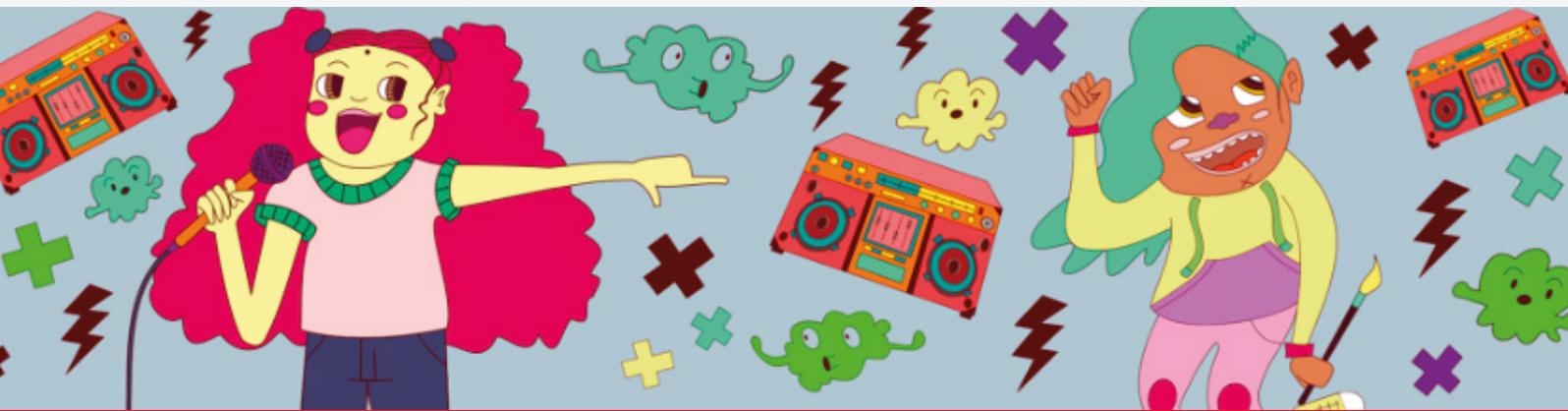


NOV
2018

QUERY



YOUNG VOICES

Put Words to your Rights

Uruguay



Save the Children

CDNU 
Comité de los Derechos del Niño/a - Uruguay

Acknowledgments

To the more than a thousand children and teenagers that participated from the survey.

Work team Query Young Voices:

Alvaro Adib, Alfredo Correa, Maria Noel Gonzalez, Ignacio Salamano, Tamara Samudio



Table of Contents

 Presentation	Pág. 4
 The survey	Pág. 5
 Main findings	Pág. 6
 Suggestions	Pág. 12

Presentation

In July this year, CRC UN received the proposal to carry out the Query Young Voices which was developed for the first time in Sweden in 2014 by Save the Children and performed afterwards in Kosovo, Lituania, Mongolia, Armenia, Jordania and Perú.

The initiative seeks to know the opinion and point of view of teenagers about subjects and realities that affect them: education, participation, discrimination and safety, in the different scenarios where they move about: their houses, educative centers, public spaces and Internet.

The experience in Uruguay was carried out within the project Más Conocimiento, Más Participación, Más Derechos (More Knowledge, More Participation, More Rights) and it is in tune with the work done by teenagers involved with the space «More Participation» of Uruguay's Children Rights Committee (CDNU).

Near 80 teenagers were part of this challenge. They have been the direct protagonists of this query, involving in the adaptation and adjustment of the questions from the survey, spreading the virtual survey among their Whatsapp groups and social media, proposing its application in public and private educational centers,

youth centers and social movements and presenting it in public spaces or activities where the presence of young people was expected or participating of focus groups discussions.

From this dialog-gathering between teenagers that are part of the group «More participation» and the technical team of the query, arises the experience in Uruguay: Young Voices: Put Word to your Rights, directed to teenagers between 12 and 17 years old from all over the country.

The results from the query will be important supplies for: impact actions and demands facing next presidential and parliamentary elections in 2019 and also a starting point drafting next Alternative Inform of Civil Society to the Children Rights Committee of United Nations



The survey

The survey was carried out between the months of September and October 2018, all over national territory. It reached 1007 teenagers between 12 and 17 years old, which volunteered through social media completing a survey in the platform Googleforms, that consisted in a structured questionnaire of 41 multiple choice questions and sub questions that teens answered in an anonymous way.

