

Sports , arts , leisure , as human rights for disabled children  
(Siderius L, Crawley F, Neubauer D,... )

Childhood provides an important window of opportunities such as playing to prepare the foundation of life-long learning and participation. Our appeal aims at promoting the rights of children with long term conditions such as disabilities or other chronic diseases to obtain access to mainstream programmes and services such as playing, making music and sports.

Any child can be excluded from participation based on a variety of socio-political factors – including religion, gender, ethnicity, language, geographic location, physical or intellectual ability – which result in discrimination and disadvantage within society. According to the universal child rights mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life. The conditions should ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community. Specifically the child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

Through painting autistic people can communicate their view of the world. Expressions as theater- and movie artist the people with Down syndrome have been very capable to reflect the society. Making music together binds the disabled and the abled on an equal basis.

Through participation in sport, disabled children can experience their abilities (sometimes for the first time) and show what previously was thought impossible. The child may unexpectedly excel in art. The stigma that rest on the disabled child can be overcome. Society attitude to focus on the disability may change in the understanding and appreciation of the abilities. The success of sometimes high levels of sport and music of persons with a disability gives hope to others. It empowers children to recognize their own potential and advocate for changes in society to recognize the fact that each individual has its own value to society.

The European Academy of Paediatrics promotes the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health for all children, in Europe as well as in Third Countries. This includes a strong commitment to the principles and practices of disability and chronic care management in childhood, supporting (as appropriate) their harmonization and implementation.