

# Improving the Treatment of Children and Adolescents in Crisis Areas

## Committee Guide

Human Rights Council (HRC)



**Causes of Conflict**  
**and**  
**Proposals for Peace**



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# 1. Personal introductions

Honourable Delegates,

We are looking forward to chairing the Human Rights Council with you as our amazing delegates in this year's OLMUN conference. In order to prepare for the conference, this committee guide will give a quick first overview of our topic and give you some ideas for furthering your research.

But before we get into all that, we want to start with us briefly introducing ourselves:

Hey guys! I'm Duru and I am 18 years old. I have attended many conferences as a delegate and I have started chairing earlier this year. Last year, I attended OLMUN'21 as a delegate of the UNHRC committee and after one whole year, I will be chairing the UNHRC committee with my beloved co-chair Tom! Chairing in OLMUN was one of my biggest goals in my MUN journey. I am really happy and honored to be your chair and I hope we all get along. Some of you will be experienced delegates, while others will be first-timers at MUN, which is perfectly fine since we all have to start from somewhere. Joining MUN conferences, in my opinion, is one of the valuable things you can do while in high school. It offers several advantages, including an enjoyable introduction to politics, the opportunity to learn about other points of view from various nations, and best of all, the opportunity to socialize and make new friends. If you have any further concerns, do not hesitate to contact us.

Moin! My name is Tom and I am 24 years old. As a delegate, my first OLMUN is actually now almost 10 years in the past, since I was a delegate in 2012, 2013 and 2014. After already getting to chair the HRC in last year's OLMUN, this will now be my second time chairing. As most of you know, last year's conference was held online, which led to a lovely, but rather unusual committee experience. That is why this year I am even more excited that I will get to meet you guys in our committee and feel some OLMUN-Nostalgia. Since I graduated from school, I was lucky to have the opportunity to study and work in the US and Uganda for a year each, and am finishing my bachelors degree at the Leuphana University Lüneburg any day now. Besides studying, I am involved in a bunch of academic events at Leuphana, research projects on Open Social Innovation and various forms of student representation or initiatives, like the Student Parliament.

To me, above anything else, getting to know all of you guys with your diverse motivations, backgrounds and opinions will be the most exciting part of this year's conference. Especially after the last two years, in which meeting strangers unfortunately has become such a rare joy for all of us!



## 2. The Human Rights Council

In this year's conference, we will have the opportunity to get together in the Human Rights Council (HRC). The HRC was founded as a subsidiary body of the United Nations in 2006. It replaced the Commission on Human Rights, which was regarded as overly politicized. As one of the main UN bodies tasked with human rights protection, the HRC discusses a large variety of issues, from preventing discrimination to political rights and the rights of refugees. In addition to being a discussion forum for these issues, the HRC issues recommendations to the General Assembly and promotes human rights education.

47 member states elected by the General Assembly make up this body, and the HRC meets for at least three sessions a year in Geneva. An innovative mechanism has been introduced in 2006 to improve respect for human rights: in the Universal Periodic Review, the human rights situation in every member state is reviewed every four years and recommendations are issued by the other members. Thus, the HRC hopes to resolve human rights issues through dialogue and practical recommendations. The council can also examine specific problems (thematic mandate) or situations in specific states (country mandate).

If you're curious about what the HRC currently is working on or want to learn more about its mechanisms, more information can be found here: <http://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/hrc>

## 3. Improving the Treatment of Children and Adolescents in Crisis Areas

In this year's HRC at the OLMUN conference, you will represent your delegations on how we can improve the treatment of children and adolescents in crisis areas. You will be tasked with something that the real Human Rights Council is also currently working on and will continue to do so even beyond the date of our MUN. To us, this can open up a very interesting pool of information for you as well as enabling you to compare the work done in our committee with the real UN committee. In this committee guide we will give you a brief introduction into the topic by listing some areas of interest and providing you with places to start your research from. But, and we can not emphasize this enough: Please keep in mind that the issues and solutions listed by us should really just serve as an inspiration and are by no means extensive. We are looking forward to seeing your delegation's ideas and opinions on the issue at hand. So find your country's specific angle and priorities in the matter and don't feel discouraged when it differs from what you will find in this committee guide.

In the following, we will try to grasp the issues that children in conflict zones confront. After a quick introduction, we will move to examples of specific issues arising by taking a look at some issues surrounding international law, the recruitment of children in war areas and lastly mental health, in particular with regard to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### 3.1. Introduction

In times of humanitarian crisis, Children and adolescents pay the highest price. In crises caused by armed conflicts, natural disasters or other emergencies we see millions of children being exposed to various forms of violence, exploitation, disease, malnutrition, abuse and neglect.