Discussion Groups

For this investigation there were carried out four discussion groups and four topics were selected to deepen: education, participation, usage of technologies, violence and discrimination.

The preparation of youth discussion groups implicated the introduction of tools linked to playing and audiovisual language, which worked as a communication support and acted as icebreakers and triggers in each subject of discussion. Furthermore, it included the production of a shortage to the dynamic.

Main findings

| Use of technologies.

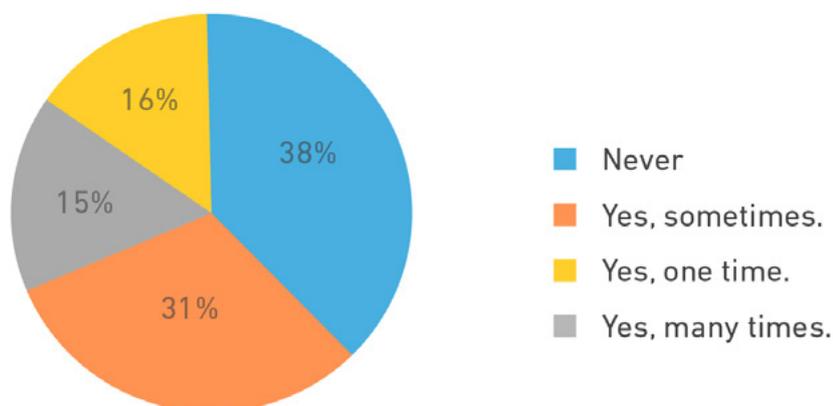
Children and teenagers accede the Internet very frequently: 8 out of 10 connect at least once a day. The principal mean of access - regardless their age, gender and place of residence - is the cell phone (8 out of 10).

Among the most recurrent uses of Internet, children and teenagers declared using it to look for information, watch videos, chat and access diverse social media (Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat).

"You can't live without Whatsapp." "The majority of us use it for entertainment, to watch series on Netflix, memes, to keep in touch among us, to get together or to hang out somewhere." "If not, you miss everything." "I post a lot of pictures." "To gossip and watch other stuff."

"We are always producing content, commenting, posting stories on Instagram, doing a blog or a meme, there's people that upload videos to Youtube, it's impossible not being an active user, we are always active on social media."

In relation to the perception of the risks involved with the use of Internet, 6 out of 10 children and teenagers declared that they had experimented «some awkwardness, hassle or scare» at least once in their lives (62%). Girls and teenage women are the ones that declared in a higher proportion to have experimented some of these situations (7 out of 10).



Graphic. Percentage of children and teenagers that declared having experimented some risky, uncomfortable or scary situation in their use of Internet.

| Perception of rights and participation

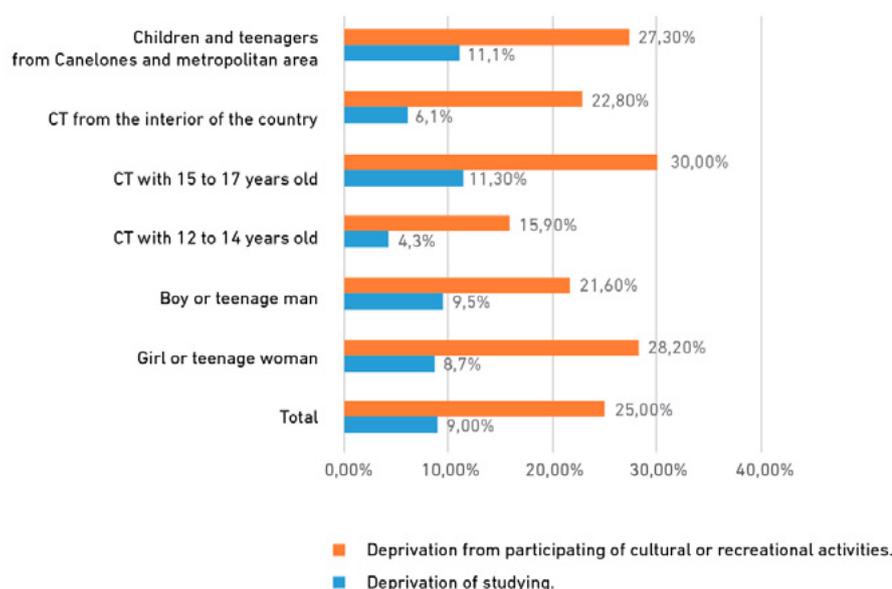
Almost the totality of children and teenagers asked, agreed that “it’s important to know your rights” (97%) and a 88,4% declared they wanted more and better opportunities. It’s important to point out that 6 out of 10 children and teenagers don’t know what the “Convention of Children’s Rights” is, and only 27,8% of total surveyed was informed about what the Convention is in the past year.

