

6.CHILD ABUSE

Aim of this unit: you are going to learn about the way a great number of children are abused and exploited all the world over nowadays. You will be reviewing specially shocking content. You will also learn about the negative consequences of this exploitation and suffering caused to children.

Vocabulary: trafficking and hard-labour general vocabulary, child-soldier and child sex (molestation, paedophilia, pornography, prostitution, etc.)

Can you remember when you were 6 or 7 years old? Can you remember your loving parents tucking you into bed next to your favourite teddy bear? Do they still do?

Well, next door, down the street, and across town or anywhere else in the world, right this minute, other children experienced or are going through a completely different experience. Their parents or relatives may be neglecting or abusing them or their lives may be in danger because of the absence of such parents...

The topics we will cover in this unit aim at raising awareness of the different ways children are abused in many places, in present-day world. Despite the fact that some forms of abuse seem more cruel than others it should strongly be pointed out that all forms of abuse are wrong, be it neglect or child trafficking. In this unit we will focus on more disturbing examples of abuse cases. Before we get to the main point, remember...

Every child has the right to grow up in a safe environment, without fear of being harmed by anybody else and every child has the right to have a number of basic needs met. Unfortunately some people choose to ignore these fundamental rights and needs of children and knowingly or unknowingly they make them suffer.

- **What Is Child Abuse?**

To abuse a child means to cause or permit any harmful or offensive contact on a child or inflict any act on the child which humiliates, shames, or frightens him/her. Some people also consider abuse the following instances: any act or omission which fails to protect or fails in the upbringing of the children.

➡ **Any child**, regardless of his age, sex, race, religion, and socio-economic background can fall victim to child abuse and neglect.

The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act defines child abuse and neglect as: “any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker, which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation, or an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE ?



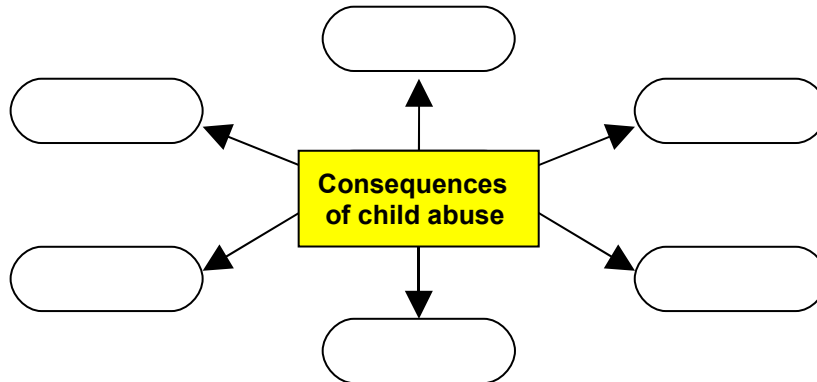
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- Match the sentences below to the pictures above. Look the words up in a dictionary:

Neglecting emotional needs of a child	Leaving a child without supervision	Forcing a child to touch you	Touching a child where he/ she doesn't want to be touched
Manipulating a child	Verbally abusing a child	Using a child as a servant	Exposing a child to pornography
Teasing a child unnecessarily	Breaking down a child's self-confidence	Neglecting a child's medical needs	Not taking care of a child (unclean, unfed, unclothed)
Hurting a child to relieve your own frustration	Neglecting a child's educational needs	Not listening to a child	Hitting and ridiculing a child at school
		Making your own child a servant: depriving him/her of time for education or leisure	

CONSEQUENCES OF CHILD ABUSE

- **Brainstorm.** Think of as many consequences as you can that child abuse bring about to children who endure it. Complete the following diagram:



- **Videosong.** Watch the video in the URL below. It features the song *Concrete Angel* by Lora Merriman. While listening to the song, note down vocabulary that you do not understand. Look the words up immediately afterwards.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P9njhcQUIXc>

Use the information mentioned in the video to complete the lines below:

- x Children show _____ problems and develop _____ diseases.
- x Some try to commit _____.
- x They become _____.
- x They experiment a regression in _____.
- x They show _____ of someone they know.
- x They start to _____ themselves again.
- x They have _____ all over their bodies.
- x They refuse _____ examination.
- x They develop _____ tendencies.
- x They find it hard to have _____ relationships.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse, also referred to as **molestation**, is defined as the forcing of undesired sexual acts by one person to another. Child sexual abuse refers to situations when the person this is done to is a child.

