

Constitution for the Establishment of Children's Clubs / Children's Councils



Department of Probation and Child Care Services

Constitution for the Establishment of Children's Clubs/ Children's Councils

(Amendment 2018)

Department of Probation and Child Care Services

PREFACE

The Department of Probation and Child Care Services initiated the Children's Club/Children's Council programme in year 2007 with the intention of empowering children and ensuring children's right to participation stated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Through this programme, the department implements various programmes in every Divisional Secretariat Division to bring up a generation of children equipped with leadership skills, develop children's talents and inculcate social values within them. This programme begins at Grama Niladhari division level and gradually elevates to the national level covering all administrative levels in the country. At Grama Niladhari division level, it operates as children's clubs. Divisional Children's Councils are established by bringing together all the children's clubs within a DS division. District Children's Councils are formed from the office bearers of Divisional Children's Councils and formation of the National Children's Council is done with the representation of the office bearers of District Children's Councils.

In order to ensure a higher transparency and a clearer vision within this massive Children's Club/Children's Council programme, amendments were done to the Constitution of Children's Club/Children's Council in year 2018 incorporating the suggestions given by the children and officers at the National Children's Council held in Polonnaruwa in 2016.

With great pleasure, I handover this amended Constitution of Children's Club/Children's Council to you to continue the programme with greater success.

These amendments were done at several stages with the participation of children, parents and District and Divisional Child Rights Promotion Officers and I wish to extend my sincere thanks to all who provided valuable suggestions to make this endeavor a success. I would also like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to Save the Children International who played a significant role by providing financial assistances necessary to print this handbook.

P. Chandima Sigera

Commissioner,
Department of Probation and Child Care Services
01.04.2018

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Important Days of the Children's Clubs /Children's Councils	
Before January 31 st	Election of new office bearers for Children's Clubs
Before February 28 th	Sending the Name List of the members of the Children's Club to the Child Rights Promotion Officer
Before April 30 th	First assembly of the Divisional Children's Council and election of office bearers
Before June 15 th	Sending the Name List of the members of the Divisional Children's Council to the District Child Rights Promotion Officer
Before August 15 th	First assembly of the District Children's Council
Before Sept. 10 th	Sending the Name List of the members of the District Children's Council to the Head Office
Before Sept. 21 st	Assembly of the National Children's Council

Introduction

Right to Participation of children stated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is a vital child right with a broad meaning. This becomes evident from Articles, no. 12, 13 & 15 which states respectively on the right of the child to express his or her opinion, freedom of expression and freedom of association. Allowing the children to enjoy the right to participation will be of utmost importance to ascertain the safety of children, minimize child abuses and also to prevent children from delinquencies.

Thus, various structures have been established in our country to ensure the participation right of our children. The children's club and the children's council system implemented by the Department of Probation and Child Care Services with the aim of ensuring children's right to participation is a programme that runs from village level to national level. Through this programme, children get the opportunity to express their opinion up to the National Children's Council across village children's clubs, Divisional Children's Council and District Children's council and will also help to improve their talents.

The Children's club/children's council programme of the Department of Probation and Child Care Services which has been implemented to achieve a total development of children through a meaningful child participation, will also take the children's voice to the international arena.

Constitution of the Children's Clubs

Children's club is the community based organization unit of the children's organization structure in Sri Lanka. It provides the opportunity for the children to participate in community activities at village level, creates the environment for children to participate meaningfully and provides opportunity for them to act as recognized citizens in the community on matters relevant to them. Empowering the principles such as the best interest of the child and child protection are also expected through the children's clubs.

1) Name:

- i. As per the constitution, children's clubs shall be established at Grama Niladhari division level. A suitable name shall be given to the established children's club and the name of the Grama Niladhari division shall be added at the end of the name.

Eg. Ekamuthu children's club - Dambahena (name of the Grama Niladhari division)

- ii. However, for fair causes, children's clubs shall be established even at village level under the approval of the Divisional Secretary. Furthermore, two children's clubs shall not be established within one Divisional Secretariat division under the same name.

2) Address:

A public place shall be used, whenever possible, as the office of the children's club and the address of the said place shall be used as the address of the children's club. A private place shall be used for the purpose only in the absences of a public place and at such instances, a suitable place shall be selected with the agreement of the members.

3) Nature:

Every children's club shall function without any political, gender, religious, ethnic or racial discrimination and shall be a place providing equal opportunities to all children including institutionalized and differently abled children.

4) Common Goal:

Creating the environment necessary for the children to express their views and opinion for matters that affect their lives or their living environment, respecting the opinion of the children and empowering children by taking their opinion into consideration when taking and implementing decisions.

5) Objectives:

- i. Ensuring children's right to development, protection, existence and participation stated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- ii. Creating a generation of children equipped with knowledge, attitudes and skills.
- iii. Instilling social values within children and attaining a spiritual and ethical development of children
- iv. Bringing up a generation of children with a personality that suits future leadership
- v. Building national cohesion through cooperation
- vi. Building ethnic, religious and cultural harmony within children
- vii. Ensuring the safety of children by empowering them
- viii. When necessary, work in collaboration with the government and non-governmental organizations in a manner that fits for the best interest of the child.
- ix. Making the office bearers of children's clubs participate in Village Child Development Committees
- x. Acting jointly with the Village Child Development Committee to safeguard children's rights

6) General Principles:

- i. Without any discrimination, all children shall be given equal opportunity to engage in the process of child participation.
- ii. Should provide room for the children to express their views freely and due respect should be given to their ideas.
- iii. During the child participation process, opportunity should be provided for child's development and should ensure his/her right to existence.
- iv. Should ensure the best interest of the child during the child participation process and priority should be given to that, when taking every decision.
- v. Children's participation should be obtained paying due attention to their age, gender, skills and talents.
- vi. Any harm to child's mental or physical health should not take place during child participation.
- vii. Adults and children should come to an agreement on the confidentiality of the information provided and on the use of sensitive information. This has to be done with the intention of safeguarding the privacy of the child and as well to prevent the child become vulnerable.
- viii. Participation of children should always take place voluntarily and on the child's own will.
- ix. Participation process of children shall have equality, non-discrimination and should be a process where everyone work together. Special emphasis shall be given to ensure the participation, especially of vulnerable, disabled, institutionalized and of children under-going social injustice.
- x. All above practical standards of child participation should be taken into consideration when implementing programmes with children.