Furthermore, among the recurring topics that they declare there’s need to do more about are: the protection against violence (50,9%), followed by the right to education (46,3%), the equality of rights between men and women (39,6%), the no discrimination (38,3%), the access to health care (19,6%) and sexual and reproductive rights (19,3%).

| Education

Almost the totality of children and teenagers asked attend to educative institutions or centers (96%). Among them, 8 out of 10 expressed being “satisfied or very satisfied” with the teaching received in their study centers.

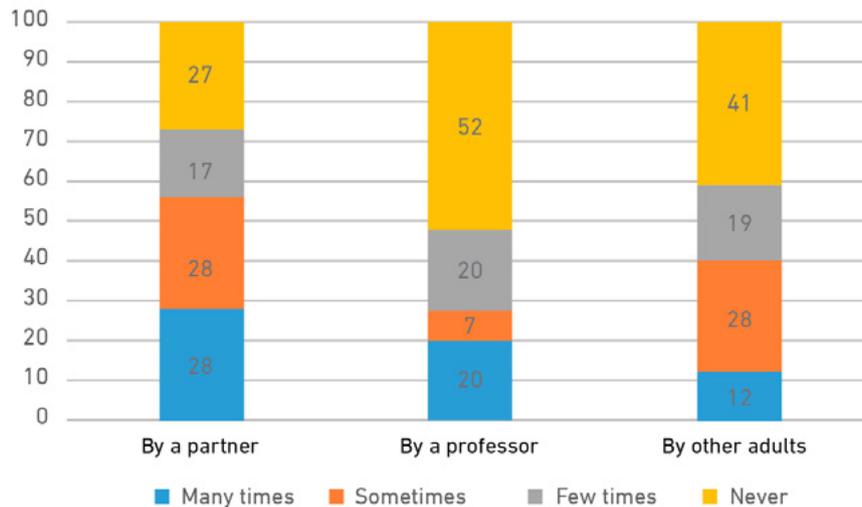
Despite the levels of satisfaction mentioned above, 1 out of 10 asked teenagers (11,7%) claimed having to drop their studies at some point of their lives in order to work. This goes in higher proportions among teenagers between the ages of 15 to 17 (15%) women and (14,8%) men. Moreover, 1 out of 10 expressed not being able to continue with their studies due to lack of economic resources (9%), and a quarter of the surveyed group (25%) declared not being able to participate of recreational or cultural activities of different kind.



Graphic. Deprivation of studying and participation in recreational or cultural activities due to lack of economic resources.

| Discrimination

7 out of 10 teenagers declared being discriminated at least once in their lives by a partner (73%). 6 out of 10 of surveyed teens expressed they had been discriminated by an adult, and those that claimed being discriminated by a teacher reach close half of surveyed (47%). From the whole, 2 out of 10 stated they had experienced an event of discrimination by a teacher in a frequent way ("many times").

