



Top Tips For Defending Rights in Health and Social Care



1 START EVERY CONVERSATION WITH RIGHTS

Use the Charter to help children and families talk about what matters to them.

- Ask questions like: “What do you need to feel safe and settled?” or “How is this move or deployment affecting you?”
- Connect what they say to Charter statements (e.g. “I am as healthy as I can be”, “Adults should listen to me”).
- Remember: UNCRC Article 12 gives every child the right to be heard — the Charter shows how to make that real for forces families.

💡 Use the Charter as a visual prompt in appointments or group work to help children express their views.

2 THINK ABOUT RIGHTS IN CONTEXT

Recognise how forces life can affect children's rights differently.

- Frequent moves can impact Article 28 – the right to education and Article 24 – the right to health.
- Deployments may challenge Article 9 – the right to family life.
- Awareness of stigma or difference can affect Article 2 – non-discrimination.

💡 When you assess a child's needs, ask: “How might their forces background affect their rights to health, education, or family life?”

3 INVOLVE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN DECISIONS

Co-production isn't just for projects — it's part of rights-based practice.

- Include young people in planning their care, transitions, and wellbeing plans.
- Share information in ways that make sense for their age and experience.
- Link to Article 12 and 13 – the right to be heard and to get information.

💡 Use creative tools — drawings, maps, or the Charter's child-friendly language — to help them shape their own plan.

4 MAKE SERVICES FLEXIBLE AND PREDICTABLE

- Mobility is part of military life, but children still have a right to consistent care.
- Coordinate across health boards and local authorities to maintain continuity when families move.
- Offer flexible appointment options (online or phone) so support isn't lost during relocation.
- This supports Article 3 – adults must do what is best for children, and Article 24 – access to health services.

💡 Use the Charter as a checklist to identify where service access breaks down for mobile families.



SCAN FOR THE RIGHTS CHARTER



5

BUILD AWARENESS ACROSS TEAMS

Not everyone recognises how military life shapes children's experiences.

- Share the Charter in team meetings or training sessions.
- Encourage colleagues to use its statements as reflective prompts:
- "Does our service make it easy for forces children to get help when they need it?"
- The UNCRC Incorporation Act means all public bodies in Scotland must act compatibly with children's rights — the Charter helps interpret that for this specific group.

💡 Add a short Charter reflection question to team supervision or case discussions.



6

USE THE CHARTER TO SHAPE POLICY AND SERVICE DESIGN

- The Charter isn't just about one-to-one work — it can guide how services are planned and delivered.
- Align your service policies with the Charter's themes (e.g. access, wellbeing, voice, family life).
- Use Charter language in strategies and improvement plans to show commitment to UNCRC principles.
- Invite children and young people from forces families to share experiences to shape policy.

💡 Quote both the Charter and the relevant UNCRC article in policy documents or service reviews — it strengthens compliance and accountability.

7

SHOW AND SHARE IMPACT

- Demonstrate how you're making rights real.
- Track examples of where the Charter shaped a service decision or improved an outcome.
- Share stories of good practice with partner agencies or national networks.
- Involve children in reviewing how well their rights are being upheld.

💡 Keep a "Charter in Action" folder with short examples of how your team made a difference — these stories are powerful for inspection, reporting, and learning.

FINAL THOUGHT

The Forces Children's Rights Charter makes rights real for a group of children who often live between systems.

Using it helps you:

- Meet your UNCRC and Covenant duties,
- Design fairer, more flexible services, and
- Make sure forces children feel seen, heard, and supported.