7) Obtaining the children's club membership

- i. Children between the age of 6-18 years, residing within the administrative area of the children's club and agreeing with the constitution of the children's club can obtain the membership.
- ii. A child who is over 18 years of age cannot be given membership of a children's club or be given positions. However, if any member exceeds the age of 18 years during the 2 year term of office of the children's club, he/she can hold the position or the membership until the end of the term.
- iii. Based on the outstanding talents of a member who has hold membership of the children's club from its beginning, an honorary membership can be given to a member till he/she is 21 years on the consent of the majority.
- iv. The annexed application has to be completed and submitted to the secretary of the children's club in order to get the membership. (Schedule 01)
- v. Membership can be granted to an applicant after submitting the received application to the Committee or at the Annual General Meeting by the Secretary and obtaining approval.

8) Terminating/Suspending the membership:

- i. If a member is acting against the constitution, the Committee has the power to terminate/suspend his/her membership after considering the facts.
- ii. The Committee has the power to terminate the membership of a member who has failed to attend three consecutive meetings without any valid reason or prior informing.
- iii. A member can resign on his own will for reasons such as exceeding the age of 18 years and shifting the residence.

9) Funds and donations:

i. Funds

For the benefit of the children's club the children's club shall accept donations and funds from outsiders and the money collected from selling World Children's Day flags. Such funds and donations shall be deposited in the bank account of the children's club before elapsing one week.

ii. Other Donations

Children's clubs shall accept goods and equipment donated by different sources. Any such property needs be documented as the property of the children's club and shall be maintained accordingly. Due approval of the Advisory Board shall be obtained when receiving outside funds or donations.

10) Money Transactions

- i. Less than Rs. 1000.00 out of the children's club money could be kept with the treasurer without depositing in the bank account.
- ii. Authority is available to withdraw the children's club money from the bank account by placing the signatures of the Treasurer and of the President or the Secretary.
- iii. A definite person of the Advisory Board should be elected for transaction purposes with the bank and the above office bearers should take permission and approval of the relevant advisor when withdrawing money from the bank.
- iv. No member of the children's club can collect money for the children's club or do any kind of money exchanging on behalf of the children's club without the approval of the Committee.
- v. The Treasurer should maintain reports relevant to all financial matters of the children's club as per the advice of the Advisory Board.

11) Office Bearers:

- i) Office bearers consists of the President/ Vice President/ Secretary/ Assistant Secretary/ Treasurer/ Librarian and five Committee members.
- ii) Office bearers for the coming year shall be elected by the members at the year-end children's club meeting or at a meeting held before 31st January.
- iii) At circumstances where more than one name is proposed for the same position, the temporarily appointed secretary shall call for a voting and elect the person who receives the highest number of votes. However, it should be allowed for the nominees to discuss among themselves and to come to a decision.

12) Other matters:

i. Advisory Board

5 individuals shall be selected out of the religious leaders in the area, Grama Niladhari, Economic Development Officer, Samurdhi Officer, Pre-school teacher, and community leaders for the Advisory Board.

i. Facilitators

Two individuals who have undergone the training on Meaningful Child Participation provided by the Department of Probation and Child Care Services can be appointed as Facilitators.

ii. Coordinating Officer

A member of the Advisory Board can be appointed as the Coordinator to handle coordination matters between the Divisional Secretariat and the children's club. After making the appointment, relevant officer and the Child Rights Promotion Officer should be informed in writing.

iii. Supervising Officer

Child Rights Promotion Officer / Assistant attached to the Divisional Secretariat to which the Children's Club belong will be the Supervising Officer and after establishing the children's club the said officer should be informed in writing.

iv. Accounting Officer

A member in the children's club not holding any post in the Executive Committee and with the knowledge in Accounting shall be appointed for the

13. Term of Office of the office bearers:

Term of the office bearers of the children's club is two years. A new set of office bearers shall be appointed at the end of the year or before the 31st of January. The list of the names of the newly appointed office bearers shall be submitted to the Child Rights Promotion Officer of the relevant Divisional Secretariat before 28th February of that year. (Schedule 04)

14. Authorities:

i. President:

President shall chair the children's club meetings and shall be responsible to run the club in an impartial manner obtaining meaningful child participation. He /she shall represent the children's club at the Divisional Children's Council.

ii. Vice President

Vice President shall chair the meetings in the absence of the President or when authorized by the President. At such instances, Vice President shall be entrusted with the powers of the President.

iii. Secretary

- a) The Secretary shall present the reports of the children's club with meaningful child participation and shall be responsible for the safe maintaining of the children's club documents.

