UNDERSTANDING OF NURTURANCE AND SELF-DETERMINATION RIGHTS IN MALTREATED CHILDREN AND YOUTH

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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ABSTRACT

Increasing access to rights for young people has highlighted the fact that little is known about their thinking and understanding of rights issues. However, expanding children’s access to rights without adequate knowledge of how they understand, experience and are able to use these rights, may be detrimental to their well-being. Thus far, research has explored conceptions of rights in several populations, including school aged children and young offenders, but little attention has been focused on maltreated children – a particularly vulnerable group. The purpose of the current study was to examine conceptions of and attitudes towards children’s nurturance and self-determination rights in 10-18-year-old children with histories of maltreatment who were living in state care. Associations between rights conceptions and attitudes, and factors related to the experience of maltreatment and child welfare care (e.g. type of maltreatment, type of foster care, time in care, and number of foster care placement changes), were explored. Rights concepts were assessed by having participants generate and discuss children’s rights issues arising in three contexts: home, school and the greater community, as well as through general knowledge questions. Attitudes were assessed using the Children’s
Rights Attitudes questionnaire (Peterson-Badali, Morine, Ruck & Day, 2004), a 32 item likert-scale measure of children’s endorsement of various nurturance and self-determination rights. Results indicated that, while maltreated children’s conceptions of rights did frequently vary from previous findings with non-maltreated children, there were also a number of broad-based similarities. Interestingly, while maltreatment and child welfare care variables were largely unrelated to rights conceptions and attitudes, participants’ understanding did appear to be informed by the particular concerns that emerged from their unique circumstances (e.g., the fulfillment of basic needs such as food, clothing, and education). Findings are discussed in relation to theory, research, policy, and practice.
DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my family, whose love and support have sustained and encouraged me in its completion. To my loving husband and partner in life, Dan, whose discipline and hard work are always an inspiration, and whose patience and positive outlook have kept me moving forward. To our three fantastic boys, Kevin, Ryan and Luke, who have each provided many welcome and memorable distractions, as well as the motivation to persist in this endeavour. To my beloved parents, Shirley and Charlie Bone, who gave me the foundation to contemplate such a journey and who have supported and nudged me all along the way. To my other family members and friends, whose frequent queries of “Should I ask…how is it going?” have helped me to remain attentive and determined.
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NOTE: Portions of this research have been previously published in the International Journal of Children’s Rights (Peterson-Badali, Ruck, & Bone, 2008). This thesis is an expanded version of the published paper and provides further elaboration and detail regarding maltreated children’s conceptions of rights at varying ages. Comparisons between conceptions of rights in this group to those in more typically developing populations have also been more thoroughly detailed. In addition, analysis of the attitudes of maltreated young people toward children’s nurturance and self-determination rights were explored. A more comprehensive discussion of theoretical, policy and practice implications for the research results is also part of the current paper.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Background and Rationale

The notion that children and adolescents are persons who are entitled to rights similar and/or equal to those of adults is of relatively recent origin. Societal concern with the rights of young people\(^1\) has evolved in conjunction with conceptions of childhood, resulting in a substantial increase in the social and political attention paid to children’s rights issues over the course of the last century (Peterson-Badali, Morine, Ruck, & Slonim, 2004; Peterson-Badali, Ruck, & Ridley, 2003). Generally, there has been a distinction made between children’s protection, or nurturance, rights and self-expression, or self-determination, rights. Nurturance rights are considered to be derived from a fundamentally paternalistic attitude toward children characterized by a need to protect and provide them with societal benefits. In contrast, self-determination rights are those "which allow one to exercise control over his/her environment, to make decisions about what one wants and to have autonomous control over various facets of one’s life" (Rogers & Wrightsman, 1978, p. 61).

The children’s rights movement came into being in the late 19th century and initially focused on children’s protection and welfare. Beginning in the mid-20th century, a desire to allow children greater participation in decisions affecting their lives motivated a shift in emphasis from nurturance to self-determination when considering issues of children’s rights. This shift has resulted in a tendency to grant increasingly younger children some of

\(^{1}\) The terms child(ren), adolescent(s), youth and young people will be used interchangeably throughout this research to refer to individuals 18 years of age or younger.
the rights previously accorded only to adults (Ruck, Peterson-Badali, & Day, 2002). This increased recognition of children and adolescents as individuals having rights comparable to those of adults is perhaps most evident in the medical, social, legal and educational fields, where children can make independent decisions regarding services or treatment (Peterson-Badali, Morine, et al., 2004).

In the late 20th century, the importance of children’s rights was formally recognized in the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (United Nations General Assembly, 1989). The CRC emphasizes that human rights belong equally to all children everywhere and recognizes that there is no hierarchy of children’s rights, placing equal importance on all rights. Through the inclusion of both nurturance (care and safety or welfare) and self-determination (self-expression and autonomy or liberty) rights, the CRC focuses on the child as a whole, while acknowledging the child’s role as member of a family. It is a powerful legal instrument that respects the evolving capacities of the child. It has received almost universal acceptance and has been ratified by all signatory nations except Somalia and the United States.

While both nurturance (provision, protection) and self-determination (participation) rights are viewed as necessary for healthy growth and development, they cannot be equally accessed by children at all ages (Ochaita & Espinosa, 1997). Generally, rights to protection and care are afforded from birth, as there are no specific competencies required of children to exercise these rights. Indeed, they are often fulfilled by adults (e.g., parents, guardians)

2 More recently, the rights outlined in the CRC have been referred to as the “3Ps” - Provision (care), Protection (safety) and Participation (self-expression) - the latter categorization reflecting a shift away from full autonomy to involvement or participation in decision-making in accordance with a child’s evolving competencies (Costa, 2007; Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2008)
rather than children. Alternatively, self-determination rights are acquired incrementally as children demonstrate the capacity to use these rights in a safe and beneficial manner (Ochaita & Espinosa, 1997; Rogers & Wrightsman, 1978). However, even very young children benefit from opportunities to participate in decision-making and to assert age-appropriate self-determination rights, thereby encouraging specific developmental capacities and stimulating individual autonomy (Ochaita & Espinosa, 1997). In fact, such opportunities are very significant developmental tasks and may increase the likelihood that a child can access and exercise his/her right in a self-protecting manner that will not compromise rights to protection and nurturance in favour of autonomy and self-determination (Ochaita & Espinosa, 1997).

A reciprocal relationship exists between granting autonomy and its development as well as between self-determination and nurturance rights. Scholars and practitioners have argued that caution must be used in extending and increasing self-determination rights so that nurturance rights are not compromised (Helwig & Turiel, 2002; Nucci & Lee; 1993; Ochaita & Espinosa, 1997). Simply extending greater rights to children, without adequate knowledge of how they understand, experience and are able to use these rights, may be detrimental to their well-being. For example, a child may refuse an educational intervention deemed necessary for success at school without a full appreciation of the consequences of such a decision for his/her long-term academic success. Therefore, in extending rights to children society must not only deal with negotiating the delicate balance between nurturance and self-determination, but must also evaluate at what point in development a child has the capacity to exercise rights in a self-protecting manner.
In response to this concern, researchers have examined children’s knowledge of and ability to reason about rights-related issues (Cherney & Perry, 1996; Helwig, 1995; 1997; Melton, 1980; Melton & Limber; 1992; Peterson-Badali, Morine, et al., 2004; Peterson-Badali, Ruck, Slonim & Bone, 2004; Ruck, Abramovitch, & Keating, 1998; Ruck, Keating, Abramovitch, & Koegl, 1998; Ruck, et al., 2002). Most studies have involved “typically-developing”, or normative groups of middle-class North American and European children and findings have suggested that both developmental changes (e.g., Helwig, 1995; 1997; Melton, 1980) and experiences with rights-related issues (e.g., Peterson-Badali, Morine, et al., 2004; Ruck et al., 2002) contribute to how young people think and reason about children’s rights.

More recently, and of particular relevance for the present study, researchers have suggested that “non-normative” life experiences such as maltreatment and foster care may influence children’s judgments and reasoning about concepts such as rights (Costa, 2007; Mullins & Tisak, 2006; Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2008; Smetana, Kelly & Twentyman, et al., 1984). In order to explore this issue, in the current study I examined conceptions and attitudes about children’s rights in children and adolescents who were in the long-term care of the state as a result of child abuse and/or neglect. When compared with "typically-developing" children, the issue of rights may have more direct implications for these children as they frequently reside outside of a traditional biological family where those we usually assume will look out for their best interests (e.g., parents) are unavailable. In addition, maltreated children often move from one home to another and each time they must

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3 Portions of this research have been previously published in the International Journal of Children’s Rights. This work provides a further elaboration of that study (see Peterson-Badali, Ruck, & Bone (2008)).
adapt their thinking about rules, rights, and responsibilities to that of their new home. Further, maltreated children may reside in environments (e.g., group homes) where there is an earlier and increased onus on them to advocate for their own nurturance and self-determination rights. As the home environment is typically the one in which children learn most about rights and where their initial experiences of advocating or negotiating for their rights takes place, the question of how maltreated children in long term state care think about rights issues is an important one from the standpoint of both theory and policy/practice.

The following review of the literature will first outline the evolution and current status of research and theory on children’s conceptualization of their rights, including the influence of sociodemographic and family factors. Next, a brief review of the literature on the correlates and sequelae of child maltreatment and state care, along with possible implications for rights understanding, is presented and is followed by the research questions examined in the present study.

**Children’s Conceptions of and Attitudes toward Rights**

*Global Cognitive Stage Approaches*

Early studies examining children’s conceptualization of rights were based on the work of Piaget (1965) and Kohlberg (1981), who characterized the development of children’s moral understanding in terms of global structures or stages. This global stage framework holds that general cognitive shifts occur throughout development and result in a progression from egocentric and concrete views of concepts such as morality or rights in early childhood to more differentiated and principled conceptions in later adolescence (Melton, 1980; Melton & Limber, 1992; Tapp & Levine, 1974). For example, in the first of
Piaget’s two stages of moral reasoning, known as “moral realism,” rules defining right and wrong are set down by authorities and must be obeyed regardless of intentions or circumstances. At this level, actions are judged by the gravity of their consequences, so that a child who accidentally breaks 15 cups is judged more harshly than a child who purposefully breaks one cup. Piaget’s second stage, “moral autonomy,” occurs around the age of 10–11 years and reflects a more cooperative view of morality, where intentions and context are considered when judging an action. At this stage, children acknowledge that rules are not carved in stone and provide only general guidelines for behaviour that serve to guard the rights of all (Piaget, 1965).