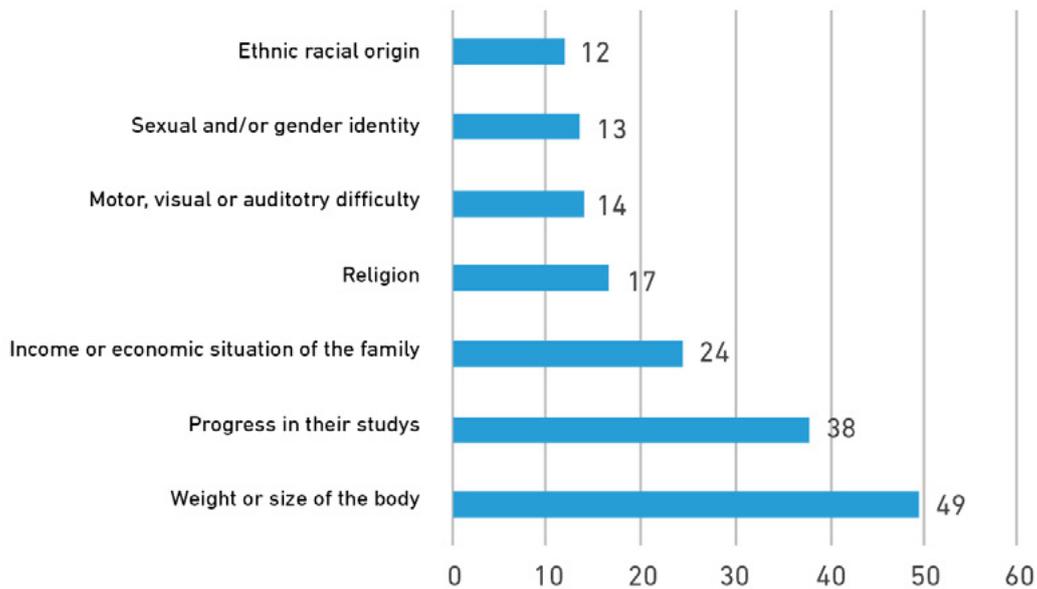


Graphic. Percentage of children and teenagers that declared being discriminated by the following people.

Almost half of the total stated being discriminated due to his or her "size or weigh" (49%). Following, a 38% declared that they had felt uncomfortable because of "how he or she is doing with their studies", a 24% due to the income or family's economic situation and a 17% due to his or her religion or due to "what people may think of belonging to a religion".

"There are people that insults, laughs or makes fun of" "At UTU they call me fat" "Sometimes it hurts... They tell you are this and you stay quiet" "At school they used to discriminate me due to my problems, I wish they would drop dead" "Due to differences, because you are not the same" "People discriminates a lot" "Also gender inequality, if someone is homosexual they are discriminated" "I model and some partners call me faggot, also I don't like football and they discriminate me for this as well" "Because of your body they also discriminate, because you are fat or thin, nobody is perfect, everything disturbs people" "There's also discrimination between gays and lesbians, there are a lot of them and people start calling faggot or dyke."

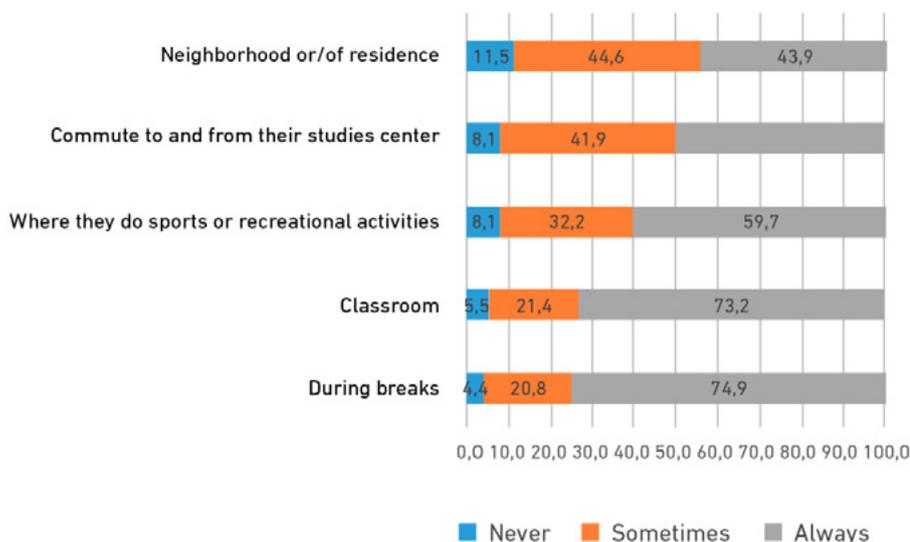
"Umbandista witches... I have relatives and I know very well how it is, you may think it's the person, but it's not (...) They supposedly throw pop corn or something and it's witchery, but it's not, it's like a cleansing. They shouldn't talk about what they don't know. If someone tells witch to a relative I don't like it. They should respect. Due to religion they feel discriminated? Yes, sure."



Graphic. Percentage of children and teenagers that declared having felt uncomfortable due to one of this characteristics.

Perception of safety in different spaces

The school center - the classroom and during breaks - is the space where children and teenagers seem to feel safer: 7 out of 10 declared to feel “always safe” in such spaces. The neighborhood of residency is the place that concentrates lower levels regarding their perception of safety, they state that “sometimes” felt in a similar situation (44,6%) and those that manifested “never feeling safe” reach 1 out of 10 children and teenagers (11,5%).