- b) The Secretary shall be responsible for all correspondences on behalf of the children's club under the approval of the Committee or the general meeting
- c) Secretary shall call children's club meetings. The official seal of the club shall be kept under the custody of the secretary.
- d) In the case of resigning from the position or at the end of the term, the Secretary shall handover all documents under his/her custody to the succeeding Secretary or Assistant Secretary.
- e) Shall represent the Divisional Children's Council.

iv. Assistant Secretary

- a) Shall perform the duties of the Secretary in his/her absence or when assigned by the Secretary
- b) In case if the Secretary resigns or is dismissed, the Assistant Secretary shall be appointed as the Acting Secretary.

v. Treasurer

- Collecting all the money due to the children's club and their safekeeping, due handling of expenses, maintaining books and accounts, keeping the bank pass book of the children's club securely are the responsibilities of the Treasurer.
- In addition to submitting the budget at the Annual General Meeting, Treasurer is bound to submit the budget of the children's club at any time if requested by the Committee.
- Responsibility of handling all transactions of the children's club lies with the Treasurer.
- In the event of resigning from the post of the Treasurer, all materials of the club in his/her possession shall be duly returned.
- Bank pass book of the children's club shall be kept under the custody of a member of the Advisory Board.
- Shall represent the Divisional Children's Council.

vi. Committee Members

Shall compulsorily attend the committee meetings and assist to achieve the common goals of the children's club.

15. Children's Club Meetings

1. Club meetings

Club meetings shall be conducted monthly and it is compulsory to have the meetings at least once in two months.

2. Committee meetings

Shall be held once a month. (Committee is expected to meet on a day prior to the club meeting)

3. Extraordinary Meetings

Extraordinary General Meetings could be convened within two weeks in response to a written notice of the Child Rights Promotion Officer of division or to a written requisition made with the signatures of 50% of members.

4. Annual General Meeting

Annual General Meeting is held every two years a time before the 31st of January. Office Bearers shall be elected at the meeting and the Child Rights Promotion Officer shall be invited for the meeting.

5. Quorum

2/3 of the members is considered as the quorum for any club meeting.

For Committee meetings, minimum of 7 office bearers shall be present.

16. Amendment to the Constitution:

If amendments to the constitution are required for the purpose of implementing an activity that have been approved by the children's club

and leading to the best interest of the child then the required amendments shall be informed to the Child Rights Promotion Officer in writing and shall be forwarded through the Divisional Secretary to get the approval of the Commissioner of Probation and Child Care Services

17. Registration of Children's Clubs:

(1) Registration:

A children's club established as per the above constitution needs to be registered in the Department of Probation and Child Care Services. A children's club formed by any other organization can become a children's club registered in the Department of Probation and Child Care Services by accepting the constitution of the Department of Probation and Child Care Services. Following needs to be fulfilled and needs to submit the relevant documents.

1. Completed a minimum of three months for the establishment of the children's club
2. Submitting the application for registration in accordance with the attached Schedule 02.
3. List of names of the office bearers, Advisory Board, Facilitators and coordinating officers.
4. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
5. Details of bank accounts/ pass book of the bank/ budget reports
6. A description of the activities conducted by the children's club during the immediate previous 03 months.

(2) Applying for the Renewal of Registration of the Children's Club

A report prepared in accordance with the Schedule 03 should be forwarded to the Commissioner with the recommendation of the Child Rights Promotion Officer / Assistant and the Divisional Secretary.

(3) Cancellation of the Registration of a children's Club

The Commissioner of the Department of Probation and Child Care Services has the authority to cancel the registration of a children's club with the recommendation of the relevant Divisional Secretary when the performance of a children's club is reported as unsatisfactory by the Child Rights Promotion Officer.

Reasons to be unsatisfactory:- not having a representation to the Divisional children's council

- not calling children's club meetings 3 months a time
- acting against the constitution
- Misuse of money
- not adhering to the action plan
- when decided by the Divisional Secretary or Child Rights Promotion Officer on reasonable grounds

Department of Probation and Child Care Services
Model Application Form for Obtaining Children's Club Membership

01.

- i. Name of the child:
- ii. Gender:
- iii. Date of Birth:
- iv. Age: Years Months
- v. School:
- vi. Grade:
- vii. If not attending school:.....
(Give the type of engagement)

02.

- i. Residing Grama Niladhari Division:
- ii. Address:

03.

- i. Mother / Father / Guardian's Name:.....

I declare that the above information are true and correct and agree to adhere to the constitution of the children's club and kindly request to grant me the membership of the
..... (name of the children's club) children's club.

Date:

.....
Signature of the child/Member

04.

I declare that I have no objection in my son /daughter, obtaining the membership of the children's club and whenever possible, I will make him/her participate the children's club activities.

Date:

.....
Signature of the Mother/Father/Guardian

05.

As per the approval given at the Committee meeting/ Annual General meeting held on, membership to the above applicant has been granted with effect from in the children's club under membership No.

.....

Signature of the Hon. President

.....

Signature of the Hon. Secretary

Date :

To be completed by the Child Rights Promotion Officer		
Document	Available	Unavailable
Report of the Annual General Meeting		
List of the Advisors & Office Bearers		
Activities done		

1. Name of the children's club:.....
2. Address:
.....
3. The
 - i. Province :
 - ii. District :
 - iii. Divisional Secretariat Division:.....
 - iv. Grama Niladhari division : to
which the children's club belong.
4. Date of establishment of the children's club:
5. No. of members at present: Girls:Boys:
6. Name and address of the President of the children's club:
.....
.....
7. Name and address of the Secretary of the children's club:
.....
.....

We declare that the above information are true and correct and kindly request to get our children's club registered at the Department of Probation and Child Care Services.

.....

Signature of the Hon. President Signature of the Hon. Secretary

Date: Date:

8. Recommendation of the Grama Niladhari:

I recommend / do not recommend the registration of the above children's club.

Date:

Official seal:

Signature:

9. Recommendation of the Child Rights Promotion Officer / Assistant:

I recommend / do not recommend the registration of the above children's club.

Date:

Official seal:

Signature:

10. Recommendation of the Divisional Secretary:

I recommend / do not recommend the registration of the above children's club.

Date:

Official seal:

Signature:

11. Approval of the Commissioner of Probation and Child Care Services:

I approve / do not approve the registration of the above children's club in the Department of Probation and Child Care Services under the registration no.