Kohlberg (1981) built on and extended Piaget’s views on moral development. His framework consisted of three levels of reasoning: preconventional, conventional and postconventional. The preconventional level was roughly equivalent to Piaget’s “moral realism,” with a concrete emphasis on punishment and consequences in children’s reasoning. Responses at the conventional level of moral development focus on conformity to legal, social and personal expectations. At the postconventional, or principled level, moral reasoning takes a “prior to society” (Crain, 1985) perspective, emphasizing the values and principles that underlie a good society, but rejecting the uniform application of rules and norms. Kohlberg’s typology for moral reasoning was adopted by Tapp and Levine (1974), who found that the progression of legal reasoning generally followed the same global stage pattern. Their research showed that for most participants, reasoning crystallized at the conventional level during adolescence and remained generally stable across situations and throughout adulthood. Like Kohlberg, Tapp and Levine (1974) found that the stages of
reasoning followed an invariant sequence and that few people reached the postconventional
level of reasoning.

Following from this work, seminal research by Melton (1980) explored children’s
conceptualization of their rights. He believed that children’s understanding of rights was
related to their level of moral judgment and would follow a similar global developmental
trajectory to that advanced by Piaget and Kohlberg. He predicted that in the initial stage of
rights understanding, children’s responses would be rather concrete, highlighting their still
immature belief that rights are granted and withdrawn by adults and are represented by the
things they are allowed to have and do. During the second stage, children would view rights
as part of a larger system of laws or conventions based on fairness, obedience, and the
maintenance of social order. In the final stage, Melton (1980) suggested that children’s
reasoning about rights would stem from universal ethical principles and that justifications
would be based on one’s fundamental entitlement to human dignity and freedom. In
addition, Melton suggested that differential access and exposure to rights as a result of
sociodemographic factors, specifically socioeconomic status (SES), would also influence
children’s conceptions of rights, resulting in more positive attitudes toward rights in
children from higher SES backgrounds.

In his study of 1st, 3rd, 5th and 7th grade American children, Melton (1980) found that
the youngest children held a concrete view of rights, likening them to privileges bestowed
by authority and judging rights based on what they were allowed to do. Reasoning from the
older children was largely based on fairness, competence and obedience, with very few
participants demonstrating a universal understanding of entitlement to rights. Regarding the
influence of SES, Melton reported that while cognitive maturation was significant for
explaining changes in children’s understanding of rights, it did not sufficiently account for all changes. His findings revealed that children from higher SES backgrounds showed an early advantage in the conceptualization of rights, with a tendency to hold a more advanced understanding approximately two years ahead of their low SES peers. However, this difference had all but disappeared by early adolescence.

While the results of several subsequent studies (e.g., Cherney & Perry, 1996; Melton & Limber, 1992) were consistent with this global stage explanation of the development of children’s conceptualization of their rights, they also advanced the perspective that broad maturational shifts do not provide a complete explanation of children’s thinking about rights and that perceptions and attitudes toward rights often vary as a function of other influences in a child’s environment (e.g., SES and culture). In addition, more recent research from a social cognitive domain perspective casts doubt on the somewhat discouraging notion that children do not have the capacity for abstract conceptualization of rights until late adolescence or early adulthood, if ever. This body of literature has outlined important limitations in the early research and advanced a more comprehensive picture of the development of children’s conceptualization of their rights (Helwig, 1995; 1997; 2006; Helwig & Turiel, 2002; Neff & Helwig, 2002; Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2008; Ruck, Abramovitch & Keating, 1998; Smetana, 2006).

**Social-Cognitive Domain Approaches**

In contrast to the notion that moral reasoning develops through a series of broad qualitative shifts in thinking that entail “the gradual differentiation of principles of justice or rights from non-moral concerns” (Smetana, 2006, p. 120), social-cognitive domain theory proposes that individuals hold distinct, and coexisting, domains of social knowledge (e.g.,
moral, personal, conventional) that follow discrete developmental paths and represent “an organized system of social knowledge that arises from one’s experiences of different types of regularities in the social environment” (Smetana, 2006, p. 120). The theory holds that as one interacts with the world, knowledge from relevant domains is simultaneously considered and coordinated with the salient aspects of the situation at hand, and that this process occurs “in increasingly sophisticated ways throughout development” (Helwig, 2006, p. 186). As individuals balance and interpret the relevant rights and freedoms in conflicting moral situations (e.g., whether an individual should be permitted to publish material that promotes hatred or violence toward a particular group), they make very complex and nuanced judgments, occasionally resulting in the subordination of certain rights. This, however, does not necessarily reflect a lack of understanding or knowledge of the inherent nature of rights (Helwig, 2006; Helwig & Turiel, 2002; Neff & Helwig, 2002), but rather one’s interpretation of the relevant considerations at a given point in time. As indicated by Smetana (2006), “a full understanding and appreciation of the complexity and diversity of social life entails a consideration of moral knowledge as distinct from, and sometimes in coordination with (or subordinated to) other types of knowledge” (p.120).

According to Helwig (2006), early research into children’s conceptualization of rights contained several methodological problems. First, the assessment of children’s knowledge and understanding of rights was based solely on their verbal responses. This likely created a bias against individuals who had difficulty expressing their thoughts and ideas and who, therefore, may have possessed greater knowledge than they were able to convey (Peterson-Badali & Abramovitch, 1993). Secondly, “by focussing exclusively on, or giving priority to, judgments in complex and conflicting situations, both the survey and
global stage approaches may have underestimated conceptions of rights by failing to detect sophisticated and abstract understandings potentially manifest in other, non-conflictful situations” (Helwig, 1995, p. 154). The assumption from early global stage research was that individuals who held an abstract or principled understanding of rights would support the exercise of such above competing considerations, and when they did not, their conceptualization of rights was perceived to be limited. However, social-cognitive domain theorists (e.g., Helwig, 1995; Helwig, 2006; Helwig & Turiel, 2002; Neff & Helwig, 2002) hold that individuals do occasionally, and appropriately, make decisions that are contrary to otherwise generally held principles because “rights are perceived, not as absolute entitlements, but as existing in a particular interpersonal and/or sociocultural context” in which they are bounded by the rights of others (Peterson-Badali, Ruck and Day, 2002).

Investigations of rights understanding involving examples of both straightforward and conflicted situations have helped to clarify this issue by providing considerable evidence that the sole use of conflicted rights situations has resulted in an underestimation of children’s level of understanding of their rights (Helwig, 1995, 1997, 1998, 2006). In an initial study involving middle class 7th and 11th graders and young college students (mean age 19-6 years), as well as in a later investigation with 1st, 3rd and 5th graders, Helwig (1995, 1998) demonstrated that when presented with straightforward rights situations, young people, even those as young as six years of age, endorsed the universality of rights, a finding at odds with the global stage notion that understanding of the inherent and absolute nature of rights does not emerge until mid-adolescence. Results from Helwig (1995) with regard to rights in conflicted situations were somewhat consistent with those of Melton (1980) in that young adolescents occasionally did subordinate rights to competing concerns,
and did so with greater frequency and across a broader range of situations than older adolescents or adults. However, with evidence of more abstract understanding in straightforward situations, Helwig (1995, 1997, 1998) did not interpret this to indicate an immature understanding of the concept of rights. Instead, consistent with a social-cognitive domain perspective, he suggested that “decisions in conflictful situations reflected several sources of variation, including age-related or developmental differences, situational or contextual variation determined by the particular types of issues in conflict, and individual differences” (1995, p. 162). For example, Helwig and Kim (1999) found that judgments could vary both within one social context (i.e., children judged decisions made according to ‘majority rule’ acceptable for a class trip but not for decisions about the curriculum) as well as between different contexts (i.e., consensus was the preferred method of decision-making in more egalitarian groups, such as peers, but in more hierarchical settings, such as school, more authority-driven decision-making was preferred). Over the course of development, children were much more capable in their management of the salient variables in multifaceted situations, resulting in increasingly more complex and nuanced judgments (Helwig, 2006).

Consistent with this perspective, Ruck and colleagues (e.g., Ruck et al., 2002; Ruck, Abramovitch, et al., 1998; Ruck, Keating, et al., 1998) reported that thinking and reasoning about rights in children aged eight to sixteen years from lower to upper middle class backgrounds differed according to the type of right under consideration (e.g., nurturance versus self-determination), as well as the specifics of the situation they were asked to judge (e.g., rights in conflicted versus straightforward situations, rights at home or school) (Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2008). Although children’s reasoning about self-determination
rights was roughly aligned with a global stage perspective - moving from an egocentric view of rights as ‘gifts’ granted by authorities, to one in which rights are based in fairness and the rule of law, and then finally, to the understanding of one’s innate entitlement, reasoning about nurturance rights did not progress from concrete to abstract conceptions, remaining generally stable across development (i.e., from 8 to 16 years of age). Even when considering only self-determination rights, young people did not consistently demonstrate an age-linked progression to abstract thinking about rights; instead, the degree of abstraction in their judgments varied according to whether they were considering rights in general or, more pragmatically, in terms of access to rights in their own lives (Ruck, Keating, et al., 1998).

In addition, when describing why a child should or should not be granted a certain right, the frequency with which specific categories of reasoning emerged was associated with the type of right in question (Ruck, Abramovitch et al., 1998). For example, when thinking about nurturance rights, the important considerations were the child’s age, level of knowledge, and parental duties. In contrast, reasoning about self-determination rights involved contemplation of issues such as rules, laws, implicit and explicit rights. The authors concluded that “children’s knowledge about nurturance rights is closely tied to their understanding of familial roles and relationships, whereas children’s knowledge about self-determination rights seems more closely associated with their developmental understanding of moral rules and growing knowledge of sociolegal institutions” (Ruck, Abramovitch, et al., 1998, p. 416). Similarly, in studies in which young people were asked to generate their own examples of rights issues, nurturance rights related to ‘basic needs’ were much more frequently tied to the home, while those involving civil liberties (e.g., privacy, religious
freedom) were most often connected to school or the larger community (Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2006; Peterson-Badali, et al., 2002; Peterson-Badali, Ruck, et al., 2004). In addition, restrictions on a child’s religious freedom were judged to be acceptable when made by the parents, but not when made by a school principal or government authority (Helwig, 1997). Results such as these highlight the numerous and varied considerations that can be part of an individual’s thinking about a given rights situation. Over the course of development, growing knowledge and understanding of the world may alter the way one weighs and balances the various factors involved in decision-making about rights.