Millions of them lose their homes, parents, friends and, to some degree, their fair chance at shaping their own future with children in crisis areas being the most likely to be in extreme poverty or to not be enrolled in primary school.

Hence, improving the treatment of children and adolescents in crisis areas proves to be a multifaceted issue combining the need for both pressing, short term problems like armed conflicts or gender-based violence as well as long term problems such as a lack of education during crises.

### 3.2. International Law

One of the initial concerns of international law on children's rights was the protection of children in armed situations. However, it was handled only with rudimentary protection. The 1907 Hague Convention Respecting the Laws and Customs of War and Land also incorporated the principle of respect for family life with total disregard to considering whether children with their families and or separated from them required additional levels of protection. Furthermore, the 1924 Declaration of the Rights of the Child, which sprang from concerns for children impacted by armed wars in the Balkans, stated merely that "children should be the first to receive help in times of hardship."<sup>1</sup>

Nonetheless, the 1949 Geneva Convention on the Protection of Civilians, also known as "Geneva Convention 4," altered the situation by incorporating 17 articles, the majority of which were concerned with children. It provided additional protection to adolescents in both inhabited and vacant areas.<sup>2</sup>

While the 1949 Geneva Convention<sup>3</sup> was a success in comparison to previous attempts addressing the

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<sup>1</sup> Hague Convention No. 4. Art. 46. "Family Honour and Rights, the lives of persons ... must be respected". Arts. 42 – 56 apply to civilians generally.

<sup>2</sup> Art. 3; in Van Bueren. International Documents on Children (1993)

<sup>3</sup> Arts. 14, 17, 23 – 27, 40, 50, 51, 68, 76, 81, 82, 89, 94 and 132.

problems of children caught up in armed conflicts, it lacked a minimum age requirement for children's participation in hostilities and provided no additional specific protection for those caught up in an increasing number of internal armed conflicts.<sup>4</sup>

In an attempt to address the problem, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the "Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergencies and Armed Conflicts"<sup>5</sup> in 1974, with the Preamble drafted as "Bearing in mind the need to provide special protection for women and children belonging to the civilian population".<sup>6</sup> It is apparent that the Assembly's jurisdiction did not extend to the question of juvenile fighters. Nevertheless, the Declaration's ratification aided the approval of two further Protocols to the Geneva Convention on the guarantee of specific protection to children.<sup>7</sup> These two supplementary Protocols to the Geneva Convention established a less controversial framework for improving the standards of protection for children in combat zones. However, these Protocols remain to be not as meaningful as the convention itself, as there were signed by fewer governments<sup>8,9</sup>

Given the non-uniform set of customs and ideas amongst societies and the dissimilar definitions of the "child" in different cultures, establishing a clearer set of rules for protecting children involved in or from the participation of armed conflicts will assist in setting a uniform set of standards across the globe. This can be done, for example, by adding new protocols to the current ones in order to clarify the treaties' meaning. This will assist to clear up any doubts about whether and under what conditions children are actually protected under international law. These, for example, will strengthen the legitimacy of sanctions and international law by requiring all military forces to follow the same set of standards. The Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, for example, was approved in 2008 to "clarify the content and extent" of the original treaty and "help States in understanding their duties."<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Van Bueren, 1993, 'International Documents on Children.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Adopted in 1977 by the Diplomatic Conference, first session held in 1974. Conference was convened by the Swiss Government in its capacity as the depository of the Geneva Conventions.

<sup>8</sup> The four Geneva Conventions have 181 State parties whereas Protocol 1 has 123 parties and Protocol 2 with 116 parties as at 10 June 1993: (1993) 294 Int. Rev. Red Cross 256.

<sup>9</sup> Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Additional Protocol I), Article 77(2), (8 June 1977).

<sup>10</sup> Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2010, 'An Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights', Note for National Human Rights Institutions.