Date:

Signature:

Department of Probation and Child Care Services
Application for the Renewal of Children's Club Registration

1. Name of the children's club:
2. Address:.....
.....
3. The
 - i. Province :
 - ii. District :.....
 - iii. Divisional Secretariat Division:.....
 - iv. Grama Niladhari division : to
which the children's club belong.
4. Date of establishment of the children's club:
5. No. of members at present: Girls: Boys:
6. Registration no. of the children's club:
7. Name and address of the President of the children's club:
.....
.....
8. Name and address of the Secretary of the children's club:
.....
.....

We kindly request to renew the registration of the
children's club registered under the above no. for the two
 years/

.....
 Signature of the Hon. President

Date:

.....
 Signature of the Hon. Secretary

Date:

9. Recommendation of the Grama Niladhari:

I recommend/ do not recommend the renewal of the registration of the above children's club.

Date:

Signature:

Official seal:

10. Recommendation of the Child Rights Promotion Officer / Assistant

.....
.....
.....

Date:

Signature:

Official seal:

11. Recommendation of the Divisional Secretary:

I recommend/ do not recommend the renewal of the registration of the above children's club.

Date:

Signature:

Official seal:

12. Approval of the Commissioner of Probation and Child Care Services:

.....
.....
.....

Date:

Signature:

Application for the Membership of the Divisional Children's Council
(submit one application per children's club)

Details of the children's club:

Name of the children's club -

Address of the children's club -

.....

Grama Niladhari division-

Registration No. of the children's club -

No of Members -

Name of the Advisor -

Age (years)	Female	Male
6 - 10		
11 - 14		
15 - 18		
Above 18		

Details if the elected office bearers

Positin	Name	Date of Birth	Address	School

.....
Secretary

.....
President

.....
Advisor

Constitution of the Divisional Children's Council

This is the Divisional Secretariat division level body of the children's council structure. It has been formed by the President, Secretary and the Treasurer and few selected members of the children's clubs operating at Grama Niladhari division level and have registered under the Department of Probation and Child Care Services. Divisional Children's Councils function under the Child Rights4 Promotion Officer.

It could also be identified as the structure that takes the children's right to participation from village level to the Divisional Secretariat division level. Furthermore, the office bearers of the children's clubs will get the opportunity to become the members of the Divisional Children's Council and the number of members that could be participated from one Children's club will depend on the number of Grama Niladhari Divisions in a particular Divisional Secretariat division.

1. **Name:** Divisional Children's Council is formed by a collection of office bearers of the Grama Niladhari division level children's clubs that operate in a particular Divisional Secretariat division. Its name shall carry the name of the Divisional Secretariat division at the end of "Divisional Children's Council".

Ex. Divisional Children's Council - Pitabeddara (name of the Divisional Secretariat)

2. **Address:** The address of the Divisional Secretariat to which the particular Divisional Children's Council belong, shall be used as the address of the Divisional Children's Council.
3. **Nature:** Every Divisional Children's Council shall be an organization that provides equal opportunities to all children of the division without any discrimination of gender, race, religion, social status or disabilities.
4. **Common Goals:** Creating the environment necessary to secure the rights of all the children residing in the Divisional Secretariat Division and giving consideration to children's ideas during the implementation process.

5. Objectives:

- i. Creating a child friendly environment
- ii. Preparation of plans for children by the children
- iii. Improving child participation for the purpose of securing child rights
- iv. Assisting to solve the problems identified in village children's clubs
- v. Representing the Divisional Child development Committees (the three principal office bearers)
- vi. Representing Divisional Coordination committee

6. General Principles:

- i. Any harm to child's mental or physical health should not take place during child participation.
- ii. Adults and children should come to an agreement on the confidentiality of the information provided and on the use of sensitive information. This has to be done with the intention of safeguarding the privacy of the child and also to prevent the child become vulnerable.
- iii. Participation of children should always take place voluntarily and on child's own will. If a child refuses to participate, it has to be respected and shall allow the children to make their participation in different ways.
- iv. Participation process of children shall have equality, non-discrimination and should be a process where everyone work together. Special emphasis shall be given to ensure the participation, especially of vulnerable, disabled, institutionalized and of children under-going social injustice.
- v. All above practical standards of child participation should be taken into consideration when implementing programmes with children.

7. Membership of the children's council:

Children holding the positions of President, Secretary and the Treasurer of active children's clubs functioning at village level or divisional secretariat division level will compulsorily get the membership. (no. of the other members that will participate depends on the no. of Grama Niladhari divisions and the no. of children's clubs in the divisional secretariat division.) On occasions when the three aforementioned officers are unable to participate, three members of the Executive Committee shall participate.

8. Funds and Donations:

- The children's council can maintain a fund from the money collected from selling World Children's Day flags and from donations of outside parties. Such money or donations shall be deposited in the account of the children's council maintained in a reputed bank before elapsing one week.
- Children's council shall accept goods and equipment donated by different sources. Any such property needs be documented as the property of the children's council and shall be maintained accordingly.
- Prior approval of the Advisory Board shall be obtained when receiving outside funds or donations.

9. Money Transactions

- i. Less than Rs. 1000.00 out of the children's council money could be kept with the treasurer without depositing in the bank account.
- ii. Authority is available to withdraw the children's council money from the bank account by placing the signatures of the Treasurer and of the President or the Secretary.
- iii. A definite person of the Advisory Board should be elected to do transactions with the bank on behalf of the children's council and the above office bearers should take permission and approval of the relevant advisor when withdrawing money from the bank.
- iv. No member of the children's council can collect money for the children's council or do any kind of money exchanging on behalf of the children's council without the approval of the Committee.

- v. When opening a bank account, the Treasurer shall be appointed with the approval of the Advisory Board to do transactions with the bank.

