**COURAGE POSTER SCRIPT**

**CHILD RIGHTS & NEEDS**

This script can be used to help you explain the Courage Child Rights and Needs Poster.

INTRODUCTION

As parents or caregivers it’s important to understand what our children’s rights are, how they will develop over the years, and how we can support them in the realisation of their rights and fulfilment of their needs.

A right is a freedom to do, or not do, certain things, or to be entitled to certain things because you belong to a particular community or country that hold these things dear.

Children’s rights were first identified at the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990.

They have been defined at a global level by UNICEF, at a continental level, such as by the African or European Unions, and by individual countries in their own Bill of Rights and Children’s Acts.

These ‘Rights Documents’ detail what should, or should not be happening to children in families, communities or societies at large.

ON RIGHTS TO LIVE

All children have a right to live, these rights include:

* A right to life
* To safety and security
* To be registered and have a name, an identity and a nationality
* A right to health care
* A right to legal protection
* And a right to support if they have any special needs

ON NO RIGHTS TO LIVE

This is in contrast to a world of no rights:

* Where children are rejected or neglected
* Subjected to abuse, whether physical, emotional or sexual
* To substance abuse, sometimes even in utero
* To have no access to justice
* Or to be trafficked as a commodity to be bought or sold

ON RIGHTS TO LOVE

Child have a right to love:

* Which include a right to a family and parental love and care
* To honour, respect and dignity
* And to privacy

ON NO RIGHTS TO LOVE

Versus a world where they are subjected to:

* Harmful cultural practices
* Armed conflict
* Race, gender, age or sexual discrimination
* Where they are refugees
* And have no care or protection

ON RIGHTS TO LEARN

Children have a right to learn:

* Through community participation and belonging
* Through education
* Through leisure and recreation
* Where they have freedom of thought, expression, association and religion
* And knowledge of their cultural roots

ON NO RIGHTS TO LEARN

Versus a world where they have no access:

* To play
* To education
* To personal development
* And are subjected to harmful cultural practices

ON RIGHTS TO LEAVE A LEGACY

Finally, children have a right to leave a legacy:

* To have a unique identity
* To have physical, mental and emotional development
* To have moral development
* To live a full and happy life
* On a healthy planet

ON NO RIGHTS TO LEAVE A LEGACY

Versus a world where they:

* Have no belonging or identity
* They are not developed or nurtured
* They are Isolated and ignored
* And live an unhappy life
* On an unhealthy planet

ON THE DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN

In addition to their rights, children also have different needs as they grow up and develop, these blocks illustrate how children develop physically, emotionally and socially and some tips for parents to support them along the way.

ON 0 TO 40 WEEKS IN UTERO

From conception to around 38 to 40 weeks your baby develops completely in your womb. This is a time of growth for your child and care and preparation for you as a parent.

From a physical perspective, development starts with your baby’s central nervous system; spine; heart; ears; eyes; arms; legs; teeth; palate; sex; vocal cords and finally their lungs. Your baby can grasp with their hands, move, kick and hiccup. Your nutrition is their nutrition, so be sure to eat a healthy diet with lots of vitamins and minerals, a healthy mother creates a healthy child.

Mentally, your baby can feel pain, suck its thumb and dream. Your nutrition is also important for their mental development, so a balanced diet is crucial.

From an emotional perspective, your baby can recognise your voice in utero. They will react to your moods, so be sure to stay calm and relaxed as much as possible. At this stage, your baby uses sight, sound, taste and touch to experience and explore their world, this is the start of their sensory development. Positive-in-utero experiences affect your unborn child, just as negative-in-utero experiences. A calm, anxiety free mother creates a calm anxiety free child.

As a mother you should get lots of rest, at least 8 hours at sleep a night. You must eat a healthy balanced diet and you must NOT take any drugs, drink alcohol or smoke cigarettes throughout your pregnancy. Visit your doctor or local clinic regularly for check-ups and ensure that you are being emotionally supported by your partner, family and community at this time, as this ensures the best possible future for your child.

ON 0 TO 12 MONTHS

From birth to 12 months, is a time of love and developing routines for your baby and yourself.

