



Know your Rights: A Guide for Young Girls

Understanding Your Rights as You Grow Up

As girls grow up, their bodies go through many changes, and with those changes come important rights that every young girl should know. With the **average age of menstruation now around 10 years old**, it's more important than ever to understand what protections exist for your health, education, and safety. This guide will help you understand your rights and empower you to speak up for yourself and others.

Right to Education

You have the right to stay in school, no matter what.

- Schools must provide **a safe and inclusive environment** for all students, including those who have started menstruating.
- You have the right to **access menstrual products** if your school provides them. If they don't, you can ask a teacher or school official to advocate for change.
- You cannot be **excluded, bullied, or shamed** for having your period. If you experience this, speak to a trusted adult.

Right to Health & Menstrual Care

You have the right to access healthcare and proper menstrual hygiene.

- If you have painful periods, heavy bleeding, or feel sick, you can see a doctor. **Your health matters!**
- In many areas, schools and public places must provide **free menstrual products** (pads, tampons, or alternatives).
- You can ask a parent, teacher, or trusted adult for help if you don't have access to what you need.

Right to Bodily Autonomy

Your body belongs to you, and you have the right to make decisions about it.

- No one has the right to **touch you, talk about your body, or make you feel uncomfortable** without your consent.
- You can say **NO** to anything that makes you uncomfortable, even if it's from an adult or someone in authority.
- If someone makes you feel unsafe, talk to a trusted adult—**you have the right to be protected.**

Right to Protection from Child Marriage & Exploitation

You have the right to grow up without being forced into adult responsibilities.

- No one can force or pressure you into marriage—this is illegal in Canada and many other countries.
- If someone tries to force you into a situation that feels wrong, tell someone you trust (a teacher, counselor, or family member).

Right to Speak Up & Be Heard

Your voice matters, and you have the right to express your thoughts and feelings.

- If something is unfair, you can advocate for change—in school, at home, and in your community.
- If you ever feel like your rights are being ignored, you can talk to someone who can help, like a teacher, counselor, or advocate.

How to Get Help

If you ever feel unsafe, need menstrual care, or have questions about your rights, here are some trusted resources:

- **Kids Help Phone (Canada):** Call 1-800-668-6868 or text CONNECT to 686868
- **Local Women's Shelters:** Provide safe spaces for girls who need protection or support.
- **School Counselors & Teachers:** Can provide guidance and advocate for your rights.

Final Message:

Growing up comes with many changes, but **you are not alone**. Knowing your rights means you can stand up for yourself and others. **You are strong, capable, and deserve respect, safety, and support.**

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