- **Paedophiles**

Paedophiles are people who prey on children sexually. They are extremely smart. They may have a normal appearance but they are cunning and know how to win parents' trust and get to be alone with their children. They might go so far so as to marry a single mother in order to gain access to her children. The mother, anxious to offer her children the male figure, will unhesitatingly offer the children to this "nice man". Paedophiles do not necessarily look dirty, or have a distinctive aspect and they show normal behaviour, which makes a positive identification really difficult. Nor do they belong to a particular social stratum or hold particular jobs; they have all possible walks of life. One thing they have in common, however, is the fact that most of them are males.

POINTERS

- ✓ Check on anyone who is in charge of the children (babysitting is quite a springboard into tricking the children) or wants to spend time alone with them.
- ✓ Ask for referees. Talk with other people they could have worked for in the past.
- ✓ Tell children to let you know if anyone approaches or touches them in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable, even if they are not strangers.



LOOK IT UP ON THE WEB!

Browse the internet for information on Marc Dutroux, a famous pederast and child abuser. Complete the following **Fact File**.

Name:
Nationality:
Occupation/ job:
Victims names and ages:
Accomplices names:
Trial facts:
Possible explanations for his behaviour:

TASK

Consider the previous information on paedophiles and answer the following questions. Use the information in the bubbles for help:

1. How do you think paedophiles trick children into trusting them?
2. How do they locate their victims?
3. Can paedophiles be known to the victim?
4. Who are the most vulnerable targets of paedophiles?

Usually, poor children who spend a lot of time in the street or single-parent families

Yes, actually, in over 60% of the cases, paedophiles were either relatives or acquaintances of their victims

They offer to buy them toys, teach them how to play an instrument, give them money, etc.

They hang around places children frequent: parks, schools, arcades, playgrounds, etc.

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GROUP WORK. DEBATE: MEGAN'S LAW

Megan's law owes its name to Megan Kanka, a seven-year-old girl who was raped and murdered by Jesse Timmendequas, a repeated violent sexual offender who lived across the street from her. Basically the law seeks to make information available to the public regarding sex offenders (rapists, stalkers, sex assaulters, etc.). Each state decides on the nature of the information and the means it will use to make it public. Commonly the information includes name, picture, address and details about previous crimes. The first such law was passed in New Jersey (US) in 1994. This is, however, a very controversial law. A lot of people oppose it on the grounds of privacy, for example. **How about you? what do you make of such a law?**

- Make two debate groups for each side of the debate: **for** and **against Megan's law**. You might be debating about a position you do not necessarily believe in; the point here is to learn this important communication skill.

Read the following article from BBC NEWS (<http://news.bbc.co.uk>) and answer the questions below.



UN TROOPS CAUTIONED ON SEX ABUSE



The UN has warned peacekeeping forces operating under its banner to obey strict rules on sexual conduct.

UN deputy head Louise Frechette said soldiers would be punished if they had sex with minors or prostitutes or if they traded sex for aid or favours. The world body has pledged to clamp down on sexual abuses following a scandal involving peacekeepers in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Ms Frechette is touring UN peacekeeping operations in west Africa.

She made her remarks while visiting Liberia, the first stop on a tour that also takes in Sierra Leone and the Ivory Coast.

Liberia hosts some 15,000 blue helmets - one of the UN's largest deployments.

The UN Deputy Secretary-General said no cases of wrongdoing had been reported in Liberia - but there is a lesson to be learnt from recent developments elsewhere in Africa.

She told the BBC's correspondent in Monrovia, Jonathan Paye-Layleh, that UN soldiers involved in an exploitative sexual relationship could be sacked, deported or face a court martial.

New report

The UN recently set up a hotline to receive complaints against peacekeepers accused of abuse.

The UN has troops stationed in several African countries



The organisation has been trying to repair the damage to its reputation as it investigates some 150 claims of abuse - many of them involving minors - allegedly committed by UN peacekeepers in DR Congo.

A forthcoming UN report will recommend that soldiers suspected of misconduct face court martial in the country where the claim is made, the Associated Press news agency reports.