10. Office Bearers:

- i. The Children's Council shall comprise of office bearers such as the President / Vice President / Secretary / Assistant Secretary / Treasurer / Magazine Editor and the Coordinator.

At circumstances where more than one name is proposed for the same post, the secretary appointed temporarily shall call for a voting and elect the person who received the highest votes. However, it should be allowed for the nominees to discuss among themselves and to come to a decision.

- ii. Establishment of Sub Committees:

Following sub- committees shall be formed for the children's council and each sub-committee shall consist of a President, Secretary and members.

- Culture and values promotion sub-committee
- Environment Development sub-committee
- Mass communication and media sub-committee
- Research and Social Survey sub-committee
- Leadership, Human Resources and Sports sub-committee

- iii. Aforementioned office bearers and the office bearers of the sub-committees shall be considered as the Executive Committee of the children's council.

- iv. Number of office bearers shall be an odd one.

- v. Advisory Board: Two members out of the members of the Divisional Child Development Committee who have an interest on children's clubs and children's council activities shall be elected for the Advisory Board.

11. Term of office of the office bearers:

Term of office of a children's council is two years. An Annual General Meeting shall be called after two years and the new office bearers shall

be elected. If any position becomes vacant during the two year term, it shall be filled at the immediate Annual General meeting. Election of new office bearers to the children's council shall be done before elapsing the month of April.

Establishment of a children's council shall be notified to the District Children's Council as per Schedule no. 04, before the 15th of June.

12. Authorities:

i. President:

Carrying out the activities of the children's council impartially with a common goal and with meaningful child participation shall be the responsibility of the President. Shall chair the meetings of the council. Shall represent the District Children's Council.

ii. Vice President:

Vice President shall chair the meeting in the absence of the President or when authorized by the President. At such instances, Vice President shall be entrusted with the powers of the President.

iii. Secretary:

1. The Secretary shall be responsible for presenting reports and documents of the children's council with a meaningful child participation and safe maintaining of children's council documents. The secretary shall also maintain a register of the children's council members.
2. The Secretary shall be responsible for all correspondences on behalf of the children's council under the approval of the Committee or the general meeting
3. Secretary shall call children's council meetings with the approval of the Child Rights Promotion Officer.
4. Official seal of the council shall be kept under the custody of the secretary.
5. In the case of resigning from the position or at the end of the term, the Secretary shall immediately handover all documents under his/her custody to the succeeding Secretary or Assistant Secretary.

6. Shall submit a concise report of the activities conducted by the council during the year to the District Children's council and National Children's council (to the department) through the Divisional Secretary.
7. Shall submit the minutes of the council meetings to the District Children's council and the National Children's council.

iv. Assistant Secretary

- Shall carry out the activities of the council in the absence of the Secretary
- In case if the Secretary resigns or is dismissed, the Assistant Secretary shall be appointed as the Acting Secretary.

v. Treasurer

- Collecting all money due to the children's council and their safekeeping, due handling of expenses, correct maintaining of books and accounts, keeping the bank pass book of the children's council securely are the responsibilities of the Treasurer.
- In addition to submitting the annual budget at the end of the year, the Treasurer is bound to submit the budget of the children's council at any time if requested by the Committee or the General Committee.
- Responsibility of handling all transactions of the children's council lies with the Treasurer.
- In the event of resigning from the post of the Treasurer, all materials of the council in his /her possession shall be duly returned.
- Bank pass book of the children's council shall be kept under the custody of the Child Rights Promotion Officer.
- At each time the annual general meeting is held, accounts and the accounts book of the council shall be get checked by the Child Rights Promotion Officer.

vi. Sub-committee Members

All office bearers of sub-committees shall prepare project proposals for their sub-committees and shall implement them (with the Child Rights Promotion Officer).

• Method of forming committees

- I. Combine the children's clubs in few closely located Grama Niladhari divisions in the divisional secretariat division and form one sub-committee.
- II. Depending on the field of interest of the officers of the divisional children's council, they shall get the membership of the desired sub-committee and shall actively run the sub-committees.

vii. Committee Members

Shall compulsorily participate committee meetings and shall assist to achieve the common goals of the children's council.

13. Meetings of the Divisional Children's Council

- a. Shall convene the annual general meetings of the council 4 months a time
- b. Committee meetings shall be convened two months a time

Extraordinary Meetings

Extraordinary General Meetings shall be called by the Child Rights Promotion Officer with the approval of the Commissioner of Probation and Child Care Services or the Divisional Secretary.

Annual General Meeting is held every two years a time before the 31st of January. Office Bearers shall be elected at the meeting and the Child Rights Promotion Officer shall be invited for the meeting.

Quorum

2/3 of the total members is considered as the quorum for any council meeting.

14. Activities that could be performed in a children's council

1. Providing opportunity to exchange experiences and ideas of different divisional children's councils, experience sharing trips, educational trips
2. Organize sports and cultural competitions between children's clubs, organize programmes such as leadership training workshops.
3. Act as a team to solve personal or general problems (educational, health, social or other) faced by the children of the area. Develop a children's leadership in the area.
4. Prepare various programmes with the support of the government and non- governmental organizations.
5. Organize special national programmes, religious programmes. Ex. World Children's Day, Independence Day, Sinhala Tamil New Year, and religious festivals, any other special celebration of educational, scientific or social nature.
6. Whenever possible, provide opportunity for disabled and institutionalized children to participate for the activities organized by the children's council.
7. Make the representatives of the Divisional Councils/ Municipal councils/ Urban council aware of the issues face by the children in the area.
8. Bring the idea of the children's council regarding child right issues to the Divisional Steering Committee and to the Divisional Coordination Committee.
9. After inquiring the issues prevailing for the children of the area taking action to ensure their rights, make aware of child rights and their duties, forming a task force to look into various malpractices faced by the children of the area and to refer them to relevant institutions.