Taken together, this research has highlighted the many complexities and layers that are part of children’s conceptualization of rights, confirming that

[T]he reasoning of individuals cannot be described in terms of a global or central tendency to emphasize one form of social reasoning over the other at different points in development. Rather, individuals give priority to different concerns depending on a variety of factors, such as the particular features of situations that are perceived to be salient and the way that different types of conflicting concerns are coordinated at different points in development.

(Helwig, 2006, p. 191)

**Maltreatment, Foster Care and Implications for Children’s Understanding of Rights**

The growing body of work examining children’s understanding of rights has shown that “children’s conceptions of rights reflect not only their developing social competencies but their experiences, including the general experience of living within a particular sociocultural environment, as well as more specific experiences associated with particular
life circumstances” (Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2008, p. 18). In large part, this research has involved “typically developing” children: those living at home and with their parents (Day et. al., 2006; Ruck et al., 2002). However, many children grow up in circumstances where biological parents no longer have primary responsibility for their care and upbringing. It is these children who are of concern in the current investigation.

It has been suggested that children who have been abused and removed from the care of their families, “may not evaluate events in the same manner as members of normative populations” (Mullins & Tisak, 2006, p. 312). Gaining an understanding of conceptualizations of rights in this population is particularly important for their well-being, as those we normally expect to protect and care for them are unavailable, and may actually have perpetrated fundamental rights violations. The following section will review research related to understanding of rights in children and youth who have been maltreated and placed in child welfare care. Factors associated with maltreatment and foster care that may influence rights understanding will also be explored.

Although we know that the social experiences and interactions of maltreated children have been far from typical and can imagine that violations of rights may be related to children’s understanding of rights, there has been little direct investigation of conceptions of rights in this group. Until recently, the most relevant of the available research focused on maltreated children’s conceptions of moral (e.g., hitting another child, refusing to share toys, name calling) and social-conventional transgressions (e.g., not listening to the teacher, leaving the classroom without permission) (Smetana, et al., 1984; Smetana, Toth, Cicchetti, Bruce, & Kane-Daddis et al., 1999). In two studies, Smetana and colleagues (1984, 1999) compared judgments of such transgressions in abused, neglected and non-maltreated pre-
schoolers, identifying differences in moral reasoning depending on a child’s maltreatment experience. For example, while all children judged moral transgressions to be wrong, those who had been physically abused considered physical or psychological harm to be more universally wrong than did neglected children, who judged unfair distribution of resources to be the more serious moral transgression (Smetana, et al., 1984). Responses of abused and neglected children were often different from each other, as well as from children who had not been maltreated. Given that rights stem from moral considerations, such findings suggest that thinking and attitudes toward rights may be shaped by specific aspects of children’s maltreatment experiences. For example, the right to proper food and clothing may be more salient for a child who has been neglected than for one who has been physically abused, whereas the right to feel protected and safe may hold a more prominent place for children who have suffered physical or sexual abuse.

Research by Mueller and Silverman (1989) has indicated that early experiences involving exploitation and violation of trust may have an impact on children’s ability to effectively interpret situations dealing with equality and trust—important components in the development of the concept of rights. Consistent with this notion, Mullins and Tisak (2006) found that when asked to make judgments about moral, conventional and personal rule violations, youth in foster care evaluated and judged events somewhat differently than those in more typical populations. These results suggest that the experience of rights violations may make it difficult for maltreated children to appropriately interpret rights situations, and to trust and be confident that they have rights and can access them, thereby essentially depriving them of their rights. In contrast, denial or violation of rights may contribute to a unique sensitivity to specific issues and abuses, as well as a heightened need to ensure their
fulfillment (Mullins & Tisak, 2006; Smetana et al., 1984; Smetana, et al., 1999; Thomas & O’Kane, 1999). Thus, the rights understanding that develops in children who have been maltreated and are in the care of the state may be characterized by deprivation, whereby understanding of rights appears to be inhibited or limited as a result of difficulties appropriately accessing or interpreting their rights; or alternatively, by a unique perspective on rights, in which particular experiences define their understanding in a manner that is different from children who have not experienced maltreatment or child welfare involvement.

**Maltreatment and Foster Care: Correlates and Sequelae**

The literature that describes the correlates and sequelae of child maltreatment provides numerous examples of consequences that may have a limiting impact on development, including the conceptualization of rights. While physical and sexual maltreatment are sometimes linked with externalizing and internalizing behavioural difficulties, respectively, physical neglect is thought to have the most devastating impact on cognitive functioning (Erickson, Egeland, & Pianta, 1989; Polonko, 2006; Marquis, Leschied, Chiodo & O’Neill, 2008; Ryan, Kilmer, Cauce, Watanabe, & Hoyt, 2000). Just as most children in care have experienced more than one type of maltreatment, the consequences of maltreatment overlap and are generally not associated with only one type of abuse, nor are they exclusive to the experience of maltreatment. Some of the most typically reported outcomes of child maltreatment are as follows: academic delay/school failure (Gilbert, Spatz Widom, Browne, Fergusson, Webb & Janson, 2009; I. Elman, personal communication, April 30, 2013; Katz, 1992; Oates, 1989; Stone, 2007), poor self-esteem (Cicchetti, Beeghly, Carlson, & Toth, 1990; Kendall-Tackett, Williams, &
Finkelhor, 1993), attachment and mental health disorders (Carlson, Cicchetti, Barnett & Braunwald, 1989; Steinhauer, 1996), dysfunctional peer relations (Fantuzzo, del Gaudio Weiss, Atkins, Meyers, & Noone, 1998; Mueller & Silverman, 1989) and behavioural problems (Kendall-Tackett et al., 1993; Maughan & Cicchetti, 2002). Social and economic disadvantage are also often characteristic of children in care (Fantuzzo et al., 1998; Oates, 1989) and have been shown to be associated with the development of rights understanding (Melton, 1980; Nucci et al., 1989; Tapp & Levine, 1974). In addition, school absence and school changes are common outcomes of child maltreatment and may contribute to gaps in learning or academic delays that interfere with the acquisition of new concepts (Cook, 1997; Gilbert, et al., 2009; Katz, 1992; Maughan & Cicchetti, 2002; Spatz Widom, 1994; Stone, 2007).

As correlates of maltreatment are frequently confounded with those of living in some form of state care, it is important to examine the characteristics and outcomes associated with out-of-family care, in addition to those of maltreatment (Clausen, Landsverk, Ganger, Chadwick, & Litrownik, 1998; Eagle, 1994; Stone, 2007). Research on the experience of long term care presents a mixed picture, and while a number of studies have reported that children in foster care may be more independent than others (Rest & Watson, 1984; Triseliotis, 1984), most report outcomes similar to those found when investigating maltreatment alone (Colton, 1989; Cook, 1997; Eagle, 1994; Gil & Bogart, 1982; Meier, 1965; Ruff-Johnson, Yoken, & Voss, 1995; Wilson & Conroy, 1999). Research suggests that variables such as the type of care in which a child is placed (e.g. family foster home, group home), the number of changes in care placement and the length of time a child ultimately spends in care, may be associated with overall adjustment and
health (Rest & Watson, 1984; Ruff-Johnson, et al., 1995; Spatz Widom, 1994: Triseliotis, 1984; Wilson & Conroy, 1999). For example, several studies have indicated that children placed in group care settings, rather a family-type foster home, were more likely to exhibit significant externalizing behavioural problems and to have attachment disorders (Curtis, Alexander, & Lunghofer, 2001; Ryan, Marshall, Herz & Hernandez, 2008; Strijker, Knorth, &Knot-Dickscheit, 2008). Similar difficulties have been reported in children who experience the instability of numerous changes in foster care placement, who, in contrast to those with stable situations, also lose established relationships, and must adapt to new caregivers, physical surroundings and often a new school (Ryan, Marshall, Herz & Hernandez, 2008; Strijker, Knorth, & Knot-Dickscheit, 2008). In addition, and not surprisingly, educational, behavioural and emotional challenges often increase as time spent in child welfare care grows (Strijker, Knorth, & Knot-Dickscheit, 2008).

Further, research on decision-making found that for some young people, the experiences associated with foster care (e.g., changes in placement, large number of adults involved in their care and decision-making) eroded confidence, compromising their ability to participate effectively in the decision-making process; for others, such experiences resulted in decision-making that reflected greater autonomy and assumption of responsibility for their own lives (Thomas & O’Kane, 1999). Based on experiences that youth described, Thomas and O’Kane (1999) identified three styles of decision-making:

[T]he damaged position says that children have often had experiences which have traumatized them emotionally, made it harder for them to trust people, or damaged their confidence in themselves, and the impact of this on their ability to take part in decision-making is largely negative. The resilient
position suggests that children may have learned from their adverse experiences, grown up more quickly as a result of having had to face change or loss or to take more responsibility for themselves, become ‘streetwise’, and therefore be more able to take part in decisions. The special position argues that children in the care system have a particular need for inclusion, power and autonomy, because they are relatively alone in the world and will need to stand up for themselves more (Thomas & O’Kane, 1999, p. 385).

One can see how a “damaged” decision-making style may disadvantage these children in advocating for and accessing their rights, not only depriving them of rights but of opportunities to advance their understanding; while the streetwise, fend-for-yourself stances that contribute to the “resilient” and “special” styles of decision-making, that embody a more seasoned and preservationist view, may lead to a somewhat characteristic or unique perspective on rights.

In addition, and perhaps contributing to a somewhat idiosyncratic view of rights, children under the care of the state in Ontario, Canada (which was the setting for the current study) participate in regular and explicit discussions of their rights and responsibilities. Child welfare workers are required to engage in such discussions with all children within 48 hours of their entering care, and every six months thereafter. Each child receives a handout outlining their “rights and responsibilities” upon entering care and this serves as a guide for these discussions. Each time a child’s placement changes, rights and responsibilities are reviewed in preparation for placement in a new foster home (H. Clarke, personal communication, May 20, 2008). The exact nature and extent of the discussions varies according to the individual child welfare worker. As there is no standard protocol,
discussions generally entail a short review of the nature of rights and responsibilities (R. Ferguson, personal communication, March 6, 2013; C. Raposo, personal communication, April 3, 2013). Children are often asked to provide examples of each and the worker will fill in the gaps and/or correct misinformation. If a child indicates that his or her rights are not being met, discussion of steps to empower the child to access his or her rights ensues. Children are also made aware of the possibility of contacting The Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth (OPACY) when necessary (T. Hogan, personal communication, May 8, 2008).