Physically, your baby's will do lots of growing in this time and should weigh between 7 and 14kgs or 17 to 27 pounds in this first year. This should be monitored by your health care provider or local clinic. Your baby will sleep a lot, from 14 to 17 hours at night with frequent naps during the day. They will start to lift their head and chest when lying on their stomach. Their eyes will start to focus on and follow a moving object around a room. Their fingers can grasp a rattle or finger, and by 12 months, they should be able to roll over, sit, crawl, pull themselves into a standing position and walk holding onto furniture. You can stimulate your baby through massage and be sure to keep an eye open for any ear or eye infections.

From an intellectual perspective, your baby will explore objects with their mouth. They will play with fingers, hands and toes, and will turn their head towards bright colours and lights. They should be able to clap their hands and wave goodbye. They will react to the sound of voices, rattles or bells, and they will say their first words, such as da-da and ma-ma. They will start to dance to music. They will be Interested in pictures, colors and textures, and early sensory challenges should be detected at this stage, such as with their hearing or sight. They will need a healthy balanced diet ideally of breast milk, or formula if breastfeeding is not possible, and will start eating basic solid foods from 6 to 12 months.

As a parent, you must make sure that you baby-proof your home by locking up poisonous substances, covering electrical outlets and removing sharp corners and edges where possible. Give your baby interesting objects of different colours and textures to play with but be aware of smaller objects that they can choke on. Cuddle and touch your baby as much as possible. Let them explore and move around. Create a routine but be flexible about this. Talk to, communicate, read to and play with your baby. Play hide & seek (or peek a boo) with hands. Most importantly, respond to your baby’s cries so that they learn trust and build strong emotional connections.

ON 1 TO 2 YEARS

From 1 to 2 years, is a time of building their personality, taking their first steps and saying their first words.

By 2 years your baby will weigh between 10 and 17kg’s or 20 to 32 pounds, again this should be monitored by your health care provider or local clinic. They should still be sleeping between 12 to 14 hours at night with naps during the day. They will start walking without help, and be able to stoop, bend over and walk backwards without falling over. They should be able to drink from a straw and feeds themselves with a spoon. They will start to gesture, push, pull and grasps items. They should be able to turn the pages of a book (make sure you read to them every night). They will be able to stack 2 to 4 objects by 2 years. They can open drawers and cupboards, so be sure to put all dangerous items out of reach. They will begin to have control over their

bowels, so you can start potty training, which should be completed by around 3 ½ years (but this is not a strict time limit).

Mentally, by age 2, your baby should be able to say 2 to 3-word sentences. They will talk to themselves and ‘jabber’ expressively. They will look at the person they are speaking to and can identify toys with words. They can scribble with crayons on paper, identify objects in books, search for objects out of sight and take things apart. They will also start humming and try to sing. It is at this stage that you may pick up developmental challenges if they are struggling to reach any of these milestones.

Emotionally, your baby will start to develop their personality and independence in this second year. This is an important stage to start teaching your child a sense of safety, and that their home is a place of care and love. They will refer to themselves by their name and will start to play with other children. They can be very possessive with their toys, and will imitate their parents or siblings all the time. They will insist on doing tasks on their own and will get frustrated and have tantrums. They will start to engage in simple make-believe play.

Play with your child on the floor every day. Make sure your home is toddler proof and safe, everything will have to move up a level. Put a box of interesting objects together for your baby to play with, including tubs, cups, paper or fabric of different colours and textures. Talk to your child and encourage them to copy you. Read simple books to them and look for teachable moments in your everyday lives. Play music to them to stimulate their brains and play dress up and make-believe games to help develop their imaginations.

ON 2 TO 3 YEARS

From 2 to 3 years, your child becomes a toddler, this is a time of growing independence, observation and imitation to learn and grow.

By 3 years your child should weigh between 11 and 19kgs or 25 to 44 pounds and should be sleeping 10 to 12 hours at night. They may also still need naps during the day. They will become taller and thinner framed, and slightly more adult looking. They will grow their full set of baby teeth, so you will need to teach them about dental care. They will start to sleep through most nights without wetting their bed and will start to use the toilet with some help from you. They will put on their shoes but will still need help lacing them up. They should be able to dress themselves with some help from you and they can feed themselves. They can hop on one foot, climb on small playground equipment, kick and throw balls, and peddle a bicycle.