### 3.3. Utilisation of enforcement mechanisms

The International Criminal Court (ICC) is often considered as one of the most credible threats facing leaders of warring parties.<sup>11</sup> The "International Criminal Court has the capacity to exercise its jurisdiction over people for the most severe crimes of international concern," according to the Rome Statute.<sup>12</sup> This mandate has allowed the International Criminal Court to prosecute cases such as Thomas Lubanga Dyilo of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) under Article 8 of the Rome Statute for inducting youngsters into the Union of Congolese Patriots.<sup>13</sup> Utilizing this power, the ICC was also authorized to issue an arrest warrant against an acting head of state, Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir, on March 4, 2009.<sup>14</sup> This arrest warrant in particular emphasizes the idea that the international community "should not wait for the end of a war crime before pursuing those guilty."<sup>15</sup> In order to ensure that states honor and carry out their obligations under the accords, efforts should be made to boost ratification and effective enforcement of international treaties. This effort would, for example, assist in reaffirming the core principle of universal jurisdiction for the International Criminal Court, which is meant to rely on the 111 States who have signed the Rome Statute to refer violations and prosecute perpetrators. This means that the ICC however does not have its own internal police force to fulfill its function. As a result, justice is sometimes delayed or not delivered at all, as evidenced by the fact that a warrant of arrest issued in 2005 against LRA Leader Joseph Kony of Uganda<sup>16</sup>, which contained allegations of enrolling child soldiers through abduction, was still unfulfilled as of April 2010.

### 3.4. Children and adolescents in conflict areas

In today's world, the suffering of children caught up in combat zones cannot be understated. Conflicts in several countries such as but not limited to Sudan, Angola, Somalia, the former Yugoslavia or more recently in Syria or Ukraine led to terrible consequences for children and adolescents.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Grono, N., International Crisis Group, Presentation on the Prosecutorial Strategy for 2007-9 at the Second Public Hearing of the Office of the Prosecutor (26 September 2006).

<sup>12</sup> Rome Statute, Article 1.

<sup>13</sup> The Prosecutor v. Thomas Lubanga Dyilo (10 February 2006) ICC-01/04-01/06, Pre-Trial Chamber I, Arrest Warrant.

<sup>14</sup> The Prosecutor v Omar Hassan Ahmed Al Bashir (4 March 2009) ICC-02/05-01/09, Pre-Trial Chamber I, Arrest Warrant.

<sup>15</sup> Singer, P.W., 2004, 'Talk is Cheap: Getting Serious about Preventing Child Soldiers', 561 Cornell International Law Journal 561 – 86.

<sup>16</sup> The Prosecutor v. Joseph Kony (27 September 2005) ICC-012/04-01/05-53, Pre-Trial Chamber II, Arrest Warrant.

<sup>17</sup> Rosenblatt, 1983, 'Children of War'.

Today's conflict is mostly an urban phenomenon, and it is a process involving the use of force of arms within a state, between parties within a nation, or among non-state/international actors. Conflict, as a noun, refers to the danger of real or implied use of violence, which can include but is not limited to, land, sea, and air warfare. Weapons, one or more military groups, and soldiers/civilians fighting on behalf of military organizations are all part of a conflict. It's vital to note that the terms "conflict" and "war" are not always equivalent. In order to be able to address the treatment of children and adolescents in crisis areas, understanding the devastating effects that conflict zones have, especially on children's health, is essential.

In the previous century, open warfare between sovereign nations gave place to internal armed conflicts, which frequently included covert assistance from other governments. In modern times, military strategy has changed to new strategies which for example seeks to conceal the differences between fighters and non-fighters by disguising combatants within the general population. This has the largest effect on children since many internal battles are fought along tribal lines, with any member of that tribe or group considered an enemy.<sup>18</sup>

In several conflicts, Children have additionally been *recruited* and had to serve not only as combatants, human shields or mine testers, but often as scouts, messengers or even sex slaves for military leaders in conflict zones in over 85 countries.<sup>19</sup>

### **3.5. Comprehensive definition of “Child soldiers”**

Under international law, a thorough definition of "child soldiers" is required. This is one of the most significant contradictions found in the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The term "Child" is defined in the preamble as "any human being under the age of 18 years unless maturity is acquired earlier under the legislation relevant to the child."<sup>20</sup> Official interpretation is thus essential to prevent states from interpreting the phrase in a way that benefits them, such as prioritizing national interests over children's rights.

Given that children impacted by conflict are on the United Nations Security Agenda, as stated in Resolution 1261 of August 1999, UN institutions have a responsibility to investigate legal issues

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<sup>18</sup> Amnesty International Sierra Leone, 'Prisoners of War? Children Detained in Barracks and Prison'. Amnesty International AFR 51/06/93.

<sup>19</sup> Happold, M., 2005, 'Child Soldiers in International Law', Juris Publishing Inc., p. 6.