The process for rights discussions in group homes is somewhat different. An initial discussion takes place as described above and at the group home there is a review of rights and responsibilities specific to the home. After the review, the youth signs a document acknowledging the discussion. Rules and responsibilities specific to each home, as well as information regarding how to contact the office of the Children’s Advocate, are often posted in a prominent location. Additional rights reviews are also conducted at the time of the annual licensing renewal of the group home (H. Clarke, personal communication, May 20, 2008).

In summary, and consistent with the ‘deprivation’ perspective advanced earlier, it may be that general deficits associated with maltreatment (e.g., trauma, loss, foster care, school failure, low self-esteem) deprive children of capacities and/or opportunities for accessing and negotiating their rights, leading to delays in the development of rights understanding. In contrast, and at the same time, exposure to other experiences (e.g. regular rights discussions, numerous decision-making opportunities, earlier independence) that characterize child welfare care may contribute to a somewhat ‘unique’ perspective on rights
that may be different, but no less rich or nuanced than that of typically developing children (Costa, 2007).

**Rights Understanding in Maltreated Youth in Care**

In the only other available investigation of rights understanding in maltreated children in state care, Costa’s (2007) exploration of participation rights in the child welfare system included assessment of knowledge and attitudes toward rights in 101 11-19 year olds. Almost half of the children in the sample (42%) defined a right using the most accurate category of ‘entitlement’, approximately twice that found in (non-maltreated) youth in previous studies (see Ruck & Peterson-Badali, 2006; Taylor, et al., 2001). However, 21% of this group believed that rights were *absolute* entitlements, without condition; and another 21% of the sample thought of rights as privileges, granted or taken away by those in authority. Similar to Ruck, Keating et al. (1998), Costa (2007) found no age differences in maltreated children’s ability to define a right, and although more older children mentioned the importance of specific civil liberties (e.g., privacy and free speech), endorsement of nurturance and self-determination issues was comparable across the age groups, a finding consistent with Ruck et al. (2002). It was suggested that for maltreated youth, the lack of age differences in conceptions of rights may reflect their shared experiences of rights violations and structured decision-making, as well as their participation in regular rights discussions while in care.

Consistent with previous research with non-maltreated children (see Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2006; Ruck, Keating, et al., 1998), Costa (2007) found that approximately half of
the young people in care\textsuperscript{4} believed rights were revocable. When asked why rights could be removed, more than three quarters of the participants believed they could lose their rights as a result of wrongdoing or punishment, considerably more than non-care children from previous research (Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2006; Ruck, Keating, et al., 1998). It was suggested that this belief may make maltreated children less likely to advocate for their rights, essentially depriving them of their rights and increasing their vulnerability to rights violations (Costa, 2007). It may also be that the issue of revocability of rights is a particularly confusing idea for young people, as the adolescent years are full of instances in which rights such as privacy, education and free speech are curtailed – evidence for the revocability of rights – as young people learn that entitlement is not absolute, but is bounded by the rights of others (Ruck, Keating et al., 1998).

Maltreated children in care are in a doubly vulnerable position, as they are in need of protection and those we normally assume will protect and provide for them are dangerous, at worst, and unavailable at best. To a certain extent, children in state care must fend for themselves. They must learn the rules and expectations of a new home, sometimes with explicit guidance and sometimes without. If they continue to have contact with their biological family, they must deal with the expectations of two sets of parents, in addition to those of their social worker. In their study of participation in decision-making by children in state care, Thomas and O’Kane (1999) noted that, at times, as many as eight adults took part in planning and decision-making for one child. Changes in placement make it difficult to gain a consistent understanding of moral guidelines, social conventions, and personal issues and everyday decisions (e.g., where to play, who to play with) become as significant as

\textsuperscript{4} The phrase ‘in care’ is used to refer to in child welfare care. Also, ‘in care’ and maltreated may be used interchangeably.
long-term decisions regarding where they live or contact with their family (Mullins & Tisak, 2006).
CHAPTER 2
THE PRESENT STUDY

Study Aims

Given the experiences of rights violations, as well as their ongoing vulnerability, conceptions of rights in maltreated children likely have more direct implications for their well-being, when compared to those outside of the child welfare system. Children in care often reside outside of a traditional biological family where there is an earlier and increased onus on them to advocate for their own nurturance and self-determination rights. While the work of Costa (2007) provides us with a brief and initial glimpse at rights understanding in this population of children and youth, the focus of her study was to explore knowledge and attitudes toward participation (self-determination) rights, as well as to gain understanding of the experience of youth participation for both children in care and child protection workers.

The current research will extend this work to include both nurturance (provision and protection) and self-determination rights. It will also explore conceptions of rights more fully by extending the traditional method of assessment to include data from both examiner and participant generated rights questions. Given the paucity of research in this area, my first goal was simply to describe how these youth define and view the rights of children and to identify patterns that might be further investigated. The second aim of the study was to examine whether there are age differences in children’s rights conceptions and attitudes and to compare the findings with previous research on typically developing children. Finally, I examined whether specific factors related to the experience of maltreatment (e.g. type of maltreatment, type of foster care, time in care, and number of
care placements) were associated with understanding of nurturance and self-determination rights.

This research allows for continued exploration of the factors that contribute to the development of children’s conceptions and attitudes regarding their rights, extending the current body of knowledge in this area. However, of equal importance are the practical implications of this research. For example, given that maltreated children may be more vulnerable to rights violations than other children, it is critical to gain an understanding of how they think about rights in order to assist them in appropriately accessing and asserting their rights in a protective manner. If they understand that rights belong to them, that they are not gifts granted at the whims of authority, maltreated children may be more able to recognize and react to violations or threats of violation to their rights and to better advocate for all of their rights. If children’s understanding of rights is associated with the experience of rights violations and/or long term child welfare care, this must be taken into account during regular rights discussions and when planning for their care. As maltreated children are often required to advocate for their own best interests and independently defend their rights, knowledge of their understanding, as well as possible influences on this, are of particular importance.

Measuring Children’s Thinking about Rights

Research by Helwig (1995, 1997) has shown that the way in which understanding of rights is measured partially determines the level of understanding a participant reveals. Examination of both conceptions and attitudes provides a rich picture of how children perceive and understand children’s rights issues. Conceptions of rights include how children define a right as well as their ideas about what rights children have. Thus,
conceptions reflect children’s general knowledge about rights and their sense of the parameters of this construct, and in the current study were measured in two ways. In previous research (e.g., Melton, 1980; Ruck, Keating, et al., 1998) conceptions of rights have been elicited by asking open-ended, declarative knowledge questions such as “what is a right?”, “what rights do kids have?” and “can rights be taken away?” More recently (e.g., Peterson-Badali, Ruck, et al., 2004), children’s conceptions have been explored by asking them to generate their own examples or vignettes of a situation involving a children’s rights issue. The current study measured conceptions of rights using both declarative knowledge questions and self-generated examples.

In contrast, attitudes toward rights reflect children’s views and opinions about specific examples of potential nurturance and self-determination rights. In recent research (e.g., Day et al., 2006; Peterson-Badali, Morine, et al., 2004) children’s attitudes have been measured using the Children’s Rights Attitude questionnaire (CRA), a 40-item questionnaire with a 6-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” Questions tap potential children’s rights in a variety of scenarios related to home, school and the community, with a 12-year-old child as the attitudinal referent.

Measuring maltreated children’s thinking about rights in this multifaceted way allows for a rich examination of the ways in which these children’s experiences relate to their thinking about rights issues. It also provides a possible means of reconciling the apparent contradiction, outlined above, between the “deprivation” versus “unique perspectives” positions on the association between maltreatment and children’s thinking about rights. This issue is discussed in more detail in the context of the research questions and hypotheses outlined below.
Research Question #1:

What are maltreated children’s and adolescents’ conceptions of and attitudes toward children’s nurturance and self-determination rights?

This research question will be examined using basic descriptive analyses (e.g., frequencies, cross-tabs) and univariate parametric and non-parametric tests (e.g., t tests and chi-square analyses). As research examining conceptions of rights in maltreated children and youth is almost non-existent, the purpose of these analyses will be to provide basic descriptive information regarding conceptions and attitudes toward nurturance and self-determination rights in maltreated children.

Conceptions

While analyses of conceptions of rights measured using open-ended, declarative knowledge questions will be largely exploratory, findings from recent rights research involving maltreated children were somewhat striking in relation to earlier results, and warrant mention here. In contrast to previous research that found children’s definitions of rights commonly involved reference to something one has or can do (Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2006; Ruck, Keating, et al., 1998; Taylor, et al., 2001), Costa (2007) found that maltreated children most frequently defined rights as a form of entitlement. In addition, while non-maltreated children have been most likely to talk about rights related to decision-making and civil liberties, basic needs were the most salient rights issues for maltreated children (Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2006; Ruck, Keating, et al., 1998; Taylor, et al., 2001). Although no specific predictions were made, the current study will further investigate the distinct and somewhat dramatic findings from Costa (2007), as well as
extending our knowledge regarding conceptions of rights in maltreated children and youth who reside in child welfare care.

Alternatively, when conceptions of rights are measured by asking children to generate their own situations involving a children’s rights issues, rather than by answering specific knowledge questions, several studies have shown that the types of rights that are most salient for children are somewhat dependent on the setting (i.e., home, school, community) in which they occur (Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2002; Peterson-Badali, Ruck, et al., 2004), a finding that is also expected in the current study. For example, rights issues related to abuse and safety have been most frequently mentioned in relation to the home, while those related to civil liberties were mentioned more often in the context of the larger community. In addition, while previous research has shown that non-maltreated children generated self-determination rights equally, or more often than, nurturance rights issues across various settings, it is expected that experiences of fundamental rights violations may result in a greater salience of nurturance rights issues for these children regardless of the setting for the self-generated rights situation.

**Attitudes**

Previous research measuring attitudes toward rights with the CRA have consistently found more positive attitudes toward nurturance than self-determination rights (Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2002; Peterson-Badali, et al., 2003; Peterson-Badali, Ruck, et al., 2004). Similar results are expected in the current population.
Research Question #2:

Are there age differences in maltreated children’s conceptions of and attitudes toward children’s nurturance and self-determination rights?