**Informing the Details of the Elected Office Bearers of
the Divisional Children's Council**

Date -

Venue -

Participation - Members

Advisors

Others

Details of the elected office bearers

Position	Name	Date of Birth	Address	School	Name of the children's club & the Grama Niladhari division

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Secretary Advisor Child Rights Promotion Officer Divisional Secretary

Constitution of the District Children's Council

This is the children's organization structure of the Department of Probation and Child Care Services that operates at district level. District Children's Councils are formed by the President, Secretary, Treasurer and few other key office bearers of the Divisional Children's Councils operating in the district. District Children's Councils are operated by the District Child Rights Promotion Officer under the guidance and advice of the District Secretary.

District Children's Councils aim at securing child rights, collective decision making, leadership and personality development and improving knowledge, attitudes and skills of children. It also draws attention on ensuring children's right to participation and in order to accomplish that action is taken to get a representation of the District Child Development Committee and of the District Coordination Committee when necessary.

- 1. Name:** District Children's Council is formed by a collection of office bearers of the Divisional Children's Councils that are operating at Divisional Secretariat division level of the district. Its name shall carry the name of the District at the end of "District Children's Council".

Ex. District Children's Council - Matara (name of the District)

- 2. Address:** The address of the District Secretariat to which the particular District Children's Council belong, shall be used as the address of the District Children's Council.
- 3. Nature:** Every District Children's Council shall be an organization that provides equal opportunities to all children of the district without any discrimination of gender, race, religion, social status, or disabilities.
- 4. Common Goals:** To create the environment necessary to secure the rights of all the children residing in the district, make use of children's

ideas productively during child development activities and to make children the stakeholders of those activities.

5. Objectives:

- a. Creating a child friendly environment and empowering children to secure child rights
- b. Preparation of plans for children by the children
- c. Improving child participation for the purpose of securing child rights
- d. Solving problems identified at district children's councils
- e. Representing the District Child development Committees (the three principal office bearers)
- f. Representing District Coordination committee

6. General Principles:

- a. Any harm to child's mental or physical health should not take place during child participation.
- b. Adults and children should come to an agreement on the confidentiality of the information provided and on the use of sensitive information. This has to be done with the intention of safeguarding the privacy of the child and also to prevent the child become vulnerable.
- c. Participation of children should always take place voluntarily and on child's own will. If a child refuses to participate, it has to be respected and shall allow the children to make their participation in different ways.
- d. Participation process of children shall have equality, non-discrimination and should be a process where everyone work together. Special emphasis shall be given to ensure the participation, especially of vulnerable, disabled, institutionalized and of children under-going social injustice.
- e. All above practical standards of child participation should be taken into consideration when implementing programmes with children.

7. Membership of Children's Club

The President, Secretary and Treasurer and all the Divisional Children's Councils established within the district receives the membership of the District Children's Council. (The member that can participate will depend on the number of Divisional Children's Councils in the district.)

8. Funds & Donations

- District children's council can maintain a fund from the money collected from selling World Children's Day flags and from donations received from outside parties. Such money or donations shall be deposited in the account of the children's council before elapsing one week. (deposit in a state bank)
- Children's council shall accept goods and equipment donated by different sources. Any such property needs be documented as the property of the children's council and shall be maintained accordingly. Due approval of the Advisory Board shall be obtained when receiving outside donations or funds.

9. Transactions

- i. Less than Rs. 1000.00 out of the children's council money could be kept with the treasurer without depositing in the bank account.
- ii. Authority is available to withdraw the children's council money from the bank account by placing the signatures of the Treasurer and of the President or the Secretary. The amount and the limit of withdrawals shall be determined by the Committee.
- iii. A definite person of the Advisory Board should be elected to do transactions with the bank on behalf of the children's council and the above office bearers should take permission and approval of the relevant advisor when withdrawing money from the bank.

- iv. No member of the children's council can collect money for the children's club or do any kind of money exchanging on behalf of the children's council without the approval of the Committee.
- v. When opening a bank account, the Treasurer shall be appointed with the approval advice of the Advisory Board to do transactions with the bank.

10. Office Bearers:

- I. Out of the District Children's Council children, President/ Vice President/ Secretary/ Assistant Secretary/ Treasurer/ District Coordinator/ Magazine Editor shall be appointed as members.

At circumstances where more than one name is proposed for the same post, the secretary appointed temporarily shall call for a voting and elect the person who received the highest votes. However, it should be allowed for the nominees to discuss among themselves and to come to a decision.

II. Establishment of sub-committees

- Culture and values promotion sub-committee
- Environment Development sub-committee
- Mass communication and media sub-committee
- Research and Social Survey sub-committee
- Leadership, Human Resources and Sports sub-committee

President/ Secretary shall be appointed to each sub-committee

Each and every member not holding membership of the Executive Committee shall be a member in any of the sub-committees.

- III. Advisory Board: District Secretary/ Additional District Secretary/ Assistant District Secretary/ District Samurdhi Commissioner/ District Child Rights Promotion Officer

11. Term of office of the office bearers:

Two years. An Annual General Meeting shall be called after two years and the new office bearers shall be elected. If any position becomes vacant during the two year term, it shall be filled at the immediate Annual General meeting.

District Children's Councils shall be established on or before the 15th of August falling after the two years period and the list of names of the members shall be forwarded to the department before 10th of September as per Schedule No. 06. Nomination of members for the National Children's Council shall be done from the officers in this list.

12. Authorities:

I. President:

Carrying out the activities of the children's council impartially with a common goal and with meaningful child participation shall be the responsibility of the President. Shall chair the meetings of the council. Shall represent the National Children's Council.

II. Vice President:

Vice President shall chair the meeting in the absence of the President or when authorized by the President. At such instances, Vice President shall be entrusted with the powers of the President. Shall represent the National Children's Council.

