

## **Declaration of Rights by Janusz Korczak**

**The child has the right to love.**

“Love the child, not just your own.”

**The child has the right to respect.**

“Respect the mysteries and the ups and downs of that difficult task of growing up.”

**The child has the right to optimal conditions in which to grow and develop.**

“We undertake to eliminate hunger, overcrowded conditions, neglect and exploitation. Suffering bred of poverty spreads like lice - sadism, crime and brutality are nurtured on it.”

**The child has the right to live in the present.**

“Children are not the people of tomorrow. They are people today.”

**The child has the right to be himself or herself.**

“A child is not a lottery ticket, marked to win first prize.”

**The child has the right to mistakes.**

“There are no more fools among children than among adults.”

**The child has the right to fail.**

“We renounce the deceptive longing for the perfect child.”

**The child has the right to be taken seriously.**

“You will never understand children if you belittle their qualities. Who asks the child for her opinion or consent?”

**The child has the right to protection.**

“We undertake to protect the child from all forms of violence and abuse.”

**The child has the right to respect for his secrets.**

“If a child trusts you with his secret, be grateful, for his confidence is the highest prize.”

**The child has the right to “a lie, a deception, a theft.”**

“He does not have the right to lie, deceive or steal.”

**The child has the right to respect for his belongings.**

“No matter how insignificant or valueless - they are not just bits of rubbish!”

**The child has the right to education.**

“One is struck by the fact that everywhere military spending is greater than that for education.”

**The child has the right to a future on this planet.**

“We still plunder the mountains, cut down the trees and destroy the animals.”

**The child has the right to forgiveness.**

“More often than not we are the harshest judges, rather than their counselors and consolers.

**The child has the right to protest injustice.**

“We must end absolute authority. Always listen and try and see things through the eyes of the child.”

**The child has the right to happiness.**

“Let children drink the joy of the morning. Show them love, kindness and understanding - set an example.”

**The child has the right to respect for his grief.**

“Even though it be for the loss of a pebble.”

**The child has the right to a Children’s Court where he can judge and be judged by his peers.**

“We are the sole judges of children’s actions, movements, thoughts and plans.

I know that a Children’s Court is essential. I hope that in fifty years there will not be a single school, or institution without one.”

**The child has the right to be defended in the juvenile court system.**

“The delinquent child is still a child, who has not given up yet, but does not know who he is. A punitive sentence could adversely influence his future sense of himself and his behavior. Because it is society that has failed him and made him behave this way.”

**The child has the right to commune with God.**

**The child has the right to die prematurely.**

“A mother’s deep love for her child must give him the right to premature death.

Not every bush grows into a tree.”

**Sentences with " are translated from Korczak's writing in Polish**