Conceptions

As previously discussed in the review of the literature, the consequences of maltreatment and out of home care may impact learning and the acquisition of knowledge, interrupting understanding of concepts such as rights, a notion supported by the finding that understanding of rights in younger children from disadvantaged backgrounds lagged slightly behind that of their more privileged peers (Melton, 1982). However, recall that Costa (2007) reported no significant age differences in conceptions of rights across a group of 11 to 19 year old maltreated children in care and, in addition, found that the majority of these children defined rights in more accurate terms than non-maltreated children in previous studies. Given these contradictory results and the paucity of research on rights understanding in this population, no specific predictions were made regarding age differences in maltreated young people’s definitions of rights.

When rights conceptions are measured by asking children to generate and talk about situations involving children’s rights, rather than by asking knowledge questions, my predictions were dependent on the type of right involved. For example, due to experiences with violations of basic protections rights, in addition to evidence regarding the salience of nurturance rights such as basic needs, education and abuse and safety (see above; Costa, 2007), it is expected that participants will generate nurturance situations with equal or greater frequency than those involving self-determination rights regardless of age.
Attitudes

Age trends in attitudes toward nurturance and self-determination rights

Previous research has often shown that throughout childhood and adolescence support for nurturance rights tends to be high and generally consistent, a finding that is expected in the current study. Results regarding endorsement of self-determination rights have been more varied (Day et al., 2006; Peterson-Badali, Morine et al., 2004; Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2006; Ruck et al., 2002), with support for self-determination rights generally lower than for nurturance, often increasing in a linear fashion over the course of development, although occasionally remaining consistent or significantly higher in mid-adolescence, when the age of the target child was similar to that of the participant (Day et al., 2006; Ruck et al., 2002). Despite the variability in previous findings regarding endorsement of self-determination rights, due to their early separation from family and greater need to advocate for themselves, it is expected that maltreated children’s attitudes toward these rights will also be consistent across the age groups.

Comparison of endorsement of nurturance and self-determination

Previous research has shown that support for nurturance rights is significantly greater than for self-determination rights in pre- and early adolescence and that this balance shifts during mid-adolescence, with support for self-determination rights increasing to become more similar to that for nurturance rights (Peterson-Badali, Morine et al., 2004; Ruck et al., 2002). In the present study, given their experiences of rights violations and lack of basic rights, nurturance issues may take on an increased salience for maltreated children and youth, resulting in significantly greater support for nurturance
rights than self-determination rights at each age level, without the previously noted shift toward self-determination for older children and those similar in age to the target child.

In summary, whether maltreated children’s conceptions of rights are similar to, or more limited than, those shown in previous research with typically developing populations, or, whether their knowledge of rights is seen, not as inhibited by, but as emerging from their experience of maltreatment and care, likely partially depends on how their thinking about rights is assessed, i.e., whether they respond to examiner-generated knowledge questions or generate their own rights issues or, whether knowledge or attitudes about rights is/are being measured. The “unique perspective” approach suggests that the particular characteristics of children’s experiences of maltreatment and out-of-home care are likely to be reflected in their conceptions and attitudes with respect to children’s rights. The following research question addresses this issue.

Research Question #3:

Are factors related to the maltreatment and care experience associated with children’s conceptions of and attitudes toward nurturance and self-determination rights?

Type of Maltreatment

Previous research by Smetana and her colleagues (1984, 1999) on moral understanding in maltreated and other children suggested that these children have a heightened awareness of moral violations in areas corresponding to their specific experiences. As rights stem from moral considerations (Smetana, 2006), it is possible that the type of maltreatment experienced will be reflected in some aspects of children’s understanding and attitudes about rights. In the current study, it is expected that maltreated children and youth will give examples of rights related to the type of
maltreatment they experienced. For example, children who have been neglected may more frequently mention basic rights such as the right to food, clothing and shelter than children who have been physically or sexually abused. Children who have been physically abused may be more likely to focus on rights representing issues of abuse and safety, while those who have been sexually abused may focus more on those related to dignity and respect or privacy and free speech than the other two groups (Smetana, et al., 1984).

Type of Foster Care

For children in the permanent care of the state, the foster care that they receive replaces the traditional family in which most children reside and from whom they learn about rights (Day et al., 2006). Maltreated children are most often placed in either a family-type foster home or a group home. As the home and family experience in these two settings is very different, the understanding of rights that develops may also be very different and the salience of particular rights may vary. Children living in a family foster home may have a more “typical” experience of rights than children in a more institutional setting (i.e., a group home), where early independence is fostered and the onus to advocate for one’s rights tends to be the responsibility of the child rather than the caregiver (Rest & Watson, 1984). As a result, when asked what rights children have, it is expected that children residing in group homes will give examples of self-determination rights more often than those residing in foster care settings. Conversely, it is expected that children in foster care will more frequently give examples of nurturance rights than those in group homes. In terms of rights attitudes, it is also expected that children and youth living in group homes will show greater endorsement of self-determination rights.
than those living in foster care. No difference in endorsement of nurturance rights is expected based on the type of care in which a child resides, with both groups showing strong endorsement of nurturance rights.

*Changes in Placement*

Children who have experienced many interruptions in placement, with the attendant changes in school and re-adjustment period may bring a unique perspective to understanding of rights relative to children who have maintained a long-term stable placement. Consistent with the “deprivation” perspective, due to the interruptions in care and schooling experienced by children who have had many placements, it is predicted that understanding of rights for these children will lag behind those who have had very few changes in their foster care placement. In addition, it is expected that children and youth who have had many changes in placement will view their rights as revocable more often than children who have had stability in their foster care situation. In contrast, due to the stability in their care situation, it is expected that children who have had very few changes in placement will generate a greater number of rights and will more frequently give examples of nurturance rights than those who have had many changes. Similarly, when examining rights attitudes, it is expected that children and youth with few placements will show greater endorsement of nurturance rights than those with many placements. No difference in endorsement of self-determination rights based on number of changes in placement is expected.

*Length of Time in Care*

Several issues related to the length of time a young person has been in care may be relevant for children’s understanding of rights. For example, children in care for
longer periods of time are likely older, with greater ability to understand the concept than younger children (Melton, 1980). In addition, with more time removed from experiences of maltreatment, they may have different sensitivities than those who have been in care for shorter periods. In addition, as children in care engage in regular discussions of rights, those in care for longer periods will have had more opportunities to discuss and learn about rights issues. Although the impact of these discussions is not currently known, they may have the effect of highlighting or emphasizing particular rights and/or increasing general knowledge about rights. Thus, controlling for the effect of age, it is predicted that children who have been in care for longer periods will be more accurate and precise when describing their rights (e.g., they will more frequently refer to rights as entitlements). It is also predicted that, compared to those who have been in care for a short time, and controlling for the effect of age, children who have spent a longer time in foster care will be able to identify rights more readily (e.g., they will generate a greater number of rights when asked what rights children have). In addition, children in care are provided with booklets describing their rights and responsibilities (Catholic Children’s Aid Society, 1998a; 1998b). In the booklet for “youth in care” it specifically states that no one can take away your rights (Catholic Children’s Aid Society, 1998a). Therefore, when age is controlled, it is predicted that the longer children have been in foster care, the more likely they will be to say that their rights are irrevocable.
CHAPTER 3

METHOD

Participants

One hundred maltreated children and youth, 48 males and 52 females, completed semi-structured, individual interviews. Participants were divided into three age groups: pre/early adolescents were 10 to 14 years of age \((M = 12.77, SD = 1.37)\), mid adolescents were 15 and 16 years old \((M = 16.10, SD = .59)\), and late adolescents were 17 and 18 years of age \((M = 17.82, SD = .60)\).\(^9\) Participants were recruited from two child welfare agencies,\(^10\) a group home organization for female youth in care and a resource centre for adolescents in care and were primarily from middle to lower-middle class backgrounds. Only those who were Crown Wards (i.e., permanent wards of the province for whom the child welfare agency assumes the rights and responsibilities of the parent) were recruited for this study. Other inclusion criteria were that the child\(^11\) was between 10 and 18 years of age, had been physically, sexually or emotionally abused or neglected, did not show evidence of major mental illness or cognitive impairment, and was able to participate in a verbal interview\(^12\). In terms of abuse history, most children had experienced multiple forms of maltreatment, with 50% having been physically abused, 22% sexually abused and 42% were emotionally abused. Almost three quarters of the children had been

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\(^9\) Due to difficulties recruiting younger participants, it was necessary to have one age group, spanning four years and containing pre- and early- adolescents instead of 2 groups each covering a span of two years.

\(^10\) There were 76 (76%) participants from the Children’s Aid Society of Toronto and 24% were from the Toronto Catholic Children’s Aid Society.

\(^11\) Generally, the terms child and children were used in reference to all participants, regardless of age.

\(^12\) Due to difficulties recruiting study participants, the original criteria were revised to include children from the age of 10 years and the requirement that children be 6 years of age or more when entering care was dropped.
neglected.\textsuperscript{13} There were roughly equal proportions of Black and White participants (44% and 37%, respectively), with the remaining 19% coming from a variety of other racial/ethnic backgrounds (e.g., Asian, South East Asian, Native Canadian, Hispanic, Middle Eastern). The majority of the participants lived in foster care (60%) and more than a quarter lived in group homes. Children in foster care generally lived in a family-type environment with one or two biologically unrelated foster parents and siblings. Children living in group homes typically shared a dwelling with a number of same sex age-mates, who were supervised by rotating shifts of Child and Youth Workers. A small number of children were fostered by biological relatives (5%) and several of the older youth lived independently (7%), most frequently sharing an apartment or house with one or more roommates. The length of time children had been in care ranged from 6 months to 14 years and 6 months, with a median of 5 years 6 months. For the purpose of data analysis, this variable was divided into four groups, with 21% of children having spent less than three years in care, 30% had been in care for three but less than six years, 26% six but less than nine years and 23% had been in care for nine years or more. The number of placements children had experienced ranged from one to 23, with 51% of participants changing placement three times or less. Sociodemographic, maltreatment and care information is presented in Table 1.