The move is designed to increase accountability among soldiers serving the UN abroad, who - under present rules - must be sent back home in order to face trial for alleged crimes.

- According to the article, what are the consequences faced by soldiers engaging in sex with minors?
- Which are the countries where such practices have been reported?
- What are the main goals of peacekeeping troops stationed in Africa?
- What do certain soldiers exchange sex for?
- Do you think such behaviour is justifiable? Why?



Watch the following slide presentation on the internet:

<http://www.slideshare.net/andrea1129/child-prostitution-in-the-philippines2>



LOOK IT UP ON THE WEB!

Let us do some research on the internet. Visit the following websites and find some disturbing stories of abused children:

<http://www.karisable.com/dvcacasech.htm>

http://www.oprah.com/tows/pastshows/tows_2000/tows_past_20000403.jhtml

- In pairs, write a summary for one of the stories and decide on the following:
 1. Source of the problem (insanity, alcohol, drugs, etc.)
 2. Consequences
 3. Was the child saved?
 4. Did the judicial system / the law fail to provide the child with safety?

PHYSICAL ABUSE

<http://www.findcounseling.com/journal/child-abuse/child-abuse.html>

- **Child labour**

Think of “child labour”. We might even conclude that there is a positive side to children working: it might positively contribute to their development and growth. Through work children learn to be more responsible and more balanced; they learn about budgeting; work keeps them active and helps them develop particular skills that will benefit them and, in turn, the rest of society. Privileged children and young people might work to pay for their entertainment or luxuries. Often, work is a vital source of income that helps to sustain children and their families. But...

- **What is child labour?**

But millions of children across the world do extremely hazardous work in harmful conditions, putting their health, education, personal and social development, and even their lives at risk. Can you imagine what kind of circumstances they have to face? Use the following tips to build sentences:

early age

dangerous places

Excessive time

subject to abuse

forced to work

low wages

bad conditions

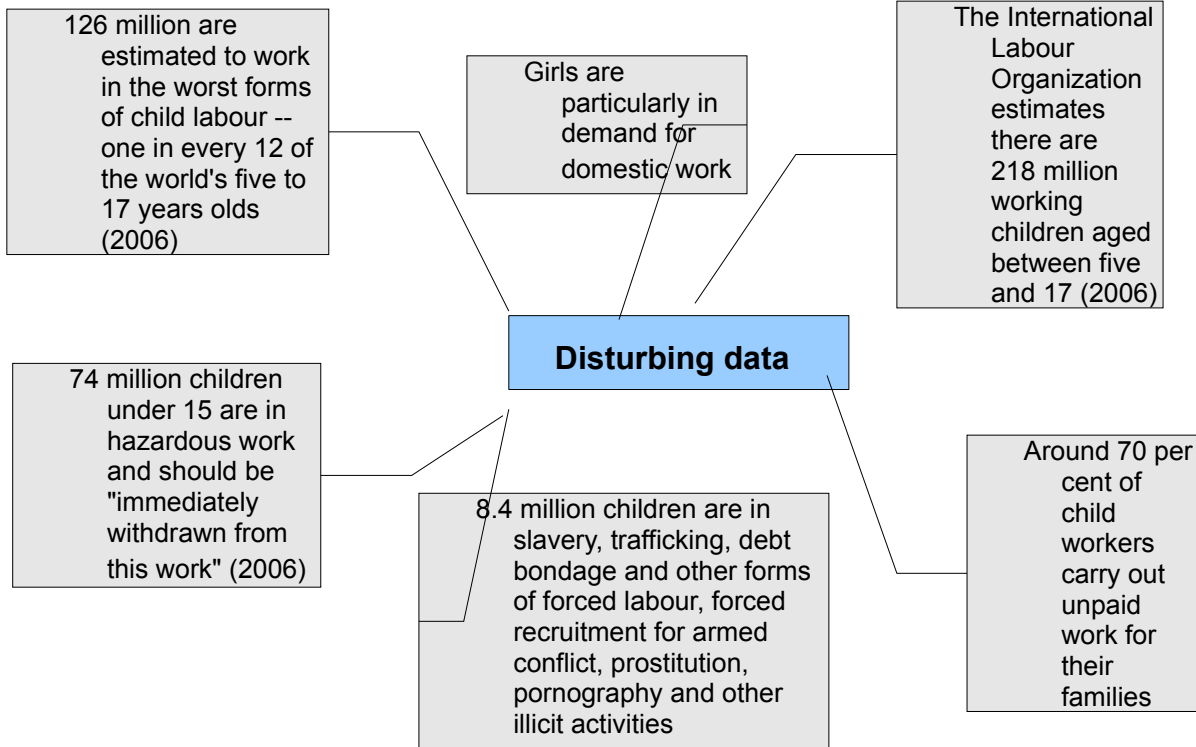
no access to education

Example: They have to work full-time at a very early age



A Lost childhood:
Think about it

What is the difference between Child Work and Child Labour?
Can you think of possible definitions for these two terms?
Why do you think there is no Child Labour in your country?
Or, is there?



CHILD TRAFFICKING

Trafficking involves transporting people away from the communities in which they live, by the threat or use of violence, deception, or coercion so they can be exploited as forced or enslaved workers for sex or labour. When children are trafficked, no violence, deception or coercion needs to be involved, it is merely the act of transporting them into exploitative work which constitutes trafficking.

Increasingly, children are also bought and sold within and across national borders. They are trafficked for sexual exploitation, for begging, and for work on construction sites, plantations and into domestic work. The vulnerability of these children is even greater when they arrive in another country. Often they do not have contact with their families and are at the mercy of their employers.

● CASE STUDY: ESSMERELDA

In the seedy Kafe Bar Berlin, Essmerelda Seferi throws back her head and croons in a husky Edith Piaf voice. Hard-drinking men leer across the smoke-filled room.

This hell in a dirt-track town in Macedonia is the end of the road and of her young life. At 14, she claims, she was sold to a man who took her virginity, prostituted her and then discarded her. That was two years ago.

Now she has rotten teeth and quickly aging skin. A hard and worldly veneer barely disguises her vulnerability, and she longs to return home to her parents in Albania. "In my dreams at night, I see how my mother cries," Seferi said, her own eyes brimming with tears. "But I know my family, I know our traditions. They would never take me back."

Seferi is one of hundreds, perhaps thousands of girls being lured from their native Albania and sold across the border in Macedonia as prostitutes, brides for elderly men or menial workers...

Seferi's fate may be typical. A woman relief teacher and the teacher's male friend, she said, offered her a weekend in Macedonia. It promised to be a glittering adventure for the pretty, spirited schoolgirl. Until three years ago, Albania had been in Stalinist isolation for almost half a century under its paranoid and brutal dictator, Enver Hoxha, and his successor. Seferi, like most Albanians, had lived an isolated life in conditions of medieval poverty. Her parents had been declared "enemies of the people," spent time in prison and were exiled to forbidding, mountainous Merdita, the Albanian Siberia.

The jaunt went wrong soon after Seferi arrived at the southern village of Celopeka. The teacher, according to Seferi, told her she should stay alone in a bar and wait for her escorts to take a trip to the border and return. Seferi did not mind. She had been given Coca-Cola for the first time in her life. "It was a real thrill," she said.

She was joined by two young men and a waitress. The next she knew she felt dizzy and began to hallucinate. "I woke up the next day. I was not in this village any more. When I got up, the sheets were all bloodied. I was 14," she said. Her new "owner," whom she knew only by the name of "Ayat," took her on trips on Turkey and Bulgaria as his mistress, occasionally forcing her to go with other men. She believes her parents were told she had been married.

When I met her, she said the Kafe Bar Berlin had an edge over the countless other bars she had worked in "because here they don't abuse me." At the time she was animated and so desperate to return home that I agreed to see her parents in Albania, tell them what had happened, and ask if they would take her back.

I went back the following week by arrangement to take photos and to obtain her parents' exact address. But she appeared to be drugged or drunk. The bar owner and an assistant sat at the table. Looking at them constantly, she refused to have photos taken. She said it was no longer necessary to go to her parents.

She was going herself two days later, she said. No, a brother was coming to get her the next month, she contradicted. She was ranting, changing her story from minute to minute. "I want to go, even if they shut me in a room and don't allow me to see another person, man or woman, for a year," she said. It was unclear if she was afraid of her parents or of the owners of the bar. When I suggested she come with me immediately, the men stood up menacingly.