Graphic. Perception of safety in different spaces. In percentages.

Furthermore, the commute to and from the educative center is the place that has the biggest gap regarding the perception of safety among girls and teenage women and boys and teenage men. This gap is of 23 percentage points between the two groups: 6 out of 10 boys declared feeling always safe (63%) while among girls this relation reaches 4 out of 10 (40%).

| Aggressions in the thoroughfare

6 out of 10 children and teenagers declared that at least once in their lives an unknown person shouted at them or followed them in the thoroughfare (63%). Near 8 out of 10 were girls and teenage women (76%).

Related to this, 7 out of 10 children and teenagers declared they had been insulted during the current year (69%), 5 out of 10 said they were treated in a disgusting way (54%), 3 out of 10 were followed down the street (29%) and 2 out of 10 had been hurt.



Graphic. Percentage of children and teenagers that went through a violent experience.

The persecution in the streets is an event that affects mostly girls and teenage women, and among them, in a higher proportion the ones that are older, between the ages of 15 and 17.

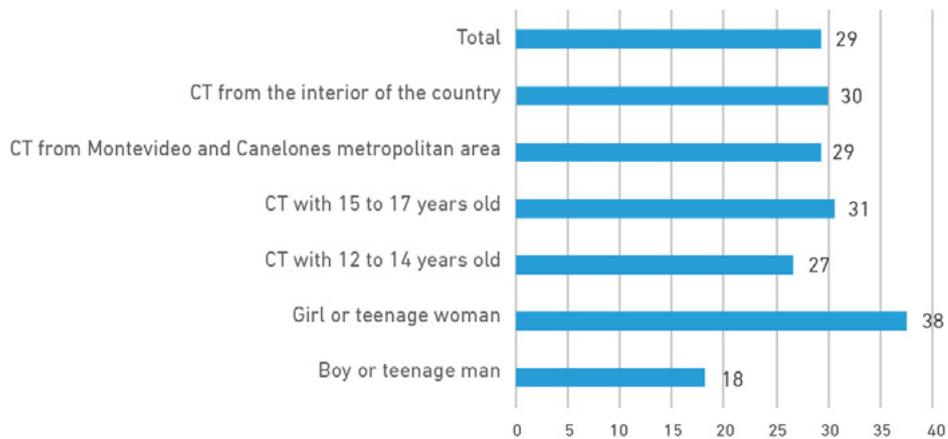
The detention by the police force in the streets is a phenomenon that affects boys and teenage men in a higher level, and among them, the ones that are older (14 to 17 years old). In Montevideo and surrounding areas this proportion is placed in a 21% and in the departments of the interior of the country the relation is 4 percent below (17%).

“If you are hooded people call the police and they stop us and ask what are we doing, they search us (...) they get foolish” “They see a hooded boy going by and they start asking: what do you have in your pockets? (...) they won’t leave you walk alone in peace and you are in your own neighborhood (...) It’s full of old people looking out of the window” “In a rich neighborhood they ask you to lower the music, in a settlement they just beat you up” “They won’t leave us be free”

“At high school they don't do anything, you say, I'm going to talk with the principal and they don't do anything, and it keeps on and on...”

| Support networks

3 out of 10 children and teenagers (29%) declared they had hurt themselves at some point of their lives. When asked about the frequency in which they speak about aspects that concern them, distress or make sad, 40% of surveyed stated they don't do it frequently and 15% that never do it. This percentage goes to 20% in boys.



Graphic. Percentage of children and teenagers that declared they had hurt themselves.

Friends are the first choice among teenagers when choosing someone to talk about the topics that concern and/or distress them: 4 out of 10 declare so (38%) and this proportion is higher between ages 15 to 17.

“With friends” “No one” “with the wall” “I talk alone”

Suggestions

Every children and teenager has the right to express his or her opinions and these opinions should be taken into account. It's essential to promote the intervention of young people in the decision taking processes, especially regarding spaces where they develop their lives. General observation number 1 (2001) about the purposes of education affirms the need that education is child-centered, that it is prosperous for him or her and that it enables him or her. It also highlights the importance of a pedagogy that is more collaborative, especially when it comes to the design of learning surroundings.

Also, from the survey it's evident that as they get older, teenagers perceive that they get to be listened by the adult world, so It's necessary to strengthen the participation, mostly with the youngest. This would consolidate good practices regarding freedom of expression and also would build strategies of protection.

