to inform your professional practice by exploring ways to use the CRC as an advocacy tool. A secondary purpose is to develop information access and retrieval skills of scholarly online materials. Students will have the opportunity to transfer knowledge gained from this assignment to professional practice when completing Part II of this assignment.

Advocacy: Define advocacy and discuss a major issue you want to address through advocacy that will benefit the lives of children or youth; for example, adequate housing to single mothers living in poverty. Define natural advocate and discuss in detail your role(s) as a natural advocate in this advocacy process, e.g., protector, educator, or both.

CRC: Use the CRC as an advocacy tool by identifying 5 to 7 specific CRC articles that are most relevant to this advocacy issue. For each article, discuss in detail how it will lend support to your advocacy work. Describe examples to illustrate.

Grading Criteria: The following grading criteria will be used to evaluate this assignment:

Paper: 20 marks

- Provide clear thesis statement that states purpose as well as key topic(s) and related issues to be addressed in assignment
- Follow sequence of topics and issues presented in thesis statement
- Provide accurate definitions (from scholarly published references) of key terms. Discussions must demonstrate sound understanding of topics/issues/arguments. Include suitable examples to illustrate concepts/topics/issues
- Finish with a sense of closure by providing concluding comments
- Well organized, logical, clear, concise use of language
- Correct spelling; appropriate grammar; professional presentation

APA Format/Citations: 5 marks

- Use a minimum of 5 scholarly references available online including materials from the Resources section in the Blackboard site for this course, and course materials as well as other scholarly journal articles and academic web-based materials that you may find online
- Minimum length requirements of 1000 words to a maximum of 1500 words, excluding list of references and cover page. Double spaced, size 12 font
- Accurately follow APA citation format (5th edition)
- Maximum of 3 direct quotes permitted, no long quotes of 40 + words permitted
- References cited in Reference List must match references in body of paper — students to include URL for each reference used; for example:
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