

# A Bill of Responsibilities for the Youth of South Africa

This bill outlines the responsibilities that flow from each of the rights enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

## Preamble

I accept the call to responsibility that comes with the many rights and freedoms that I have been privileged to inherit from the sacrifice and suffering of those who came before me. I appreciate that the rights enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa are inseparable from my duties and responsibilities to others. Therefore I accept that with every right comes a set of responsibilities.

### My responsibility in ensuring the rights to equality

- treat every person equally and fairly, and
- not discriminate unfairly against anyone on the basis of race, gender, religion, national-, ethnic- or social origin, disability, culture, language, status or appearance.

South Africa is a diverse nation, and equality does not mean uniformity, or that we are all the same. Our country's motto: !KE E: XARRA//KE, meaning "Diverse people unite", calls on all of us to build a common sense of belonging and national pride, celebrating the very diversity which makes us who we are. It also calls on us to extend our friendships and warmth to all nations and all the peoples of the world in our endeavour to build a better world.

### My responsibility in ensuring the right to human dignity

The right to human dignity places on me the responsibility to:

- treat people with reverence respect and dignity
- be kind, compassionate and sensitive to every human being including greeting them warmly and speaking to them courteously.

### My responsibility in ensuring the right to life

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- not discriminate unfairly against anyone on the basis of race, gender, religion, national-, ethnic- or social origin, disability, culture, language, status or appearance.

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### My responsibility in ensuring the right to family or parental care

This right expects me to:

- honour and respect my parents and to help them,
- be kind and loyal to my family, to my brothers and sisters, my grandparents and all my relatives.
- recognise that love means long-term commitment, and the responsibility to establish strong and loving families.

### My responsibility in ensuring the right to education

The right to education places on me the responsibility to:

- attend school regularly, to learn, and to work hard,
- cooperate respectfully with teachers and fellow learners and
- adhere to the rules and the code of conduct of the school
- and concurrently places on my parents and caregivers the responsibility to
- ensure that I attend school and receive their support and places on my teachers the responsibility to:
- promote and reflect the culture of learning and teaching in giving effect to this right.

### My responsibility in ensuring the right to work

This right carries with it the responsibility for all learners, parents, caregivers and teachers to:

- work hard and do our best in everything we do.
- recognise that living a good and successful life involves hard work, and that anything worthwhile only comes with effort.
- This right must never be used to expose children to child labour, (proposed alternative: prevent children being exposed to child labour)

### My responsibility in ensuring the right to freedom and security of the person

This right is upheld by taking responsibility for:

- not hurting, bullying, or intimidating others, or allowing others to do so, and
- solving and conflict in a peaceful manner

### My responsibility in ensuring the right to own property

The right to own property places on me the responsibility to:

- respect the property of others,
- take pride in and protect both private and public property and not to take what belongs to others.
- be honest and fair, and for those who have, to give generously to charity and good causes.

### My responsibility in ensuring the right to freedom of religion, belief and opinion

The right to freedom of conscience requires me to:

- allow others to choose and practice the religion of their choice, and to hold their own beliefs and opinions, without fear or prejudice.
- respect the beliefs and opinions of others, and their right to express these, even when we strongly disagree with these beliefs and opinions. That is what it means to be a free democracy

### My responsibility in ensuring the right to live in a safe environment

This right assumes the responsibility to:

- promote sustainable development, and the conservation and preservation of the natural environment
- protect animal and plant-life, as well as the responsibility to prevent pollution, to not litter, and to ensure that our homes, schools, streets and other public places are kept neat and tidy.
- In the context of climate change, we are also obliged to ensure we do not waste scarce resources like water and electricity.

### My responsibility in ensuring the right to citizenship

The right to citizenship expects that each of us will be good and loyal South African citizens. This means that we are responsible for:

- obeying the laws of our country,
- ensuring that others do so as well, and
- contributing in every possible way to making South Africa a great country.

### My responsibility in ensuring the right to freedom of expression

The right to free expression is not unlimited, and does not allow us to:

- express views which advocate hatred, or are based on prejudices with regard to race, ethnicity, gender or religion.
- We must therefore take responsibility to ensure this right is not abused by ourselves or others, to not tell or spread lies, and to ensure others are not insulted or have their feelings hurt.

## Conclusion

- I accept the call of this Bill of Responsibilities, and commit to taking my rightful place as an active, responsible citizen of South Africa. By assuming these responsibilities I will contribute to building the kind of society, which will make me proud to be a South African.

!KE E: / XARRA // KE  
Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika.



basic education

Department:  
Basic Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

# Rights and Responsibilities



1. Your friend is being forced to steal money for an older friend. He/She is afraid to lose the friend because it protects him/her from the actions of bullies. How would you advise your friend?
2. You have been given the responsibility to be a member of the Representative Council of Learners (RCL) at your school. What will be your priorities, based on your understanding of Rights and Responsibilities?
3. We all expect love and care from our parents. What should we do in ensuring that our parents are equally happy?
4. What steps would you take when you are surrounded by people who believe that violence is the only solution when faced with challenges?
5. How would you make sure that your right to freedom of expression (free speech) does not hurt other people in class discussions?
6. Grace likes to criticise other religions and she thinks her religion is the best in the world. How would you convince her to be more tolerant?
7. My friend Ben believes that only girls should clean the classroom. How would you respond to this statement?
8. How would you contribute to the reduction of crime in and around your school?