Seferi looked longingly at the car as I left. "Please come back tonight," she said. "Just for a coffee, just to hear me sing."

On further surreptitious visits by friends, when a blurred photograph was taken during a performance despite the danger of retaliation by local gangsters, she appeared to have been beaten, a broken young woman already mentally unhinged and heading for a breakdown. If she had stayed at home, she would still have been a schoolgirl.

She sang a popular song, "Black Kurbet." Kurbet is the word used for Albanians who go overseas to work and send money back to their families. "Oh, Black Kurbet, why are you so black? They've left me all alone. So far away from home—home, where I left my childhood."

Albanian girls who end up in Macedonia are trapped. As illegal residents, they cannot seek legal protection. The traditions of rural Albania make it virtually impossible to flee back home: a girl who has lost her virginity is an outcast...

Essmerelda, trafficked in Macedonia, originally from Albania

Special Thanks to: Polaris Project
Website: www.PolarisProject.org



GROUP WORK – Read Essmerelda's story and, in groups, analyse how the following parties neglected her:

- ✓ Her family
 - ✓ Society on the whole
 - ✓ Macedonia, Albania
 - ✓ People in Kafe Bar Berlin
 - ✓ Her "customers"
- **Human trafficking** involves transporting people away from the communities in which they live, by the threat or use of violence, deception or coercion so they can be exploited as forced or enslaved workers for sex or labour.
(www.antislavery.org)

(do you want to learn more about this abject activity? Visit the following website:
http://actioncenter.polarisproject.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=50&Itemid=62

WHAT CAN YOU DO? HOW CAN ONE PUT AN END TO THIS?

You will learn later on about the existence of NGO's, groups or associations that have as a mission to help abolish such terrible practices as child abuse or child trafficking. You will learn how these groups operate and what kind of activities they engage themselves. Before that it is your turn to look at possible actions you, as an individual, or society on the whole, would need to undertake to help fight these malpractices. Write ideas in the boxes:

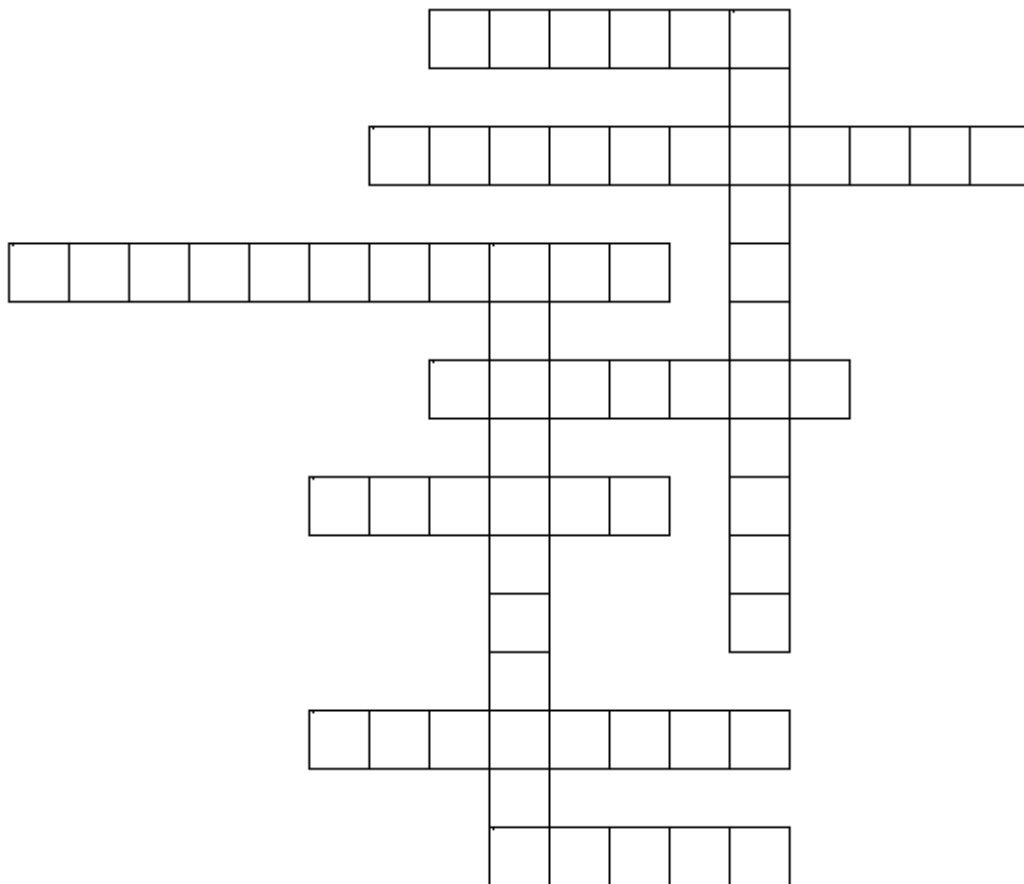
CHILD SOLDIERS

Over the past decades, a lot of children in different regions have found themselves in the middle of wars. In such countries as Cambodia, El Salvador, Somalia, Ethiopia, Peru, Sierra Leone and Uganda, boys (and even girls) in their early teens were forced to become soldiers. They were separated from their families, whom they would possibly never see again, forced to hold guns and use them against the enemy who, at times, bore some kind of relation to them. While some boys wanted to become soldiers, most of them were not trained to use guns. About half a million boys fought in the Iran-Iraq war in the 80's. Some had a deadly task: finding land mines. Some boys still have this task nowadays, which leaves a lot of them crippled or dead.

CREATIVE WRITING. Look at the picture and think how this boy's life has been completely shattered. Write about the things he has had to give up and what future awaits him.



- **Child Abuse** criss cross puzzle. Complete the puzzle with words you have learnt all through the unit.



Across

1. Person involving in sexual intercourse with another person without their consent.
3. Forcing of undesired sexual acts by one person to another.
4. A soldier involved in maintaining peace.
6. Failure to provide adequate nourishment or liquid, or provide or procure basic medical attention or shelter or warmth for a child.
7. Employment of children under an age determined by law or custom.
8. Being owned and worked by and for someone else.
9. Treatment of something (a person, item, substance, concept, or vocabulary) that is seen as harmful.

Down

2. Recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation.
5. Psychological disorder in which an adult experiences a sexual preference for children and engages in sexual acts with them.

- **How did UNICEF start?**

UNICEF, first known as ICEF (International Children's Emergency Fund), was founded in response to the need of millions of children after World War II. There was neither enough food nor medicines nor clothing for children. The United Nations created this special agency to look after the children. The fund provided children with basic food and medication (such as vaccinations against tuberculosis) and it was offered to all children, regardless of the side their country was in during the war. In 1953, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution by which ICEF was to become UNICEF and part of the UN.

- **What is its mission?**

UNICEF is an organization that helps children all over the world in such vital scenarios as health care, nutrition, sanitation, education and protection. UNICEF claims its mission is to promote “survival, protection and development of all children worldwide” and, its ultimate goals, “Health for All” and “Water and Sanitation for All”.

- **Activites organized by UNICEF**

UNICEF is based in most countries and it organizes activities aimed at protecting children all over the world. Activities vary from country to country but they basically tackle the following issues:

- ✓ Child survival and development
- ✓ Basic education and gender equality
- ✓ AIDS prevention
- ✓ Child protection



INTERNET RESEARCH: You are going to work with a partner to find more information on UNICEF.

Read **Asmina's story** :

(<http://www.unicef.ca/portal/Secure/Community/502/WCM/EDUCATION/assets/pdf/AsminasStory.pdf>)



Creative writing

Compare a day in the life of Asmina to a day in the life of a child her age in your country.



“Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF”

You are going to do some research on the “Trick-or Treat for UNICEF” program. Browse for information to answer the following questions:

- When and how did the program start? Where did it start?
- What is the program's main goal?

GAME – Now visit the UNICEF website for games and play some of the games contained therein:

<http://youth.unicefusa.org/games/>

POINTERS

- ✓ Leave no child out
- ✓ Put children first
- ✓ Stop harming and exploiting children
- ✓ Fight poverty
- ✓ Educate every child
- ✓ Listen to children

- **KNOWLEDGE QUEST**

Complete the summing report your teacher will give you.