\textsuperscript{13} For data analyses, children who had experienced some form of abuse, but not neglect were grouped together; those who had experienced neglect, but not abuse, formed a second maltreatment group. The third maltreatment group had experienced some form of abuse as well as neglect (see Table 1).
### Table 1

**Sociodemographic Characteristics and Abuse/Care History**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic</th>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>( N )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Early Adolescent</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mid-Adolescent</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Late-Adolescent</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Placement(^{14})</td>
<td>Foster</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family Member</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maltreatment History</td>
<td>Physical Abuse</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sexual Abuse</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emotional Abuse</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neglect</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abuse Only</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neglect Only</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abuse and Neglect</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time in Care</td>
<td>Less than 3 years</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 years to 5 years, 11 months</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 years to 8 years, 11 months</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9 years or more</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Changes in Placement</td>
<td>One to 3 changes</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 or more changes</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{14}\) Over the duration of their time in care, children may have experienced multiple types of placements (e.g., foster care and group home, most often moving on to independent living after 18 years of age). Coding into one placement category was based on the predominant type of residence a child had lived in while in care.
Recruitment and Interview Procedures

In each of the child welfare agencies, the social workers were provided with a detailed description of the study, including a list of the criteria to use in reviewing their caseloads for possible participants (see Appendix A). When a case met the inclusion criteria, written consent (see Appendix B) and contact information was forwarded to the researcher, who then made contact with the foster parents, group home staff or the youth himself/herself to set an interview time. All participants from the adolescent resource centre and the group home organization were Crown Wards under the guardianship of one of the two previously mentioned child welfare agencies. At these sites, after administrative approval was obtained, the inclusion criteria and interview details were discussed with program leaders, who then described the research to possible participants and gained their initial consent. The researcher then set a time to meet with each potential participant and to gain each individual’s consent to participate.

Procedures were in accordance with ethical standards. The researcher conducted the majority of the interviews, with assistance from two graduate and one undergraduate research assistants. All interviews were conducted in the following manner: letters detailing the purpose and procedure of the study were reviewed with children and given to their foster parent or caregiver, where applicable (see Appendices C and D); written consent was obtained from the participant when he/she was aged 16 years or older (see Appendix E); verbal assent (in addition to the written consent already given by the child’s guardian) was obtained from children less than 16 years of age (see Appendix F).
The semi-structured interview consisted of four parts and was conducted in the following order:

Part 1  Self-Generated Rights Questions (see Appendix G)

Part 2  Rights Knowledge Questions (see Appendix H)

Part 3  Children’s Rights Attitudes Questionnaire (CRA) (see Appendix I)

Part 4  Participant’s Background Information (see Appendix J).

In order to address the possibility of difficulties with reading or understanding when completing the CRA questionnaire, participants were asked to read aloud and complete the first three questions together with the researcher. If the participant struggled when reading these items, the remaining questions on the CRA were read aloud by the researcher (this was a rare occurrence). For all participants, questions about specific interview items were taken as they arose. The entire interview took approximately 50 minutes and was conducted in a private space, removed from distractions. Participants were given a cash compensation following completion of the interview15.

Measures and Coding

I. Conceptions of Rights

A. Self-Generated

In the first part of the Rights interview, participants described a situation involving a children’s rights issue for three different settings: home, school and society (see Appendix G). These questions assessed children's understanding of rights and their ability to apply this understanding across various situations or contexts. In the first

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15 The initial cash compensation for participants was $5. As time went on and recruiting progressed slowly, this amount was raised to $10 and then $15.
question, the setting was not specified. Participants were asked to describe a situation involving a children’s rights issue and then to name the right involved. The setting of the right described in the first question determined the context for the following questions. For example, if the child’s response described an issue related to school, then the next two questions specified that the rights issues be related to home and society (e.g., “Describe a situation involving a children’s rights issue that typically happens in the home or involves parents”). If, in the first question, it was not possible to identify the setting as home, school or society, the response was not scored and the participant was asked to describe a situation involving a children’s rights issue for each of the three settings. When children’s responses seemed unclear or incomplete, probes such as “tell me more about it,” “explain what you mean?” or “why would you say that?” were given. Responses were coded broadly according to the general type of right described (i.e., nurturance or self-determination) and then, more specifically, according to a previously established content-based coding scheme consistent with the rights identified in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Peterson-Badali, et al., 2002). For example, a situation describing an example of child abuse would be coded broadly as a nurturance rights issue and, more specifically, into the category of “abuse and safety”; a situation involving religious freedom would be broadly coded as a self-determination issue and, specifically, as a right to “religious civil liberties”; a situation describing the need for food, clothing or shelter would be broadly coded as a nurturance right and then as a right to have “basic needs” fulfilled; a situation involving the right to have access to one’s social worker or family members was broadly coded as a self-determination issue
and, more specifically, as a “care specific” right (as children not in the care of the CAS do not mention these as rights issues) (see Appendix K).

B. Rights Knowledge

Four of eight questions used by Melton (1980) were selected to obtain a measure of children’s knowledge and understanding of rights (e.g., What is a right? What rights do children have? see Appendix H). These questions were open-ended and coded using a content-based scheme tailored to each question (see Appendix L). When children’s responses seemed unclear or incomplete, probes such as “tell me more about it,” "explain what you mean?" or "why would you say that?" were given.

C. Interrater reliability

A random selection of 31% of the coded data for the self-generated and the rights knowledge questions (sections A and B above) was scored by an independent rater. The interrater reliability, computed using Cohen’s Kappa to assess the proportion of agreement, was satisfactory for all questions (see Table 2).

II. Attitudes toward Rights

A. Children’s Rights Attitudes (CRA) Questionnaire

The CRA questionnaire (Peterson-Badali, et al., 2003) was adapted from the Children’s Rights Attitude Scale developed by Rogers and Wrightsman (1978). The CRA questionnaire is a 40-item questionnaire that measures endorsement of 22 self-determination and 18 nurturance rights in the context of home, school and society. Participants choose a response along a 6-point Likert scale, i.e., from strongly disagree to strongly agree (see Appendix I). The questionnaire includes both prototypical and
multifaceted statements. Prototypical items consist of general statements dealing with various children’s rights issues that are devoid of context or qualification (e.g., children should have the right to quality education), while multifaceted items embed the right in a context, often pitting a child’s right against parental, school or societal practices (e.g., children should have the right to express ideas or opinions in school newspapers, even if many teachers may not agree with them). Research has shown that use of only multifaceted, or conflicted, situations may underestimate children’s understanding of rights issues (Helwig & Turiel, 2002). In addition, given that ceiling effects are common when using attitudinal measures, particularly with respect to nurturance rights (Rogers & Wrightsman, 1978), multifaceted statements were included to increase the variability of responses and to minimize participants responding at the ceiling. In order to ensure that

Table 2

* Interrater Reliability for Self-Generated (SG) and Rights Knowledge (RK) Questions *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Range of Cohen’s Kappa</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SG Rights</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Home</td>
<td>.93 – 1.00</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– School</td>
<td>.84 – 1.00</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Community</td>
<td>.93 – 1.00</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RK1: What is a right?</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RK2: What rights do kids have?</td>
<td>.81 – 1.00</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RK3: Why should kids have rights?</td>
<td>.86 – 1.00</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RK4: Can anyone take away your rights?</td>
<td>.93 – 1.00</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Who?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Why?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Why Not?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
participants would be evaluating the rights of children the same age, all of them were instructed to think of a child the age of 12 when responding to the statements. The significance of using a 12 year old was related to the fact that this age marks the transition into adolescence, when rights issues tend to become more salient for children and balancing needs for nurturance and self-determination becomes more challenging.

III. Demographic Questionnaire

A demographic questionnaire, designed for the purposes of this research, was used to provide background information about participants (see Appendix J). Participants were asked the first nine questions directly (e.g., What is your age? What is your date of birth? Who lives with you?). Specific information regarding abuse and placement experiences of participants (the last six questions) was obtained from their files at the child welfare agencies and not asked of the participant directly (e.g., At what age did this child first come into care? At what age did this child become a crown ward? What type of abuse did this child suffer? What was the severity of the abuse?).
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

As previously indicated, the purpose of the current study was threefold: (1) to generally survey maltreated children’s and adolescents’ conceptions of and attitudes toward children’s nurturance and self-determination rights, (2) to examine age differences in conceptions and attitudes toward these rights, and (3) to assess whether or not there is an association between the maltreatment and care experience and conceptions of and attitudes toward children’s nurturance and self-determination rights. Results will be presented as follows: self-generated conceptions of rights, conceptions in response to rights knowledge questions, and attitudes toward rights based on responses to the CRA questionnaire. For each research question, results related to specific predictions will be presented first, followed by other findings of note.

Research Question 1: Conceptions and Attitudes toward Nurturance and Self-Determination Rights

The analyses for this dissertation were conducted using SPSS 14. Prior to analysis, all data was examined for accuracy of data entry and missing values. No cases were deleted. To investigate conceptions of and attitudes toward children’s nurturance and self-determination rights in maltreated children and youth, basic descriptive analyses (e.g., frequencies, crosstabs) and univariate parametric and non-parametric tests (e.g., t tests and chi-square analyses) were used. As the focus of this study was largely to explore conceptions of rights in maltreated young people, comparisons were conducted at the .05 level in order to limit type II errors (Helwig, 1995). Unless specifically mentioned, there were no differences between males and females.
Conceptions: Self-Generated Rights Questions

As earlier mentioned, participants were first asked to describe a situation involving a children’s rights issue (unspecified setting). The setting of the rights issue generated was recorded as home, school or community. Results revealed that the majority of participants initially described rights issues related to the home (67%). Another 20% gave situations involving larger community issues, while only 5% generated issues associated with school. Several respondents could not think of a children’s rights issue (2%) and a few more gave responses that were vague or without an identifiable setting (6%).

Participants describing rights in the home or school settings, most often gave responses involving nurturance rights (69% and 61%, respectively). Chi-square analyses revealed a significant difference from the expected proportion of nurturance to self-determination responses for home, $\chi^2 (1, 99) = 13.83, p < .01$, and school, $\chi^2 (1, 100) = 4.84, p < .05$. Responses for the community setting were almost evenly split between nurturance and self-determination (46% versus 54%, respectively) (see Figure 1).

When participants were asked to name the right involved in the situation that they had described, the frequency of the type of right mentioned varied according to the setting in which the right occurred (see Figure 2). For example, rights related to civil liberties$^{16}$, psychological needs$^{17}$, and decision making$^{18}$ were mentioned frequently and

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$^{16}$ The civil liberties category is a combination of six individual civil liberties: right to privacy, freedom of speech/thought, freedom of religion, freedom of association, freedom of expression/identity, freedom from discrimination/inequity.

$^{17}$ Psychological needs rights issues involve dignity and respect, responsiveness, advocacy, fair treatment, guidance.

