



# **CHILD RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT (CRIA)**

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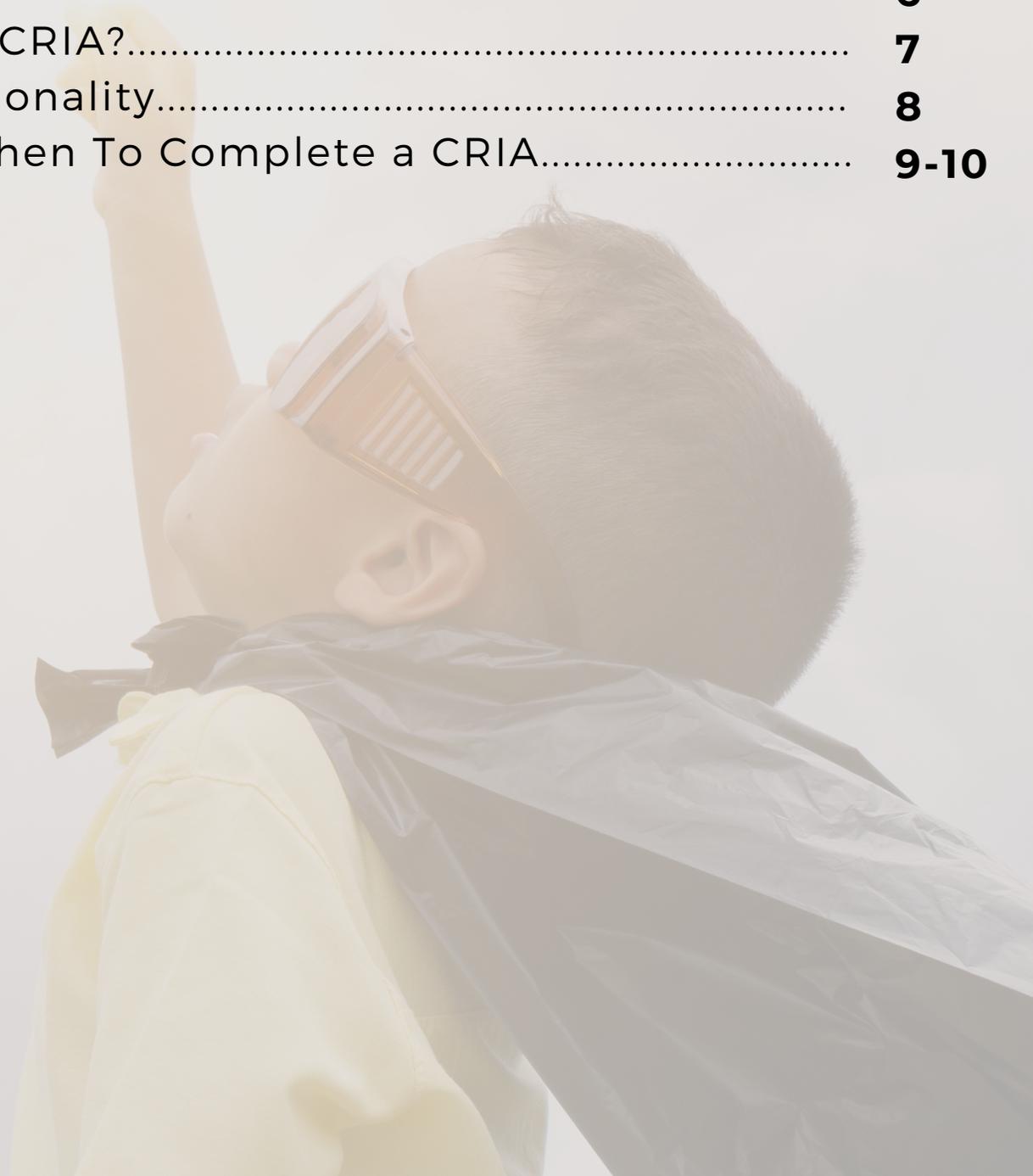
**A PRIMER FOR THE  
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# FOREWORD

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If there ever was a time to prioritize children and youth, this is it. There are no child neutral policies. Virtually every decision has a direct or indirect impact on children. Child Rights Impact Assessments (CRIA) are a tool that help policy and legislation comply with the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It sees children as active rights holders rather than passive recipients of adult actions.