In this regard, CRC recommendations to Uruguayan government urge it to take all necessary actions to provide an appropriate and systematic training about the contents of the Convention and its facultative protocols. It states that children and teenagers, as well as all professionals that work with and for them (congress men, law enforcement officers, judges, teachers, health workers and social assistants, peo-

ple that work for child care institutions and people who work on media) should know and apply the Children Rights Convention. Moreover, it recommends to strengthen participatory councils to be entirely operational at all school levels, but specially in high school.

Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) are installed in children and teenagers' everyday life but at the same time the adult world seems to have certain lag when it comes to cease the opportunities, minimize risks or even assess the way in which things are changing, how we get information, learn, interact and entertain ourselves nowadays. These ICT became new socialization and participation spaces and new practices come with certain autonomy and freedom to create and share with others, which means that educational institutions are no longer a preferential learning place.

In this context, adding information to educational curricula and plans about the use of ICTs is a key issue, but it's also not enough. Technologies are synonym of social, political and economic opportunities and young people tend to use these ICTs in an integrated and multifunctional way, and they tend to adapt them to their needs and interests (CEPAL, 2010). Also, it became important to produce knowledge about these new interaction and content creation

practices, especially regarding its social activism and communicative potential. On social media, young people let us know about their opinions and interests. They became linked to a citizen power in a new language as users stopped being passive receptors of information and now have the possibility to create and spread their own contents. ICTs and social media amplify the meaning of articles 12 and 13 of CRC, taking a leading role in how young people exercise their influence and proclaim concerns and ideas, producing new types of organizations, which have translated in the creation of social movements such as communities, this last is established as right in article 15 of CRC.

According to all above, a high percentage of children and teenagers have suffered a violent experience of any sort along their lives, being discrimination the main type. From the poll taken and from children's comments and focus groups it arises the need to deepen the dialog about the acknowledgment of differences.

For this, it is necessary to cross study gender perspective in curricula and implement different strategies that enable the existence and visibility of the ongoing diversity: wisdom, practices and views cannot only be seen from current dominant culture. This is also expressed in the Committee's recommendations, that through its article number 2 guides the State in the adoption of legal frames oriented to the eradication of discrimination and the action taking for the prevention and abolition of discrimination as a fact.

The feeling of safeness in children and teenagers in public spaces is strongly con-

ditioned by their gender, where girls and teenage women feel much more insecure, in their neighborhood as much as in their commute to their educative centers. Public space is perceived as highly insecure by them and because of this, it's recommended to promote strategies that produce a cultural change related to male violence, focusing specially in harassment in public places. For this it is mandatory to produce studies about gender equality, gender diversity and the promotion of reproductive and sexual health rights, as well as violence prevention. The Committee's recommendations affirm that these programs should be based on scientific evidence and in human rights norms and directed also to children and teenagers that attend to schools or not, and that are presented in friendly and alternative formats in order to guarantee the accessibility, also they have to be designed with the help of teenagers.

In sight of general observation number 15 (CRC, 2013) about the right of the child to enjoy his health as much as he can, it is concerning the fact that there is a high percentage of children that declared having hurt themselves and the difficulties they seem to find trusting adults to speak about what makes them sad or anguish. Conflicts, discrimination, pressures related to their appearance, harassment and social exclusion are key subjects to understand their mental health and psycho-social issues as in self aggressions, depression, eating disorders and suicide, affecting profoundly most teenagers.

To grant an effective response to these issues it is necessary to offer multi sector focused answers, provide help and as-

sistance through trained personnel who have a view that is based in public health and psycho social support, and not using excessively medication and detention as a resource.

In this regard, the State should offer assistance to parents and tutors, being essential the fluent communication with them and also receiving support and feedback, providing safeness and emotional stability.

Children and teenagers' stories are very eloquent regarding their perception of safeness in the different spaces where they develop their daily activities, where State's institutions and adults in general, perform discrimination, imposition and repression as the only way to solve conflicts.

For this it is essential that safety measures are designed for prevention, incorporating children and teenagers' voices in the design and execution of those, in the aim to achieve a peace culture and democratic safeness. Moreover, it is considered decisive that legislative reforms are oriented to guarantee the norms and current international recommendations ratified by Uruguayan State, especially the ones that refer to Children's Rights Convention.

AN INITIATIVE OF



Save the Children



Comité de los Derechos del Niño/a - Uruguay



Con la cooperación de



Unión Europea