<sup>20</sup> Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, G.A. Res. 54/263, Articles 1 and 2, UN Doc. A/RES/54/263 (25 May 2000).



relating to the protection of child soldiers.<sup>21</sup> As a result, the suffering of child soldiers is seen as part of the Security Council's primary role for sustaining international peace and security.<sup>22</sup>

Although it is acknowledged that there is no age at which brutal acts are acceptable, it is suggested that rather than prosecuting former child soldiers, efforts should be directed toward rehabilitating them in order to help them rebuild their broken societies and avoid being re-recruited into conflicts. In this regard, the International Criminal Court's Rome Statute specifies, for example, that it has no "jurisdiction over any individual under the age of 18 at the time of the alleged commission of the act."<sup>23</sup> States must also "attempt to establish" and hold people accountable for their conduct, according to this Article. As a result, the decision of the exact age at which a person must be held accountable has been left to the discretion of the individual States.<sup>24</sup> Uganda is one example of this predicament, where the Children Act establishes a 12-year minimum age for criminal culpability. This is despite Uganda's Constitution defining a child as anyone under the age of 18<sup>25</sup>, as well as the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice's recommendation that the minimum age not be set too low "bearing in mind the facts of a child's emotional, mental, and intellectual maturity."<sup>26</sup> Nonetheless, children of all ages who are caught up in violent conflicts become refugees or are displaced in some way. It is thus inadvisable to designate them just as "child soldiers," and instead to take steps to reintegrate all youngsters involved in ill-armed conflicts back into their communities. This circumstance will allow them to feel more welcomed into society and work together to restore their war-torn nation, breaking the vicious cycle of rehabilitation followed by more conflict or re-enlistment. At the Pan African Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution's Buduburam Refugee Camp in Ghana, for example, reintegration programs were implemented for all "conflict impacted youth of any age."<sup>27</sup> This program helped the children to feel that they were not only "child soldiers" but also a part of the society.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> The Secretary-General, Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict, delivered to the General Assembly, UN Doc. A/58/546-S/2003/1053 (10 November 2003).

<sup>22</sup> UN Charter, Article 24(1).

<sup>23</sup> Rome Statute, Article 26.

<sup>24</sup> International Criminal Court, Article 30(3) (a).

<sup>25</sup> The Children of Uganda (2002), S88; Constitution of Uganda (1995), Chapter XVII, Article 257(c).

<sup>26</sup> UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (1985), Article 4(1).

<sup>27</sup> Artemy Izmetiev, Buduburam Refugee Camp volunteer, Pan African Centre for Peace- Ghana, Interview by Janet McKnight, Accra, Ghana, (15 June 2009).

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

### 3.6. Mental health

The development or deterioration of existing mental health problems may be attributable to the loss of life, loss of property/ possessions, personal danger or experiences, separation from family, socioeconomic peril, and general health.

Improvements in community-based mental health treatment for children and families are urgently needed. The effectiveness of "usual care" has been shown to have severe flaws in several studies. When handled by law enforcement rather than mental health providers after a crisis, children and adolescents show increasing numbers of inconsistent care, repeated emergency department (ED) visits, arrests and detentions. This highlights the need for a comprehensive coordinated crisis response system for children and youth.

Unfortunately, a large percentage of youth still lack access to basic health care. Even for individuals who have insurance, there are still gaps in access to mental health services. Significant inequities persist for young people of color, Indigenous children, and LGBTQ+ youth, preventing many of them from receiving the mental health care and support they require to thrive.

States should prioritize eliminating these barriers and increasing the whole continuum of prevention, treatment, and recovery programs, as well as integrating these services into situations where young people can access them.

### 3.7. COVID-19 and crisis response

COVID-19 has had an unprecedented impact on children, making it the biggest crisis for children UNICEF has experienced in its 75-year existence, according to a study issued by the UN Children's Agency.

The report<sup>29</sup> "*Preventing a lost decade: Urgent action to reverse the devastating impact of COVID-19 on children and young people*" highlights the various ways in which COVID-19 is challenging decades of progress on key childhood challenges such as poverty, health, access to education, nutrition, child protection, and mental well-being. It states that over two years into the pandemic, COVID-19's

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<sup>29</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/reports/unicef-75-preventing-a-lost-decade>

pervasive impact is growing, increasing poverty, entrenching inequality, and jeopardizing children's rights at previously unseen levels.

