

## UNICEF Action Team for Children's Rights Berlin

### What we do, who we are and how you can get involved!

#### I. Information activities

We want to motivate children and adults to engage in children's rights and UNICEF's work, and to become active in their own communities. Because of this, the key part of our work lies in informing others. We organise lessons together with schools and colleges, in which we give talks and set up workshops. During the talks, we introduce our work and communicate about children's rights with the students using interactive games and lesson materials from UNICEF. The children also have the opportunity to talk about their own experiences and pose critical questions. Our goal is to illustrate the importance of children's rights and to raise awareness for the issue through interaction with the students. We carry out workshops in schools across Berlin around every 1-2 weeks. The workshops are generally two school lessons long, but can last up to five lessons.

One of our bigger workshops took place in November 2015 at FEZ. During the day-long session, 150 schoolchildren discussed the subject of children's rights and creatively presented their results.

We are also happy to support actions of other organisations representing children's rights - among other activities we ran numerous workshops at the children's rights film festival. We also work with the children's charity Deutsches Kinderhilfswerk and the Cinema for Peace Foundation. The Action Team for Children's Rights Berlin only forms a part of the UNICEF group in Berlin, so we do of course support the other teams with organisation and staging of events. We help organise school runs and charity concerts, and also collect donations.

#### II. Political work

It is a matter very close to our hearts that children, who often can't yet speak up for their own rights, are taken seriously and that their rights and interests find a place in politics. Our team is in contact with the children's commission of the Bavarian state Bundestag and members of the German Bundestag.

In order for children to address what's important to them, we organise the yearly action day for children's rights in Berlin, where members of the Bundestag organise projects and discuss children's rights with students from across the country.

In addition to this, last year we visited the German Bundestag with a welcome class and discussed integration and language barriers with the Green Party member and UNICEF Germany board member Ekin Deligöz. We plan to visit this year as well.

#### III. Voluntary engagement

Our work is made possible by the voluntary engagement of our team members. The team is currently made up of 35 students from various fields, united by the concern for children worldwide.

We're looking for creativity and initiative – we want to develop ideas with you!

During the past two years, for example, we held a gift-action at the Humboldt University of Berlin, where we were able to collect donations for projects in South Sudan. This was on the initiative of one of our team members.

Perhaps while reading this page it has occurred to you that you'd like to get involved - so come and join us! We can never have enough members, so we're always happy to welcome new volunteers who wish to engage in our team.

It is best to contact us via email at:

[unicef.ak.berlin@gmail.com](mailto:unicef.ak.berlin@gmail.com)

Contact persons are Esther Balke and Hai Ha Tran.

#### **IV. What are UNICEF and the Action Team doing for refugee children?**

At the end of last year, UNICEF and the German government came to an agreement about an initiative for refugee children. With this agreement, 300,000 refugee children are to be better protected and supported. The planned measures to be undertaken by UNICEF include:

- Helping to identify vulnerable children
- Supporting learning and playing facilities, and cooperating with partners to improve the access to help and advice services by bringing in expertise and training courses on the subject of “child-friendly spaces”
- Training and advising of staff in refugee institutions to prevent violence and abuse
- Giving advice and support on building and strengthening protection methods in reception centres and other shared accommodation
- Supporting the improvement of data collection and monitoring the situation of child support with the development of practical guidelines, training and advice in order to make institutions more child-friendly and gender-sensitive
- Establishment of codes of conduct for staff in these institutions and better methods of handling complaints and further referrals

For several months, the UNICEF Action Team for Children's Rights Berlin has been working intensively with welcome classes. Within our work with refugee children, we have carried out numerous children's rights workshops and also organised out of school activities - such as visiting the German Bundestag and holding a discussion with members of the Bundestag. In February 2016, we organised the “food + culture Syrien” event in cooperation with the Studentenwerk Berlin and collected donations for refugee children.