



International Year of the Child IYC

The Purpose of the Year

The International Year of the Child (IYC) is concerned with all children in all countries, especially young children. Its major aims are to:

- encourage all countries, rich and poor, to review their programmes for the promotion of the well-being of children, and to mobilize support for national and local action programmes according to each country's conditions, needs and priorities;
- heighten awareness of children's special needs among decision-makers and the public;
- promote recognition of the vital link between programmes for children on the one hand, and economic and social progress on the other;
- spur specific, practical measures—with achievable goals—to benefit children, in both the short and long term on the national level.

The Year should also provide an opportunity to emphasize the intellectual, psychological and social development of children, in addition to their physical welfare.

Since 1979 is the 20th anniversary of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, the IYC is an opportunity for each country to increase its efforts to implement those rights.

Special attention should be devoted to particularly disadvantaged children. Among the most vulnerable groups, for example, are young girls where they receive unequal treatment; slum children; children of migrant workers; abused children; orphaned children; refugee children; children of unwed mothers; children in poor rural areas; children exposed to drugs and crime; physically and mentally handicapped children; and the vast category of children suffering from malnutrition.

While programmes of national and local action remain the focal point of the Year, IYC should also stimulate new research on the needs of children and the widespread gathering and dissemination of research on child-related issues.

Objectives and Hopes of the IYC

The main objective of the Year—to encourage raising significantly the level of services benefiting children on a permanent basis—ultimately implies an increase in financial resources dedicated to this end. It is hoped that education and information activities in each country can shape public opinion and spur government action to increase the funds devoted to children's programmes—either for the country's domestic programmes or for assistance to other countries, or for both. A major emphasis should be placed on increasing both international and national support of services for children in developing countries, by encouraging voluntary participation and financial support by Governments and the public regarding child-oriented programmes everywhere in the world.

In industrialized countries, part of the efforts made and of the funds raised should be directed toward meeting needs special to their children. Another part could be earmarked for programmes in those developing nations which decide to expand children's services and to integrate them more fully within their national development plans. This assistance could be channeled through the appropriate United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations, or on a government-to-government basis.

IYC-The Challenge

The International Year of the Child offers a rare opportunity to demonstrate that intensified public and governmental awareness of children's needs can lead to concrete action of immense and, above all, lasting benefit to mankind's future—its children. There is no sounder investment than the future of the child—and no greater responsibility for the adults of today. The great and promising potentials of the IYC require, deserve and depend upon the unreserved support of Governments, organizations and individuals.

The major legacy of the International Year of the Child can and should be a permanently higher level of concern with children and an intensified and continuing attention to services benefiting them on the part of Governments and the public alike.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
CONCERNING INTERNATIONAL
YEAR OF THE CHILD
PLEASE CONTACT:

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