According to the report, the pandemic has resulted in a staggering 100 million additional children living in multidimensional poverty, a 10% increase since 2019. Roughly 60 million more children are currently living in monetary poor homes than before the pandemic, which is more indicative of backsliding. Furthermore, over 23 million children would have missed out on critical vaccination in 2020, up roughly 4 million from 2019 and the biggest level in 11 years. The paper notes that regaining lost ground will be difficult — even in the best-case scenario, recovering and returning to pre-COVID child poverty levels will take seven to eight years. Even before the pandemic, there was an increase in demand for mental health services, particularly among youth. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the problem, causing social isolation, disruption of habits, and traumatic grieving in many adolescents and children. Epidemiological statistics currently reveal worrisome rates of behavioral medical requirements among school-aged children and adolescents, with considerable increases in the percentage of children and adolescents reporting moderate to severe anxiety and depression.

The following is taken from the report:

- Mental health conditions affect more than 13 percent of adolescents aged 10–19 worldwide. By October 2020, the pandemic had disrupted or halted critical mental health services in 93 percent of countries worldwide
- Up to 10 million additional child marriages can occur before the end of the decade as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The number of children in child labor has risen to 160 million worldwide – an increase of 8.4 million children in the last four years. An additional 9 million children are at risk of being pushed into child labor by the end of 2022 as a result of the increase in poverty triggered by the pandemic.
- At the peak of the pandemic, 1.8 billion children lived in 104 countries where violence prevention and response services were seriously disrupted.
- 50 million children suffer from wasting, the most life-threatening form of malnutrition, and this figure could increase by 9 million by 2022 due to the pandemic's impact on children's diets, nutrition services, and feeding practices.

Even while younger populations are less vulnerable to the CoV-SARS-2 virus and COVID-19 illness, the pressure on the health system generated by the pandemic poses significant risks to the health and well-being of children and adolescents. Countries dealing with the pandemic had and may have to shift considerable financial, commodity, and human resources away from routine service delivery. Vaccine programs, insecticide-treated bednet distribution initiatives, and delivery of treatments for common pediatric ailments including diarrhea and pneumonia have all seen extraordinary interruptions in recent months. Many families are also unable to bring their children to a health institution for treatment due to transportation issues or the fear of contracting COVID-19 in the process. These setbacks might lead to a major increase in preventable child death throughout the world.

As per evidence, children and adolescents are more likely to be exposed to violence during lockdowns, and teens may be at a higher risk of HIV infection and early pregnancy. All of these variables can have a detrimental influence on a child's or adolescent's health in the short and long term.

Furthermore, as a result of COVID-19 and pandemic response activities, children and adolescents are experiencing tremendous anxiety, stress, and disruptions in their everyday lives, including school cancellations, a lack of social gatherings and increasing social isolation. These pressures will represent a major threat to mental health and wellness in the near and distant future.

### **3.8. Outlook**

Hence, improving the treatment of children and adolescents in crisis areas proves to be a multifaceted issue combining the need for both pressing, short term problems like armed conflicts or gender-based violence as well as long term problems such as a lack of education during crises. This complexity and multifactorial nature of the issue will from our point of view also be visible in the resolutions that will be worked on and potentially passed during this year's HRC.

The last pages just show a few ways children and adolescents and shall by now means give you an extensive list which would simply take way too much space. For example, this committee guide did not shine as much light on humanitarian issues surrounding the matter as one could or should. Focus on the areas that you deem the most important and try to create a constructive approach to them for your resolutions. This can include looking for solutions and approaches that have already shown success or promise in the past both on a UN or governmental scale as well as actions by NGOs.

## **4. List of helpful resources for your research**

We have collected a few links that can help you to start off your research. However, keep in mind that they are just meant as a friendly tip. Your research can and should go beyond these links and does not

necessarily have to include any of them. There is no right or wrong way to do this: For some of you, research will be almost more fun than the conference itself, for some it at first might feel like the most boring thing you have done in a long time. Try to get a feeling for the topic and find out why it matters to the government and people of the country you represent in our committee. During this process, we also encourage you to critically reflect on the topic yourself, even if the opinions you form are not supposed to find their way into your delegations policy statements or resolutions. While we encourage you to scan the internet for written sources, sometimes it can also be a good introduction to just watch YouTube Videos or TED talks on the issue at hand. It is on you to find your way of doing research that yields the results you are looking for and, just as important, lets you enjoy this process and allows you to follow your curiosity and interests.