III. Secretary:

- a. The Secretary shall be responsible for presenting reports and documents of the children's council with a meaningful child participation and safe maintaining of children's council documents. The secretary shall also maintain a register of the children's council members.

- b. The Secretary shall be responsible for all correspondences on behalf of the children's council under the approval of the Committee or the general meeting.
- c. Secretary shall call children's council meetings under the Child Rights Promotion Officer's approval.
- d. Official seal of the council shall be kept under the custody of the secretary.
- e. In the case of resigning from the position or at the end of the term, the Secretary shall immediately handover all documents under his/her custody to the succeeding Secretary or Assistant Secretary.
- f. Shall represent the National Children's council.

IV. Assistant Secretary

- a. Shall carry out the activities of the council in the absence of the Secretary
- b. In case if the Secretary resigns or is dismissed, the Assistant Secretary shall be appointed as the Acting Secretary.
- c. Shall represent the National Children's council.

V. Treasurer

- Collecting all money due to the children's council and their safekeeping, due handling of expenses, correct maintaining of books and accounts, keeping the bank pass book of the children's council securely are the responsibilities of the Treasurer.
- In addition to submitting the annual budget at the end of the year, the Treasurer is bound to submit the budget of the children's council at any time if requested by the Committee or the General Committee.
- Responsibility of all transactions of the children's council lies with the Treasurer.

- In the event of resigning from the post of the Treasurer, all materials of the council in his /her possession shall be duly returned.
- Accounts and the Accounts book of the council has to be get checked by the District Child Rights Promotion Officer at each time the annual general meeting is held.
- Shall represent the National Children's Council.

VI. Sub-Committee Members

All office bearers of sub-committees shall prepare project proposals for their sub-committees and shall implement them (with the Child Rights Promotion Officer).

- **Method of forming committees**

- I. Combine the children's councils in few closely located Divisional Secretariat divisions in the district and form one sub-committee.
- II. Depending on the field of interest of the officers of the divisional children's council, they shall obtain the membership of the desired sub-committee and shall run the sub-committees actively.

VII. Committee Members

Committee members shall compulsorily participate committee meetings and shall assist to achieve the common goals of the children's council.

13. Meetings of the District Children's Council

- a. Meetings of the council shall be convened 4 months a time
- b. Committee meetings shall be convened 4 months a time

Extraordinary Meetings

District Child Rights Promotion Officer shall convene extraordinary general meetings under the approval of the Commissioner of Probation and Child Care Services or the District Secretary.

Quorum

2/3 of the members is considered as the quorum for an Annual General Meeting of the District Children's Council.

14. Duties

1. Providing opportunity for children to represent the District Child Development Committees.
2. Providing opportunity for two office bearers of the District Children's Council to represent the District Coordinating Committee.
3. Exchanging views and ideas regarding Divisional Children's Council activities.
4. Have a dialog on the issues and needs that arises for the children at Divisional Secretariat level.
5. Discuss about the decisions of the National Children's Council, implementing them and submitting suggestions to the National Children's Council.
6. Hold a District Children's Convention
7. Act as a group for actions against children in the district.

Informing the Conducting of the Election of Office Bearers

Date -

Venue -

Participation - Members

Advisors

Others

Details of the elected office bearers

Position	Name	Date of Birth	School	Name of the children's club & the Grama Niladhari division	Divisional Secretariat Division of the Children's club

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Secretary Advisor District Child Rights District Divisional Secretary
Promotion Officer

Constitution of the National Children's Council

- 1. Name** - National Children's Council - Department of Probation and Child Care Services
- 2. Geographic Area in concern** - Sri Lanka - A representation of 7 children (key Office Bearers) from a District Children's Council and getting the representation of all districts.
- 3. Goals-** Organizing the National Children's Council for the protection and promotion of child rights, make use of children's ideas productively and empowering children while making them its stakeholders
- 4. Objectives**
 - I. Promote the participation of Sri Lankan children in a meaningful way
 - II. Taking action to secure the rights of Sri Lankan children
- 5. General Principles**
 - a. Any harm to child's mental or physical health should not take place during child participation.
 - b. Adults and children should come to an agreement on the confidentiality of the information provided and on the use of sensitive information. This has to be done with the intention of safeguarding the privacy of the child and also to prevent the child become vulnerable.
 - c. Participation of children should always take place voluntarily and on child's own will. If a child refuses to participate, it has to be respected and shall allow the children to make their participation in different ways.

- d. Participation process of children shall have equality, non-discrimination and should be a process where everyone work together. Special emphasis shall be given to ensure the participation, especially of vulnerable, disabled, institutionalized and of children under-going social injustice.
- e. All above practical standards of child participation should be taken into consideration when implementing programmes with children.

6. Establishment of the National Children's Council -

Details regarding the establishment of the District Children's Council shall be submitted to the head office before 10th of September.

National Children's Council shall be established in October.

7. Obtaining and cancellation of membership

An active member of the District Children's Council shall be eligible for membership.

Membership of a National Children's Council member shall be cancelled on the decisions taken after conducting a formal inquiry by the Advisory Board regarding a complaint on an unethical conduct stated in the constitution of the council.

8. Term of office of the office bearers - Shall be two years.

9. Composition of the National Children's Council -

Consists representatives from the 25 districts and will include the President/ Secretary / Treasurer / Vice President / Assistant Secretary / Editor and one other representative from each District Children's Council.

10. Key Office Bearers (Total number of positions are 09)

- a) President
- b) Co-President
- c) Secretary
- d) Co-Secretary
- e) Treasurer
- f) National Coordinator
- g) Magazine Editor

11. Authorities:

I. President:

Carrying out the activities of the children's council impartially with a common goal and with meaningful child participation shall be the responsibility of the President. Shall chair the meetings of the council.

