

THE PLAN

- All children must have the best possible start in life. Helping children begins with good health care for their mothers even before the children are born. Young children must have good nutrition, immunizations and grow up in a safe and healthy environment.
- All children must have a quality education. Primary schools should be free so that all children—boys and girls, rich and poor—can attend. All schools should be safe

and friendly places. All children must have teachers who are trained properly and who encourage them to learn.

- All young people must have the opportunity to develop the skills they need to participate in and contribute to their communities. Governments and societies must make sure that all children are physically and mentally healthy. They must protect young people from violence. They must ensure that young people have the kind of education that prepares them to earn a living.



for children and young people

Even if you can't come to New York for the Special Session, a great way to influence what happens there is through an international campaign called **Say Yes for Children**. **Say Yes for Children** will start in March 2001, with the idea of sending a message from millions of young people and concerned citizens to the governments attending the Special Session. Look for information on this campaign in your community.

ACT NOW!

1. Get in touch with the department or ministry in your government that handles education or youth services. Discuss what has been happening to children and young people in your country. Let the people there hear your thoughts and feelings.
2. Work with children's organizations and local and national youth groups in your community. Make sure that your voices are heard loud and clear at the Special Session in September 2001.
3. Call or write the UNICEF office in your country. Get more information about the Special Session.
4. Raise the issue of the Special Session in your school, youth center or organization.
5. Join discussions at youth conferences, forums, and other meetings and events where the Special Session is being discussed.
6. Visit www.unicef.org and www.unicef.org/voy for more information and discussion about the Special Session.

Voices of youth:

MEETING IN CYBERSPACE



Take up the issues of HIV/AIDS, gender discrimination, child labour, the environment, armed conflict and youth rights in the UNICEF youth rights web project, *Voices of Youth* (VOY) at www.unicef.org/voy. Give your opinions and hear from other young people around the world. The "Take Action" forum encourages participants to share their experiences about getting involved and making a difference in their communities. All the discussions and materials are available on-line in English, French and Spanish.



So... how about getting involved?

Young people have been invited to the planning meetings or to the Special Session itself to take part in a variety of activities, forums and panels. Governments may have youth representatives in their official delegations and many NGOs are expected to bring young people to the Special Session to share their opinions, experiences and suggestions for solutions to the problems we all face.

Photos: UNICEF: HQ00-0778/DeCesare; HQ92-0075/Maines; HQ97-0911/Lemoyne; HQ98-0497/Pirozzi; HQ99-1069/Lemoyne; HQ99-0223/Pirozzi; HQ99-0870/Lemoyne; HQ00-0401/Balaguer; HQ93-2123/Noorani; UN/DPI/Markisz; UNICEF:HQ92-034/Toutounji

For more information about the Special Session and how you can be involved call or write the UNICEF office in your country or visit us on the web at: www.unicef.org/voy

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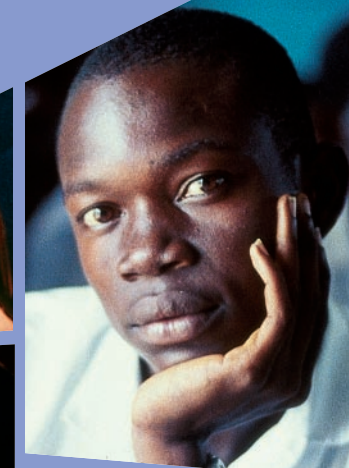
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What's up?

with the **Special Session**
on **Children** at the **UN**

What do you think....

- Are the biggest problems the world faces today?
- Would make the world a safer place?
- Would make the world a better place?



**WANTED:
YOUNG PEOPLE**

United Nations General Assembly
New York, 19 - 21 September 2001

The Leadership Initiative

The Leadership Initiative is an important part of the Global Movement for Children that is headed by **Nelson Mandela**, the former president of South Africa, and his wife, **Graca Machel**, a UN special expert on children. The Leadership Initiative calls on governments and leaders from all segments of society to increase their investments in children's health, education, rights and protection so that the goals of the Special Session can be realized for all children and young people.





WANTED: YOUNG PEOPLE

What are your ideas about...

- Giving children a healthy start in life?
- Stopping wars and violence?
- Getting more people out of poverty?
- Contributing to your communities?

you have the right
to be informed, to have your
opinions heard and to be involved
in matters that affect your lives. World
leaders need to hear your voices and see your
faces. The Special Session on Children, a meeting on
September 19, 20 and 21, 2001, at the United Nations in New York City,
is a time and place where this can happen.

The Special Session is an official United Nations meeting, so mostly it will be Heads of State and Government who will attend. But many other people and groups have been invited to both the Special Session itself and to preliminary planning meetings for the Session. We expect non-governmental organizations (NGOs), children's organizations, advocates for children, and children and young people themselves.

**WHO
WILL
BE
THERE**

**YOUR
RIGHTS**

In 1989, the Convention on the Rights of the Child was passed by members of the United Nations. It includes the ways that adults and governments must protect you and support your health, education and development. It says, for example, that you have the right to an education. The right to have a home and enough food to eat. And the right to protection from abuse and neglect. The Convention also says that children and young people have the right to participate and the right to freely express yourselves.

Goals of the Special Session



- To take a look at what's been done during the past 10 years to improve the lives and protect the rights of children and young people.
- To come away with commitments that all children will get the best possible start in life, a quality education and the skills they need to become full and active participants in the world around them.
- To agree on what to do next to improve the quality of life for children and young people.

Change the world with Children

The real work of meeting the needs of children and young people will be done in homes, communities, villages, towns and cities in countries around the world. It will require a huge commitment from governments and from all parts of societies – youth activists, civic leaders, government agencies, NGOs and private corporations. **The Global Movement for Children** is a worldwide campaign to help make sure that governments keep their promises to children. It is a coalition of committed people and organizations whose number one priority is taking action to improve conditions and ensure the well-being of all children and young people in the world.



the dream

A world where the best interests of children and young people are always taken into account. A world that protects children's rights. A world that treats every child equally and lets boys and girls play and learn, and grow to adulthood in health, peace and dignity. A world that involves children and young people in making decisions about their lives and finding ways to make the world a better place for all.

It all began in 1990

The Special Session is a follow-up to the 1990 World Summit for Children. The Summit inspired worldwide support for meeting the needs of children. At the 1990 Summit, governments pledged to give every child a better life and a promising future. They signed the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and a Plan

of Action for Implementing the World Declaration.

And they outlined the areas of children's lives most in need of attention during the next decade, including poverty, health, nutrition and education, and included specific goals that governments felt could be achieved by the year 2000.

A lot has happened in the last 10 years to improve the well-being of children.

- More children were in school.
- The lives of millions were saved because of vaccines.
- Millions were spared blindness and mental disabilities because they had more micronutrients, such as vitamin A and iodized salt, in their diets.

**1990-
2000**

2001 and beyond

Children and young people throughout the world still experience far too many hardships in their everyday lives. The lives of millions are shattered by extreme poverty, armed conflict, AIDS and discrimination. Consider this:

- 160 million children under the age of five are malnourished. About 10 million severely malnourished children die each year.
- 110 million children do not attend primary school, two thirds of them girls.
- 600 million children live in families earning less than \$1 a day.
- 1.4 billion people do not have safe water in their communities.
- 13 million children have been orphaned by AIDS and 8,500 children and young people each day are infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.