$^{18}$ The Decision Making (DM) category is a combination of four decision-making categories: DM-general, DM-health, DM-discretionary time, DM-education.
Figure 1. Percentages for Nurturance and Self-determination rights described in the home, school, and community settings.

Figure 2. Percentages of specific type of rights mentioned according to setting.
consistently across all three settings, with civil liberties issues predominating for both the
school and community. Not surprisingly, educational rights issues were most frequently
mentioned within the school setting, while rights involving basic needs were most
common in the home. Issues specific to the care experience also arose most often in the
home setting and included concerns regarding access to specific people, e.g., being able
to contact the advocacy office, a social worker, parents or other family members (see
Table 3). Although maltreated children may be expected to have a heightened sensitivity
to rights issues related to abuse and safety, and these were regularly mentioned, other
rights issues appeared more salient across settings (e.g., civil liberties) or were more
specific to particular settings (e.g., education in the school setting, basic needs in the
home settings).

Conceptions: Rights Knowledge Questions

“What is a right?” – Definitions of a right were thematically coded based on the
content of participants’ responses. The most complex and accurate understanding of
rights was reflected in responses that included the notion that a right is an inherent, but
bounded, entitlement (e.g., “a right is something you are entitled to do by yourself and no
one can stop you, unless what you are doing offends or harms someone in some way”).
Such responses were coded as conditional entitlements (see Appendix L). Accurate, but
less precise descriptions, referring to the inherent or innate nature of rights without
further elaboration, were coded as entitlements (e.g., “something you are entitled to”).
Several categories included responses that reflected an incomplete or concrete
understanding of rights. The laws and rules category included responses that described
rights as laws, rules or guidelines (e.g., “they’re kind of like laws”), while responses
### Table 3

**Categories and Examples of Nurturance and Self-Determination Rights**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abuse/safety</td>
<td>• freedom from abuse&lt;br&gt;• right to a safe environment</td>
<td>• physical, sexual, verbal, emotional abuse&lt;br&gt;• bullying, threatening or intimidation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>• right to go to school and receive education appropriate to needs and abilities</td>
<td>• to be taught in a way one understands&lt;br&gt;• to be in school&lt;br&gt;• ask questions and get answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>• right to appropriate and timely health care</td>
<td>• immunizations&lt;br&gt;• dental care&lt;br&gt;• healthy environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure and Recreation</td>
<td>• right to have fun and play</td>
<td>• to get together with friends and socialize&lt;br&gt;• to not do homework or other work all the time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Labour</td>
<td>• underage children should not be forced to work or be underpaid</td>
<td>• sweatshops&lt;br&gt;• babysitting without compensation&lt;br&gt;• military service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Needs</td>
<td>• right to food, clothing, shelter, water</td>
<td>• appropriate place to sleep&lt;br&gt;• appropriate clothing for age, weather, etc.&lt;br&gt;• access to food and water/drink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Needs</td>
<td>• right to be treated with dignity and respect, to get help/support when needed</td>
<td>• fair treatment&lt;br&gt;• to have friends&lt;br&gt;• to love and be loved</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(table continues)*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Privacy</td>
<td>• right to personal property information</td>
<td>• to keep a diary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• to have personal space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• to speak privately on phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech/Thought</td>
<td>• right to voice one's opinion and be heard</td>
<td>• to vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• freedom of speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• disagree with adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>• right to practice religion freely</td>
<td>• to have a religion different than parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• to practice beliefs without persecution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association</td>
<td>• right to spend time with people one chooses</td>
<td>• to pick your own friends and not be limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression/Identity</td>
<td>• right to express self/identity</td>
<td>• to be vegetarian, vegan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• to colour hair or wear unique clothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination</td>
<td>• right to live free from discrimination</td>
<td>• to not be treated differently based on personal characteristics, e.g., size, sexuality, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making-general</td>
<td>• freedom to do what one wants</td>
<td>• to be independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• right to make own decisions</td>
<td>• to say no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making-health</td>
<td>• to make decisions about medical treatment</td>
<td>• to exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• to have an abortion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making-</td>
<td>• to make choices about how to spend free time</td>
<td>• to have a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>discretionary time</td>
<td></td>
<td>• to do extracurricular activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making-education</td>
<td>• right to make decisions about academic life</td>
<td>• to choose courses of own interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• to choose where to go to school</td>
<td>• to choose where to go to school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal/governmental/societal</td>
<td>• right to legal counsel</td>
<td>• to collect welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• right to social services</td>
<td>• to call police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(could be either Nurturance or Self-Determination)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care Specific</td>
<td>• rights issues specifically related to the child welfare system</td>
<td>• to call advocacy/worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(could be either Nurturance or Self-Determination)</td>
<td>• to have contact with family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• (rights) issues raised that do not fit into the above categories</td>
<td>• to change placements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: For more details on the definitions of the rights categories, examples and coding of responses see Appendices K and L.
indicating that a right was something one could do, has, or was allowed to do were coded as “allowed to do, can do, can have” (e.g., “right to have things . . . to own things,” “the right to do something”). Other response categories contained various types of misconceptions about rights. In responses categorized as “unconditional entitlements,” participants suggested that a right was the innate or inherent ability to do whatever one wished, without limitation (e.g., “the right to do what you want, no one can stop you”). Although capturing the notion of inherent entitlement, definitions in this category fail to acknowledge the parameters of rights—that they are not unconditional but bounded by the rights of others. Responses coded as privileges or something one deserves included those in which a right was described as something granted or given by someone else (e.g., “a privilege you get,” “you get rights for good behaviour”), the implication being that it could also be taken away.

As shown in Figure 3, definitions from a total of 34% of maltreated children and youth fell into the two categories reflecting the most accurate conceptions of rights. The most frequently used category reflected a general understanding of rights as “entitlements” (20%), while another 14% of participants more precisely defined rights as “conditional entitlements.” Fifteen percent of participants defined a right in terms of “laws and rules” and 9% indicated that rights were “unconditional entitlements.” In 6% of cases, participants held misconceptions about rights, (e.g., “a right is when you do something good”).

“What rights do kids have?” – Responses to this question were not mutually exclusive and were coded into categories as shown in Appendix L. All children’s rights described by participants were recorded and coded ($M = 3.54, SD = 1.45$). The rights
category most frequently mentioned was Basic Needs (65%). As shown in Figure 4, categories involving Civil Liberties, Psychological Needs and Education were mentioned by almost half of the participants, while issues of Abuse and Safety were mentioned by 39%. Rights that were specific to the care experience were mentioned by approximately one-quarter of the participants.

“Why should kids have rights?” – Although responses to this question were not mutually exclusive, most participants (85%) provided only one reason that children should have rights. The most frequently cited reason for children having rights was for protection and safety (41%). Almost one-quarter of the participants (24%) believed that children should have rights because they are universally available to all people (see Figure 5).
Figure 4. Percentages of specific type of right mentioned in response to ‘What rights do children have?’.

Figure 5. Percentages of responses in each category of reason given for ‘Why should children have rights?’
“Can anyone take away your rights? Who? Why or why not?” – In response to this question, 65% of participants believed that rights could not be taken away and 35% indicated that someone could take away your rights. Those who indicated that rights could be taken away most frequently stated that parents (45%) could do so, and wrongdoing or punishment was the most commonly given reason (55%). Most of the participants who responded negatively justified their choice by referencing the inherent and universal nature of rights (39%) (see Appendix M).

**Attitudes: CRA Questionnaire**

Initial internal consistency analyses of the Nurturance and Self-Determination scales of the CRA questionnaire revealed Cronbach’s Alphas of .63 and .71, respectively. To improve the internal consistency of the scales, several items were removed (indicated by * in Appendix I), yielding satisfactory Cronbach’s Alpha coefficients of .73 for the Nurturance scale (Items 1, 19 & 21 removed), and .80 for the Self-Determination scale (Items 10, 15, 22, 24 & 33 removed).

Attitudes toward nurturance rights were very positive ($M = 5.46$, $SD = .44$), with most responses falling between “somewhat agree” to “strongly agree.” Participants also responded positively to the self-determination items ($M = 4.16$, $SD = .70$), with most responses falling close to the “slightly agree” point on the 6-point scale. A paired-sample *t*-test indicated that attitudes toward nurturance rights were significantly more positive than toward self-determination, $t(99) = 16.69$, $p < .01$. 
Research Question 2: Age Differences in Maltreated Children’s Conceptions and Attitudes Regarding Children’s Rights

To investigate age differences in conceptions of and attitudes toward children’s nurturance and self-determination rights in maltreated children, basic descriptive analyses (e.g., frequencies, crosstabs) and univariate parametric and non-parametric tests (e.g., t tests and chi-square analyses) were used. Unless specifically mentioned, there were no differences between males and females.

Conceptions: Self-Generated Rights Questions

Measuring children’s conceptions of rights by asking them to generate their own examples of children’s rights issues, rather than by measuring their responses to examiner-generated knowledge questions, is thought to draw more directly on the issues that are most salient in their lives (Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2008). Thus, due to their experiences with violations of basic protection rights, in addition to recent evidence regarding the salience of nurturance rights such as basic needs, education and abuse and safety (Costa, 2007), it was expected that participants within each age group, and across settings, would generate fewer situations involving self-determination than nurturance rights. There was some support for this hypothesis, though results did vary according to the participant’s age and the setting of the rights situation generated. For example, nurturance rights were described significantly more often than self-determination rights for the pre/early-adolescents, $\chi^2 (1, 34) = 7.53, p < .01$, and the mid-adolescent group, $\chi^2 (1, 38) = 10.53, p < .01$ in the home setting (see Table 4), while no significant age differences were evident in either the school or community settings (see Tables 5 and 6).
### Table 4

**Percentages, frequencies and crosstabs results for type of right generated - Home setting**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-Early Adolescence</th>
<th>Mid-Adolescence</th>
<th>Late Adolescence</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>( \chi^2 )**</th>
<th>( p )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurturance*</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse/Safety</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Needs</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Needs</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Determination</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Liberties</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care Specific</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* “Other” included inaccurate responses that occurred infrequently and/or could not be placed into existing categories, e.g., Education, Leisure/Recreation, Child Labor/Military Service, Don’t Know/No Response.

*Crosstabs comparison of Nurturance vs Self-Determination rights generated for the Home setting, across all age groups: \( \chi^2 (1, 99) = 4.96, p < .08 \) (one case was missing as a result of a “don’t know” response).

