

# The Legislator

"One must spend time in gathering knowledge to give it out richly"



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## Child Abuse

**Child Abuse is defined as any act or inaction on the part of a parent or caregiver which results in the neglect, physical harm, sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of a child, 18 years and under. This is according to information provided by the Ministry of Social Development.** There are long term implications for children who have been abused. They often experience emotional and psychological trauma that haunts them years after the physical wounds have healed. There are four major types of Child Abuse;

**Neglect:** The failure to provide for a child's basic health, nutritional and educational needs and absence of love and affection.

**Emotional:** Constant and repeated acts of verbal insults or psychological abuse or cruel punishment.

**Physical:** Causing physical injury to a child.

**Sexual:** Inappropriate touching, intercourse or making them the subject of pornographic material.

The full implementation of the Children's Authority is well on its way because a new board was appointed on March 6<sup>th</sup> 2012; this Authority is intended to promote the welfare, care and protection of all children and to act as an advocate for the rights of all children.

Presently in Trinidad and Tobago, the legislation which protects children is the **Children Act, Chapter 46:01** and the **Children Authority Act, Chapter 46:10**; for further reading on these Acts please view the following link: <http://www.legalaffairs.gov.tt/Laws>.

There have been recent amendments being made to the Children Act which is stated within the **Children's Bill No.1 2012**. This Bill seeks to repeal and replace the Children Act, Chap. 46:01. The aforementioned Bill had its 1<sup>st</sup> reading in the House of Representatives on 20<sup>th</sup> Jan., 2012 and its 2<sup>nd</sup> reading was held on 9<sup>th</sup> Mar., 2012. This Bill relates to the protection of children and young persons. For further readings on this Bill please view the following link: <http://www.ttparliament.org/publications>.



## TALK YUH MIND!

*Child neglect is a form of child abuse. What do you see as the effects of child neglect?*



**Nicholas Suban**  
Research and Evaluation  
Officer-Project Mgt.

Child neglect can lead to resentment and delinquency causing long term breakdown of families and can be harmful to a child's development.

These issues may not be limited to a particular family or group as they can have societal costs as well.



**Cherisse Nixon**  
Legal Officer  
SG Dept.

The effects of neglecting a child are wide-ranging and ripple out to touch a society at large. A neglected child may choose to act out his/her frustration at being disregarded on others. He/she may fall prey to negative influences due to the lack of parental concern or support.

Finally, a neglected child is one who may feel unwanted and unloved and be ignorant of his/her value as a person and may therefore be unable to see the value in others.



**Andella Ramroop**  
Associate Prof. - CSS Dept.

It negatively impacts the society in the long run because it eventually becomes a cycle.

If this is what children see and live with they will ultimately exercise such actions as adults.



**Rachael Jacob**  
Clerk II –  
SG Dept.

When a child is being neglected by their parents or guardian they may engage in rebellious behaviour which may include activities such as substance abuse, vandalism and lack of respect for authority figures.

## Profile

*Head, Central Authority Unit*  
**Ms. Sunita Harrikissoon**



**(1) What aspects of this Office motivated you to accept the appointment as Advisor to the Honourable Attorney General?**

I am particularly attracted to issues dealing with International Law and International Relations. Mutual Legal Assistance and Extradition revolve around both so working in this field is ideally suited to me. After having worked as Legal Executive at the Central Authority for 6 years and developing an overall understanding of the work of the Unit and forging valuable relationships with international organisations, the appointment as Head was for me, the next step in my career development and something I aspired to achieve.

**(2) Who would you say has had the most impact on your life?**

My family, particularly, my parents. While growing up, I saw the sacrifices they made to provide my sister and I with a tertiary education. We were taught from very early about honesty, hard work, dedication and the value of people. Those are core values I live by and am trying to instill in my own children.

**(3) What would you say has been your personal motto?**

**“Nothing happens before its time”  
and “What doesn’t kill you make you stronger”.**

**(4) What is the best book you have ever read?**

**“Left to Tell”** by Immaculée Ilibagiza.  
It is a true story by the author of how she survived during the Rwandan genocide in 1994 emerging with a profound and lasting relationship with God, and discovering power of prayer, the importance of forgiveness and the meaning of true unconditional love and understanding. She gives us the strength to find wisdom and grace during our own challenging times.

**(5) Which cause or organization do you feel most fervent about?**

**SOS Babies (Supporting Our Sick Babies).** This is a non-governmental organization operating out of the San Fernando General Hospital to provide support and counseling to parents of premature and critically ill babies at the Neo-Natal Intensive Care Unit.

## Book Talk



### *Children's Socio-Economic Rights, Democracy and the Courts*

**Author: Nolan, Aoife**

**ISBN:978-1-84113-769-8**

**Price: £52.25**

Despite the significant growth of academic interest in both children's rights and socio-economic rights over the last two decades, children's socio-economic rights are a comparatively neglected area. This is particularly true with regard to the role of the courts in the enforcement of such rights.

The author of this book remedies this omission, focusing on the circumstances in which the courts can and should give effect to the socio-economic rights of children. The arguments put forward are located within the context of long-standing debates in constitutional law, democratic theory, and human rights.