II. Co-President:

Co-President shall chair the meeting in the absence of the President or when authorized by the President. At such instances, Co-President shall be entrusted with the powers of the President.

III. Secretary:

1. The Secretary shall be responsible for presenting reports and documents of the children's council with a meaningful child participation and safe maintaining of children's council documents. The secretary shall also maintain a register of the children's council members.
2. The Secretary shall be responsible for all correspondences on behalf of the children's council under the approval of the Committee or the general meeting.
3. In the case of resigning from the position or at the end of the term, the Secretary shall immediately handover all documents under his/her custody to the succeeding Secretary.

IV. Co-Secretary

1. Shall carry out the activities of the council in the absence of the Secretary
2. In case if the Secretary resigns or is dismissed, the Co-Secretary shall be appointed as the Secretary.

V. Treasurer

- Collecting all money due to the children's council and their safekeeping, due handling of expenses, correct maintaining of books and accounts, keeping the bank pass book of the children's council securely are the responsibilities of the Treasurer.
- In addition to submitting the annual budget at the end of the year, the Treasurer is bound to submit the budget of the children's council at any time if requested by the Committee or the General Committee.
- Responsibility of all transactions of the children's council lies with the Treasurer.
- In the event of resigning from the post of the Treasurer, all materials of the council in his /her possession shall be duly returned to the council.

VI. Magazine Editor

Designing the magazines to promote child rights, provide knowledge and bring out the talents of the members.

VII. National Coordinator

Organizing different workshops with the participation of National Children's Council members

12. Method of Electing Office Bearers

- One member can apply for a 02 position only.
- Total number of positions are 09. Action will be taken to have only one position for one district. (Done to give the opportunity to many districts as possible)
- When there is only one contestant for a position, he or she will be elected unanimously.
- Action will be taken to elect officers for the positions of President, Secretary and Editor from both Sinhala and Tamil languages. Members will be elected from a single language (Sinhala) only when no Tamil speaking members have applied for the position.
- When electing members for the positions of Co- President and Co-Secretary, the member who has received the highest number of votes will be appointed as the President and the member who got second highest votes from the other language will be appointed as the Co-President. Co- Secretary will too be elected in the same manner.
- At instances where a member has applied for 02 positions and receives highest number of votes for both positions, then he/she should resign from one position on his own will and take the higher position out of the two. Under such circumstances, the member who received the next highest number of votes will be appointed to that position and the said contestant should be from a district where no other positions have been given.
- Applications for each post must be forwarded with the recommendation of District Child Rights Promotion Officer prior to the election. Grouping into sub-committees can be done at the discretion of the members who were not elected to the key positions and President and the Secretary of the sub-committees can be elected by the members of the sub-committee.

- Two members from one district should not be appointed to any key positions or sub-committee positions. Positions should be divided among districts.
- When two candidates receive equal number of votes for a particular position, one candidate can quit voluntarily or can be elected from a draw.
- Every candidate should be a member of a registered children's club and a member of a District Children's Council.
- Age of the candidate should not have exceeded the age of 18 years. When a member is appointed to a position before he/she attains the age of 18 years, then he/she can continue in his/her position till the age of 21 years. However, they don't have the right to contest for positions but are eligible to cast their vote.

13. Sub committees

1. Leadership, human resources and sports sub- committee
 2. Mass communication and media sub- committee
 3. Culture and values promotion sub- committee
 4. Research and social survey sub- committee
 5. Environment development sub-committee
- President / Secretary shall be appointed to each sub-committee. Each and every member not holding membership of the Executive Committee shall be a member in any of the sub-committees.
 - Each sub-committee shall be formed by joining two neighboring provinces.
 - Opportunity will be given to represent one sub-committee depending on the interest of the child.

14. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall comprise of 17 members. It includes key office bearers of the National Children's Council and the President and the Secretary of sub-committees.

(Election of key office bearers and Executive Committee members shall be done in a manner that will make a representation from all districts)

15. Advisory Board

Minister in charge of the subject, Secretary to the Ministry, Commissioner of the Department of Probation and Child Care Services, Assistant Commissioner and the Child Rights Promotion Officers of the Head Office.

16. Meetings

Annual General meeting of the National Children's Council shall be held once a year.

- Sub- committee meetings shall also be held once a year.
- Executive Committee shall be convened six months a time.
- Quorum shall be 2/3 of the members

17. I. Common Responsibilities / Duties

- i. Developing a national level coordination to obtain the support of government and non-governmental organizations for children's club/children's council projects.
- ii. Conducting the Annual National Children's Convention
- iii. Developing a national level programme to ensure child rights
- iv. Obtaining active contribution for programmes held to mark the World Children's Day.
- v. Raising a fund
- vi. Getting the opportunity for the National Children's Council to participate in the process of formulating regulations relevant to children.
- vii. Establishing a task force for child development

II. Responsibilities/Duties of sub-committees

Culture and values promotion sub-committee

1. Preparation of programmes for Divisional and District Children's Councils to create a virtuous family environment
2. Preparation of programmes for national integration

Environment development sub-committee

1. Implementing environment protection programmes for District and National Children's Councils
2. Preparation of programmes for national integration

Mass communication and media sub-committee

1. Providing opportunities for children to show their creative talents, making various creations and gathering necessary information
2. Getting the opportunity within the mass media to promote and strengthen child rights
3. Empowering the community to prevent violence against children
4. Providing necessary assistance to update the National Children's Council website

Research and social survey sub-committee

1. Conducting science and innovation competitions at district and national level

Leadership, human resources and sports sub-committee

1. Organizing various trainings, leadership and personality development programmes (by the Divisional and District Children's Councils)
2. Conducting programmes for attitude development
3. Forming sports training pools and conducting sports competitions



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Save the Children