We call on all governments to apply a CRIA lens to their programs and policies. Further, we urge anyone who works with children to educate themselves on children's rights and to actively seek child and youth voices and participation in their work. The Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO) contends that if a child rights lens was proactively applied to services and programs, there would be less of a need to advocate for children's rights and views to be upheld.



# 5 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (UNCRC)

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- 1** Everyone under 18 has all the rights in the convention.
- 2** There are 54 articles in the UNCRC that establish children's rights.
- 3** The UNCRC is the most widely ratified human rights treaty in the world. The Government of Canada ratified the UNCRC on December 12, 1991.
- 4** The 'general principles' (non-discrimination; best interest of the child; life, survival and development; and respect for the views of the child) help interpret all other articles.
- 5** The Convention must be seen as a whole: all rights are linked, and no right is more important than another.

# CHILDREN HAVE A RIGHT TO...

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# WHEN YOU UPHOLD CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

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Children will meet their academic potential and participate in school (Articles #23, #28, #29)

Indigenous and racialized children will have a strong sense of belonging and contribute greatly to the community (Articles #21, #30)

Bullying and crime rates will be reduced because children who are treated with dignity and respect are more likely to grow up treating others with respect (Articles #16, #40, #42)

Children will have opportunities for therapeutic support from childhood harm so they can thrive (Articles #6, #39)

We will enjoy children laughing as they play, dance and create (Article #31)

Children will be safe at home and in the community, as protection and safety measures will be in place (Articles #3, #19, #33, #34, #36)

Children will have energy to live and grow because they are provided with nutritious food and have a safe place to sleep (Articles #26, #27)

Children will become the great leaders of tomorrow, as they will have their voice heard in matters that affect them (Article #12)

# WHAT IS CRIA?

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A Child Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) is a tool for translating the UNCRC and the child's best interests into policy and practice to:

- improve public policy and contribute to better outcomes for children;
- ensure potential impacts to children are predicted, monitored and mitigated;
- consider short-term and long-term effects of policy on children;
- apply research and evidence to analysis of decisions;
- emphasize children's participation in decision-making; and,
- provide an efficient process to verify that governments are meeting obligations to uphold children's rights.

CRIA is not a separate process, but rather an analytical tool to use during different steps of the policy development process. CRIAs are applicable to and can benefit all government departments. All government departments should use CRIAs when developing and proposing policy.

# WHY USE CRIA?

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CRIA sees children as active rights holders rather than passive recipients of adult actions.

There are many benefits to using Child's Rights Impact Assessments. These include:

Making the best decisions for, and with, children and youth

Increased legitimacy of government decisions

Helps children and youth understand their rights

Less of a need to advocate for children's rights and views to be upheld

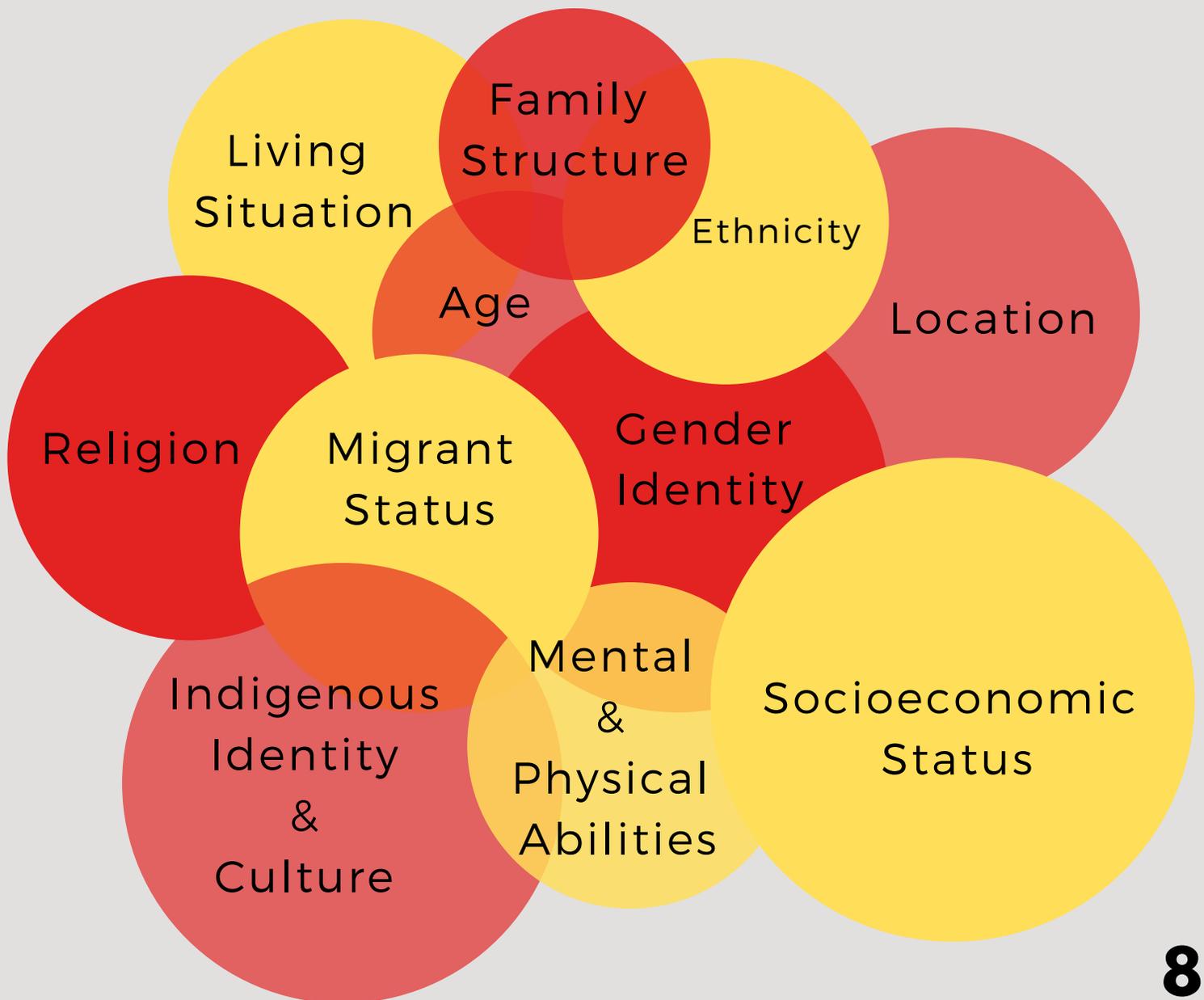
Increased opportunity for participation increasing the quality of analysis and advice

**Maximizes positive impacts and avoids or mitigates negative impacts on child rights and well-being**

# INTERSECTIONALITY

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Intersectionality is a lens, a prism, for seeing the way in which various forms of inequality often operate together and exacerbate each other (Crenshaw, 1989). It is important to consider intersectionality when completing a CRIA because policy decisions may impact different groups of children and youth negatively or positively to different extents.



# HOW & WHEN TO COMPLETE A CRIA

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United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) uses three basic steps to review proposed or past actions or decisions:

## 1. **Select, Screen and Scope**

- identify what could and will be assessed.
- consider using clusters of rights under the UNCRC to simplify the process.
- if a law or policy already exists, CRIA can be used as a monitoring and evaluation process to identify effects and unforeseen impacts on children.

## 2. **Assess**

- Analyze law, policy or regulation and identify potential impacts on children based on various sources such as: academic literature, experts , jurisprudence, General Comments and Concluding Observations from the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.
- Use different tools depending on the time frame and depth of the analysis.
- Engage relevant government departments responsible for the policy area or law.

# HOW & WHEN TO COMPLETE A CRIA

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- Assess the child rights relevant to the issue:
  - Start with the four core guiding principles of the UNCRC: non-discrimination; best interests of the child; life, survival, and development; and respect for the views of the child (UNCRC 2, 3, 6, 12).
  - Examine other relevant UNCRC articles identified.
- Formulate recommendations, setting out potential amendments, enhancements and alternative policies to address any concerns that have arisen through the CRIA process.

### **3. Communicate**

- Publicize and communicate the CRIA results and recommendations to inform the decision-making process, encourage ownership of the results and enable transparency.
- Communicate internally or externally to government and across government in a coordinated way as much as possible, depending on the stage of the decision-making process or action.

\*See YCAO Child Rights Impact Assessment Tool