The claims made by the author are supported and illustrated by concrete examples of judicial enforcement of children's socio-economic rights from a variety of jurisdictions. The work is thus rooted in both theory and practice, and represents a major original contribution to the existing scholarship in a range of areas including human rights, legal and political theory, and constitutional law.

Nolan brings together and addresses a wide range of issues that have never been previously considered in book form. These include: children as citizens and their position in relation to democratic decision-making processes, the implications of children and their rights for democratic and constitutional theory, the role of the courts in ensuring the enforcement of children's rights and the debates surrounding the litigation and adjudication of socio-economic rights.

(Series: Human Rights Law in Perspective)

## Law Libraries Worldwide:

### New York University School of Law Library

The Law Library of NYU School of Law and lawyer training, is dedicated to acquiring and preserving a comprehensive collection of resources in all formats, providing the most highly competent assistance to use information resources, and maintaining a welcoming, comfortable facility. Their collections have historically been regarded as among the deepest research collections not only in the country but also in the world.

As part of their collection, they have documents of legally associated United Nations Research under their Research guides section. Library Users have access to the United Nations Online, information with respect to Treaties, Human Rights Committee, International Court of Justice and the International Law Commission.



New York University School of Law

For more information please see their website:

[www.law.nyu.edu](http://www.law.nyu.edu)

### **Statistics of Materials Received by the Library for the 1st Quarter, 2012.**

ITEMS	DPP	AG
Books	30	79
Legal Journals/ Periodicals	50	155
Judgments	74	74
Other Publications (Statutes/Law Reports)		45

## Resource Tip - **Australian Human Rights Commission**

<http://www.hreoc.gov.au/legal/humanrightsreports/index.html>

The Australian Human Rights Commission, formerly the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, was established in 1986 by an Act of the federal Parliament. It is an independent statutory organization that reports to the federal Parliament through the Attorney General.

**Its mission** is to lead the promotion and protection of human rights in Australia by making human rights values part of everyday life and language; empowering all people to understand and exercise their human rights; working with individuals, community, business and government to inspire action; keeping government accountable to national and international human rights standards and securing an Australian charter of rights.

The legal research and resources link offers: - **legislation** & **international human rights reports**.

The Human Rights link gives access to: - **children's rights** & other **useful links on the welfare of children**.



## Be the Change.....



**'You may never know what results come of your action, but if you do nothing there will be no result'**  
M M K Gandhi 1869 - 1948

**When all the trees have been cut down,  
when all the animals have been hunted,  
when all the waters are polluted, when all  
the air is unsafe to breathe, only then will  
you discover you cannot eat money.**  
~ Cree Prophecy

*Jé*

*Ed*

*Cambio*

Here is a selection of groups in T& T involved in environmental works:

1. The Trinidad & Tobago Field Naturalists' Club  
<http://ttfnc.org/>
2. Nature Seekers  
<http://natureseekers.org/>
3. The Asa Wright Centre  
<http://asawright.org/>
4. Citizens for a Better Trinidad and Tobago (CBTT)  
[dsrbrown2010@gmail.com](mailto:dsrbrown2010@gmail.com)
5. Trini Eco Warriors  
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Trini-Eco-Warriors>

These are just a few environment groups. For more groups and ventures check <http://greentnt.org/node/771>



## Feature:

### Declaration of the Rights of the Child

All children have the right to what follows, no matter what their race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, or where they were born or who they were born to.

1. \* to grow up and to develop physically and spiritually in a healthy and normal way, free and with dignity.
2. \*to a name and to be a member of a country.
3. \*to special care and protection and to good food, housing and medical services
4. \*to special care if handicapped in any way.
5. \*to love and understanding, preferably from parents and family, but from the government where these cannot help.
6. -to go to school for free, to play, and to have an equal chance to develop yourself and to learn to be responsible and useful.
7. -to be among the first to get help.
8. -to be protected against cruel acts or exploitation, e.g. to not be obliged to do work which hinders development both physically and mentally.  
To not work before a minimum age and never when that would hinder health moral and physical development
9. To be taught peace, understanding, tolerance and friendship among all people.

#### Source:

<http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/resources/plainchild.asp>

## CELEBRATING WITH THE WORLD

### World Book and Copyright Day – Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> April

23 April is a symbolic date for world literature for on this date in **1616**, *Cervantes*, *Shakespeare* and *Inca Garcilaso de la Vega* all died. It is also the date of birth or death of other prominent authors such as Maurice Druon, Haldor Klaxons, Vladimir Nabokov, Josep Pla and Manuel Mejía Vallejo.

World Book and Copyright Day is an occasion to pay a worldwide tribute to books and authors and to encourage people to discover the pleasure of reading. It is hoped that this will lead to the renewed respect for those who have made irreplaceable contributions to social and cultural progress.

Source: <http://www.un.org/en/events/bookday/>



#### Comments & Feedback

We would like to thank all individuals for their contribution and continued support as well as IT, the Communication Department, the participants of the Opinion Poll, also a special thank you to the Head, Central Authority Unit.

Let's hear from you, our valued readers. Share ideas and suggestions! Email our editorial team at:

[jpierre@ag.gov.tt](mailto:jpierre@ag.gov.tt), [vimaharaj@ag.gov.tt](mailto:vimaharaj@ag.gov.tt) or [kjones@ag.gov.tt](mailto:kjones@ag.gov.tt)