Intellectually, most of their speech will be understandable, and they will continue to repeat words and sounds that they hear around them. They will be able to listen to and tell simple stories, and stack 5 - 7 blocks. They will enjoy playing with clay and play dough and should be able to complete a 6-piece puzzle. They will be able to match objects and pictures and be able to count up to 3 objects. Make brushing their teeth part of their daily routine.

Encourage lots of tactile play in sand and water and start to build your child's vocabulary by adding descriptive words to their sentences. Sing simple songs and dance with them. Talk about colors, numbers, and shapes every day.

Help them to build their physical confidence.

Teach your child their surname. Children mirror adult behaviours, so make sure you behave as you want your child to behave.

ON 4 TO 5 YEARS

From 4 to 5 years, your child will start learning how to plan and will start to make friends.

By 5 years your child should weigh between 15 and 25kgs or 31 to 57 pounds and should sleep for 10 to 12 hours at night. They may begin to lose their baby teeth, and should be able to dress themselves with a little assistance. They will learn how to skip, and be able to throw a ball over head, catch a ball after it bounces and jump over low objects. They will be able to use a knife and fork, with some practice, and should begin to eat three meals a day with a snack. They can use scissors and cut a straight line, and their right or left hand or foot dominance will be decided at this stage.

Intellectually, they should know the names of basic colours and be able to memorise their home address and telephone number, which is important for their safety. Their play will include being upside down (on swings or monkey bars), tumbling and rolling, which all helps to improve their mental concentration and focus. They can tell their own stories and will understand that books are read from left to right. They can draw pictures that represent people, objects, and animals, and can sort objects by size, colour and other aspects. They can count up to 10 and will begin to identify letters and to write. They will start planning or becoming ‘project minded’ and understand cause and effect.

Emotionally your 4 to 5-year-old will be cheerful, energetic, and enthusiastic about life. They will enjoy planning and discussing what to do and will start to identify ‘best friends’ who will be very important to them. They will invent games and organises other children and will start to learn to share. They can make their own decisions and will become more sensitive to other’s feelings and notice when another child is happy or sad. They will enjoy collecting things, role playing and will start to understand right from wrong.

As their parent, encourage your child’s physical development through skipping, galloping, hopping, and follow the leader. Play with cutting, drawing and writing and help your child to identify and name their feelings. Praise and encourage your child for specific achievements (rather than generally). And give your child a space to be alone (such as their own tent, or special place). Encourage your children to be thankful and show empathy in everyday interactions. Ideally start early childhood education at this stage either at home or at an early childhood development or play school.

ON 6 TO 8 YEARS

From 6 to 8 years, your child will get involved in school projects and will develop their problem-solving skills.

As your child gets older, you must ensure that they develop a healthy weight to height ratio, through eating a balanced diet. They should also still be getting 10 to 12 hours of sleep at night. Your child will become skilled at using scissors, cutting along lines and basic threading as their fine motor coordination strengthens. Their permanent teeth will start to develop, and they will start to test their muscle strength through physical activities such as cartwheeling, running and climbing. They should have a good sense of balance by now and be able to tie their own shoelaces. They will enjoy copying designs, shapes, letters and numbers, and as they grow, they will need a larger space to exercise.

Intellectually they will start to build their skills in reading and writing, but they may still switch letters (such as b and d) when learning to spell. They will enjoy planning and building and may start to show a stronger interest in reading. Their problem-solving abilities will increase, and they will start to develop a longer attention span. They will know the difference between right and left and will begin to understand times of day and days of week.

Emotionally, friendships and spending time with their friends will become increasingly important to them. They will start to show an interest in rules and rituals and may want to play with similar friends, such as girls with girls and boys with boys. They will start identifying ‘best friends’ and possibly an ‘enemy’, or someone they don’t get on well with. They will struggle with criticism and failure and will want to perform well and do the right thing. They will start to see things from another child’s viewpoint. This is a good time to teach them about their family history so that they understands the value of the family and belonging.

