

Taking a Stand for Children and Young Adults

In February 2010, a Bill of Rights for Children and Youth was adopted by the Santa Clara Board of Supervisors. These rights keep the needs of children and youth at the forefront of decisions about budgets and government policies.

While these rights have long served as a critical guidepost during periods of financial and political uncertainty, they were initially created without the direct leadership and input of the youth they were meant to serve. In summer 2022, the Youth Liberation Movement partnered with Kids in Common to create a youth-driven Bill of Rights, grounded in the voices of over 250 Santa Clara County youth. Updated in March 2023, it remains a cornerstone of the Children's Agenda and has since gained widespread support from individuals, cities, government agencies, youth groups, and nonprofits.

BILL OF RIGHTS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

Every young person must get what they need when they need it, no matter their actual or perceived race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, mental or physical ability, nationality, immigration status, criminal history, first language, skin color, education status, or wealth. We value the diversity of our children and young adults in Santa Clara County and believe we must treat each of them with respect and dignity.

ALL CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- ✓ **HEALTHCARE**
Affordable, timely, and quality mental and physical healthcare that they can access at any time
- ✓ **MENTAL HEALTH**
Mental and emotional health and well-being and support systems in and outside of the home that promote emotional and social safety
- ✓ **LOVE AND EMOTIONAL CONNECTIONS**
Meaningful connections with consistent, caring adults and peers who love and appreciate the young person for who they are and want to see them grow
- ✓ **SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE**
Receive support and guidance from role models who are dedicated to helping them achieve their dreams and goals
- ✓ **LIFE SKILLS**
Training to develop life skills and knowledge as well as opportunities to apply them for their growth
- ✓ **EDUCATION**
A relevant and engaging education that exposes them to other cultures and promotes lifelong learning
- ✓ **JOB OPPORTUNITIES**
Job opportunities that provide safe and reasonable working conditions, and a living wage, and allow them to grow their careers
- ✓ **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**
Time, space, and resources to pursue any interest or opt for rest
- ✓ **EXTERNAL SUPPORT FOR FAMILY**
Support that will allow their families to be taken care of so they can pursue their dreams
- ✓ **MODERN NEEDS**
Reliable transportation and wi-fi, computers that meet their needs, and phones when applicable
- ✓ **BASIC NEEDS**
Enough quality food and water, showers, clean clothes, and hygiene products to keep their bodies healthy
- ✓ **HOUSING**
Affordable, stable, safe, and comfortable housing that meets their needs as individuals
- ✓ **GREEN SPACES**
Easily accessible and clean green spaces that will be preserved for future generations
- ✓ **SAFETY**
Feel and be safe in all environments they are in, such as their schools, homes, neighborhoods, and online
- ✓ **VOICE**
Be treated as equal partners in identifying problems, developing solutions, and making the decisions that they are impacted by
- ✓ **CHOICE**
Make important decisions for their lives and set boundaries that are respected



The rights have not been fulfilled for all youth. Many are limited by the inflexible and overly restrained structure of the environments designed for them. Change to these environments will not happen without mass commitment and action. By combining our personal power and expertise through continuous collaboration, we have the ability to create lasting change for Santa Clara County youth.