### **Related UN Resolutions and Actions**

- [S/RES/2601](#)
- [S/RES/2427](#)
- [S/RES/2143](#)
- <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N99/248/59/PDF/N9924859.pdf?OpenElement>
- <https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/un-system-activities-on-youth.html>
- <https://www.unicef.org/reports/state-worlds-children-2021>
- <https://www.unicef.org/emergencies>
- <https://www.unicef.org/>
- <https://www.ohchr.org/en>
- <https://www.unicef.org/adolescence/humanitarian-action>
- <https://blogs.unicef.org/evidence-for-action/time-to-ramp-up-psychosocial-support-for-adolescents-in-crisis-settings/>
- <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/9374>
- <https://www.unicef.org/children-under-attack>
- <https://www.unicef.org/protection/protecting-children-in-humanitarian-action>
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### **COVID-19 and Crisis Response**

- <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/covid-19-biggest-global-crisis-children-our-75-year-history-unicef>

- <https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/1165-supporting-families-and-children-beyond-covid-19-social-protection-in-high-income-countries.html>
- <https://www.coe.int/en/web/children/covid-19>
- <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-health/child-health-and-covid-19/>
- <https://data.unicef.org/covid-19-and-children/>
- <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpubh.2021.644235/full>

### Healthcare for Children and Adolescents

- <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S027273589290005S>
- <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/10/19/fact-sheet-improving-access-and-care-for-youth-mental-health-and-substance-use-conditions/>
- <https://www.who.int/activities/improving-the-mental-and-brain-health-of-children-and-adolescents>
- <https://www.unicef.org/laos/media/4816/file/IMPACT%20OF%20COVID-19%20ON%20ADOLESCENT%20WELLBEING%20AND%20MENTAL%20HEALTH.pdf>
- <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2022/01/special-childrens-mental-health>
- <https://www.npr.org/2021/10/20/1047624943/pediatricians-call-mental-health-crisis-among-kids-a-national-emergency>
- <https://conflictandhealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13031-018-0153-1>
- <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s12913-018-3366-5>

## 5. How to prepare for this year's conference

In preparation for this year's conference, you should prepare both a draft resolution and a policy statement which summarize your delegation's opinion on the topic. Each draft resolution should be at least one page long and concentrate on the Operative Clauses. Policy statements should be more concise and generally be limited to less than 200 words.

You will find more information on how such documents are written and structured in the OLMUN handbook which is available for free download in the download sections of OLMUN's official website ([olmun.org](http://olmun.org)).

To be able to support you in your preparations for this year's conference, we encourage you to **send us your policy statement by the 11th of June**. We will then look through all of your ideas and give you feedback and ideas that you can incorporate in your final stages of conference preparation.

Also, we would love to get to know you a little better in order to plan our committee sessions: Please let us know about your prior MUN-experiences, some of the things that you are looking forward to the most for this year's conference as well as things that might still worry you. You can just include those things in your mail when sending in your policy statements.

While the deadline is not mandatory, we will definitely create a list of delegates who decide to hand in their documents either too late or not at all.

Keep in mind that these delegations then might mysteriously find themselves to be targeted with punishments more frequently than others.

## 6. Final words

First, we want to put things into perspective. After a break of two years, we all will be in charge of bringing OLMUN back to Oldenburg in the best way possible. After living more in a global pandemic for more than two years, which came and still comes with severe consequences for many of us, we feel extremely fortunate to now be planning a committee, in which we can meet all of you face to face this coming June. We are looking forward to meeting more people in 4 days than it sometimes seems we have met in the last 12 months combined. To hear your first speeches, to learn about new points of view, to see the fear in your eyes light up once you discover how creative we actually got with punishment ideas. Honestly, even to watching the first ones of you fall asleep during committee sessions.

This year's OLMUN will depend on what we make of it. But, just as much as this includes putting effort into your research or in creating the best resolutions and policy statements possible, we also want to remind you that OLMUN is about having fun together. So yes, be well prepared (and take our deadlines seriously), but also just look forward to the conference with a smile. During the 4 days we have together, we will make sure that all of us feel comfortable and can enjoy the conference at our own pace. For some of you, becoming main submitters might seem like the biggest goal this year. For others, even attending the conference at all already is a big step out of the comfort zone. To us as chairs, both and everything in between are amazing.

So until June, get familiar with the rules and your country, get your outfits ready and look forward to the conference. Please, feel free to reach out to us if you feel overwhelmed with your preparations or



need anything from us. We will answer all of your questions, no matter how “stupid” they might seem to you. Reach us via email at: [HRC@olmun.org](mailto:HRC@olmun.org).

We're excited to get to know all of you and can't wait for this year's HRC!

See you soon and all the best

Duru & Tom

