

Activity Guide: Needs, Rights and Wants

★ For children in early years settings and/or those more confident with simpler concepts

Suggested Timing	20 – 30 minutes	
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening video (optional) • Want and Needs Deck • Board or chart paper and markers 	
Educator Note	This activity helps students build a simple shared understanding of rights, needs and wants before moving into the Country Packs.	
Need	Right	Want
<p>A need is something children must have to live, feel safe and grow well.</p> <p><i>Examples: food, water, a safe place to live and sleep, clothing, medicine, love and care.</i></p>	<p>A right is something every child should have so they can be safe, healthy, learn and grow. Rights are for all children, no matter who they are.</p> <p><i>Examples: going to school, having food and clean water, being cared for, playing, and being listened to.</i></p>	<p>A want is something that would be fun or nice to have, but children can still live, learn and grow without it.</p> <p><i>Examples: toys, candy, video games, a pet, fancy shoes or extra screen time.</i></p>

- 1. Introduce rights, needs and wants in simple language.** Explain that a need is something children must have to live, feel safe and grow well; a right is something every child should have so they can be safe, healthy, learn and grow; and a want is something that is nice or fun to have, but not something children need to live and grow.
- 2. Use a video or short class discussion to support understanding.** If helpful for your students, show the [\[We all have Rights\]](#) or [\[What are Child Rights\]](#) video or use a short discussion prompt. After the video, ask students what they noticed and what rights or needs they heard mentioned.
- 3. Brainstorm children's rights as a class.** Ask students, what are some things all children should have or be able to do? Record their ideas on chart paper or the board.
- 4. Compare students' ideas with the Wants and Needs Deck.** Use the provided Wants and Needs Deck to review examples together. As each example comes up, ask students whether they think it is a right, need or want. Encourage students to explain their thinking in simple terms. The final slide will show the correct categories, which students can compare to their first list. Add any new ideas to the class list and briefly discuss why each example is a right, need or want.
- 6. Connect needs to rights.** Explain that many children's rights help protect the things children need to be safe, healthy and able to grow. For example, children need food, water, care, safety and learning, and children's rights help make sure these needs are taken seriously.
- 7. Introduce National Child Day.** Explain that November 20 is National Child Day, a day when people in Canada learn about and celebrate children's rights. Ask students: What is one right you think every child should know about?