As parents, Provide lots of opportunity for active play, such as throwing at targets, running, jumping rope, tumbling, swinging and balancing. Provide simple opportunities to understand rules of play such as card or board games. Encourage your child to collect, sort and store interesting things, and most importantly, encourage them to read and write by taking them to the library, writing about their day or making a picture story book. Help your child to explore their world more broadly, such as through visiting your place of work, a play or musical performance and museums. Start to teach your child effective stress management skills such as quiet time, reading, deep breathing, anger management and thinking skills.

ON 9 TO 11 YEARS

9 to 11 years is a time of achieving things, accomplishment and building strong friendships.

At this stage, girls can be as much as 2 years ahead of boys in development and can start to menstruate from the age of 11. Your child will start to get much stronger and more confident in their physicality and will have improved coordination and reaction

time, as their reflexes improve and develop. You may notice a rapid growth phase at this stage, and you will need to make sure that they have access to lots of healthy food to help them manage their energy levels.

Intellectually, your child should be able to read and write well at this stage, so they may need some support if they have any learning challenges. They will start to develop an interest in fictional stories and ‘how to’ books. They will develop special interests and hobbies and will fantasize and daydream about their future. They will enjoy planning and organising tasks and will be more product and goal orientated. They will have great ideas and intentions, but not be good at following through on them. They will enjoy games with more complex rules and should still be encouraged to participate in imaginative play. Develop their skills in building, cooking, sewing, designing, technology and executing on plans.

Provide time and a place for them to be alone to read or daydream (not just schoolwork). Encourage them to set up play dates with friends, and to take part in an clubs or sport. Play games that improve their strategic ability such as chess, checkers, and Monopoly.

As a parent, make sure you are providing lots of balanced meals and snacks as this is a time of significant growth. Discuss your children’s sexuality with them, the differences between boys’ and girls' bodies, attraction, relationships, sex, conception and how their body will develop through puberty into adulthood.

ON TEENAGERS

From 12 to 18 years, your child becomes a teenager, this is a time of puberty, hormones and early adulthood.

From a physical perspective, your child will experience dramatic changes in their bodies. Girls start to menstruate, and boys reach puberty. Both become sexually aware and may act on their new physical status. Becoming a teenager can be an emotional rollercoaster, there are several hormonal changes. Increased testosterone in boys can lead to more aggression. It is an awkward growth stage, as they get used to their changing bodies. It can be a time of stress and tension, often driven by school pressure, and your child will need love and understanding as they become young adults.

Intellectually, teenagers can be quite egocentric and view the world very much from their perspective. They will become very concerned that everyone is watching them and will be very preoccupied with themselves, how they are feeling and how they are perceived. They can become critical of others, especially their parents or caregivers, and often want to ‘fit in’ and gain approval from their friends. They will question your and other people’s views, on religion, political beliefs, values and more and they will often feel misunderstood. They will be very experimental and take risks. Teens believe they have a personal magic that will protect them even with risky behaviour, remember their brains are only fully developed at the age of 24 years.

From an emotional perspective the changes in their hormones can lead to sudden unexpected changes in moods which can be frustrating for parents. They can be very critical of their family and will have some emotional outbursts. From 12 to 14 years they will seem irritable and excitable; at 15 years they may become moody and withdrawn; and from 16 to 18 years they will start to settle down and become calmer and less volatile. We expect teens to behave as adults, but they are not always ready for this. They will, however, want to be socially acceptable and seem mature for their age. Most importantly, be aware of depression, anxiety and self-harming, teens are at high risk of these challenges and will need your support if they emerge.

As parents, make sure you start to guide and prepare your child for puberty, sex education, and the physical and hormonal changes to expect from as young as 9 years of age. Help your child to find an adult mentor, outside of your immediate family if necessary, at these individuals can sometimes help to guide and provide a safe place to talk about changes in bodies and emotions if they feel uncomfortable doing this with you. Your teens will have high levels of anxiety at potential failure, so allow minor ‘victories’ by acknowledging their newfound thinking abilities and independence. Develop their creativity in all fields to help them to understand how to solve problems creatively and ensure lots of space for sharing and understanding.

ENDS.