**chi square results were not presented when cell counts were too low to conduct a reliable test.
Table 5

Percentages, frequencies and crosstabs results for type of right generated - School setting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rights</th>
<th>Pre-Early Adolescence</th>
<th>Mid-Adolescence</th>
<th>Late Adolescence</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>$\chi^2$***</th>
<th>$P$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurturance*</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse/Safety</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Needs</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Determination</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Liberties</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. “Other” included inaccurate responses that occurred infrequently and/or could not be placed into existing categories, e.g., Medical, Basic Needs, Legal/Governmental/Social Support.

*Crosstabs comparison of Nurturance vs Self-Determination rights generated for the School setting, across all age groups: $\chi^2 (1, 100) = .29, p < .87.$

**chi square results were not presented when cell counts were too low to conduct a reliable test.
Table 6

Percentages, frequencies and crosstabs results for type of right generated - Community setting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-Early Adolescence</th>
<th>Mid-Adolescence</th>
<th>Late Adolescence</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>$\chi^2$**</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurturance*</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse and Safety</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Needs</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Needs</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Determination*</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Liberties</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. “Other” included inaccurate responses that occurred infrequently and/or could not be placed into existing categories, e.g., Leisure/Recreation, Child Labor/Military Service, Care Specific, Misconceptions.
*Crosstabs comparison of Nurturance vs Self-Determination rights generated for the Community setting, across all age groups: $\chi^2 (1, 100) = .24, p < .89$ (missing cases resulted from “don’t know” responses).
**chi square results were not presented when cell counts were too low to conduct a reliable test.
Although no predictions were made, when age differences for specific categories of rights were examined, once again, results varied according to the setting of the rights issue. For example, in the home, older participants described civil liberties significantly more often than the younger groups, \( \chi^2 (2, 100) = 5.86, p < .05 \) (see Table 4), while decision-making rights were mentioned significantly less often by the oldest group in the community setting, \( \chi^2 (2, 100) = 5.60, p < .05 \) (see Table 6).

**Conceptions: Rights Knowledge Questions**

Conceptions of rights have typically been measured using researcher-generated knowledge questions, vignettes or surveys. While much of this work has shown a characteristic developmental pattern, with understanding increasing and becoming more accurate with age (Helwig, 1995; Melton, 1980; Melton & Limber, 1992; Ruck, Abramovitch, et al., 1998), recent research involving maltreated children reported conceptions of rights to be consistently well-developed across age groups in a population of 11-19 year old participants (Costa, 2008). In addition, and contrary to the limitations suggested by the maltreatment literature, Costa (2008) reported that understanding of rights in maltreated children was more accurate than shown in previous literature with non-maltreated children. Given these contradictions, no specific predictions regarding rights knowledge conceptions were made.

“How is a right?” – Similar to findings from Costa (2008), no significant differences in definitions according to age emerged (see Appendix N).

“How rights do kids have?” – No interpretable differences emerged in the frequency of the types of children’s rights given according to age. The only significant difference was in the use of the “other” category of rights, which was used significantly
more often by the mid-adolescent group than either of the other two age groups, \(\chi^2 (2, 100) = 6.24, p < .05\) (see Appendix O). There was also a significant difference in the use of this category according to gender. Of the 33 participants who gave responses categorized as “other,” 25% of those were female and 8% male, \(\chi^2 (2, 100) = 4.91, p < .05\).

“Why should children have rights?” – The youngest participants were significantly more likely than the older groups to provide a response categorized as “responsibility/future development and learning”, \(\chi^2 (2, 100) = 6.34, p < .05\) (see Appendix P).

**Attitudes: CRA Questionnaire**

*Age trends in attitudes toward nurturance and self-determination rights*

Similar to previous research (Day et al., 2006; Peterson-Badali et al., 2002; Peterson-Badali et al., 2003), it was predicted that attitudes toward nurturance would be consistently high, and not significantly different, across the three age groups studied. While not as high, attitudes toward self-determination rights were also expected to remain consistent. However, findings from one-way ANOVA tests revealed significant differences in attitudes toward nurturance, \(F(2, 97) = 9.86, p < .01\) (16.9% variance explained), and self-determination rights, \(F(2, 97) = 4.59, p < .01\) (8.7% variance explained), according to age. Contrary to prediction, Sheffe post-hoc comparisons for nurturance rights revealed that the pre/early-adolescent group held significantly less positive attitudes toward nurturance rights than both of the mid-adolescent \((p < .01)\) and the late-adolescent groups \((p < .01)\), who did not differ significantly from one another. In terms of self-determination rights, the mid-adolescent group held significantly more
positive attitudes than the late-adolescent group ($p < .01$). The pre/early-adolescent group did not differ from either the mid-adolescent or late-adolescent groups (see Table 7).

Table 7

*Means and Standard Deviations for participant responses on the CRA according to Age*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Nurturance</th>
<th>Self-Determination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Early Adolescence</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Adolescence</td>
<td>5.54</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Adolescence</td>
<td>5.64</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* From the Likert scale for this questionnaire, 5 represents a response of “somewhat agree,” 4 is “slightly agree” and 3, “slightly disagree.”

**Comparing attitudes toward nurturance and self-determination**

It was expected that endorsement of nurturance rights would be significantly higher than that for self-determination regardless of age and paired sample $t$ tests were used to compare attitudes toward children’s nurturance and self-determination rights within each age group. In the pre/early-adolescent group, attitudes toward nurturance rights were significantly more positive, falling close to the “somewhat agree” point, than attitudes toward self-determination rights, which were closer to “slightly agree,” $t(33) = 8.04, p < .01$ (see Table 7). Attitudes toward nurturance rights fell between “somewhat” and “strongly agree” in the mid-adolescent group and were significantly more positive than for self-determination, which were closer to the “slightly agree” point, $t(37) = 9.50, p < .01$. Once again, in the oldest group, attitudes toward nurturance rights were significantly more positive than for self-determination. The late adolescent group held
Research Question 3: Maltreatment and Care Experiences

Four factors related to the experiences of maltreatment and child welfare care were examined: (i) type of maltreatment, (ii) type of foster care, (iii) length of time in care, and (iv) in care. Chi-square analyses involving the four maltreatment variables suggested the possibility of significant interactions between several of these variables: type of maltreatment with type of foster care and type of foster care with number of changes in placement. Significant interactions were confirmed by loglinear analysis and further tested using a saturated loglinear model. Maltreated children who had experienced neglect, but not abuse, were significantly more likely to live in foster homes and to have had fewer changes in placement than those who had been physically, sexually or emotionally abused but not neglected. Children who lived in foster homes were significantly more likely to have been neglected, and not abused, and to have had fewer changes in placement than those who resided in group homes.

(i) Type of maltreatment – Previous research indicating that maltreated pre-school children had a heightened awareness of moral transgressions related to their experiences of maltreatment provided a guide for current predictions about understanding of rights in children who had been physically or sexually abused and for those who had experienced neglect (Smetana, et al., 1984, 1999). I intended to investigate such findings in sub-groups of children who had experienced either physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. However, as is typical of many child welfare cases, most participants in the current sample had experienced multiple forms of maltreatment, most often neglect.
accompanied by some form of abuse (66% of abused children and youth had also been neglected). While the neglect only group was large enough for analysis, the other groups were not (6 physical abuse only, 2 sexual abuse only and 4 emotional abuse only). Thus, in the current study, the “neglect only” group (N = 24) was compared to an “abuse only” (N = 26) group and a combined “abuse and neglect” (N = 50) group, allowing for some teasing apart of the contributions of neglect and abuse history to understanding of children’s rights.

The expectation that maltreated children and youth would more frequently mention rights related to the type of abuse they had experienced was examined using responses to the rights knowledge question “What rights do children have?” Contrary to predictions, neglected children did not talk about basic rights more frequently, nor did abused children focus on rights reflecting abuse and safety more often than children in the other maltreatment groups (see Table 8). As previously indicated, the hypothesis regarding sexually abused children was not tested. The only difference in the types of rights mentioned according to maltreatment experience was that the “neglect only” group referred to educational rights (χ² (2, 100) = 7.20, p < .05) significantly more often than the other groups (see Table 8). There were no significant differences in definitions of rights, in reasons for children having rights, or in perceptions of the revocability of rights according to maltreatment experience (see Appendices Q, R and S, respectively).

(ii) Type of foster care – Although participants may have lived in different types of foster homes during their time in care, for the purpose of this study, the most predominant form of placement was determined. Sixty-four percent of the participants
### Table 8

**Percentages, frequencies and crosstabs results for responses to “What Rights Do Kids Have?” according to Type of Maltreatment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Abuse Only</th>
<th>Neglect Only</th>
<th>Abuse and Neglect</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>$\chi^{**}$</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nurturance</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse/Safety</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure/Recreation</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Needs</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Needs</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Determination</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Liberties</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misconceptions</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care Specific</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
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<td>Other</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. “Other” included responses that could not be placed into existing categories, e.g., child labor and military service, legal/governmental/social support.

**chi square results were not presented when cell counts were too low to conduct a reliable test.**
resided in a family foster home environment during the majority of their time in care, while 36% lived primarily in group homes. The expectation that group home residents would give examples of self-determination rights more and nurturance rights less frequently than those living in foster homes was tested by calculating the total number of nurturance and self-determination responses given to the rights knowledge question “What rights do children have?” Results from independent samples t-tests revealed no significant differences in the number of nurturance, \( t(98) = .46, p < .64 \), or self-determination rights, \( t(98) = -.21, p < .83 \), mentioned by the two groups (see Table 9).

Table 9

*Means and standard deviations for the total number of Nurturance and Self-Determination Rights given by participants in response to “What rights do kids have?” according to Type of Foster Care*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Foster Home</th>
<th>Group Home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurturance</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Determination</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, while there were no differences in definitions of rights according to type of care (see Appendix T), maltreated children living in group homes gave examples of rights that were specific to the care experience, \( \chi^2 (1, 100) = 4.36, p < .05 \), significantly more often than those living in foster homes, and foster home residents described decision-making rights significantly more frequently than those in group homes, \( \chi^2 (1, 100) = 4.69, p < .05 \) (see Table 10).
Table 10

Percentages, frequencies and crosstabs results for responses to “What Rights Do Kids Have?” according to Type of Foster Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Foster Home</th>
<th>Group Home</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>( \chi^2 )***</th>
<th>P</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nurturance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse/Safety</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure and Recreation</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Labor/Military Service</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Needs</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>.07</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychological Needs</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal/Gov/Social Support</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(table continues)*
Table 10 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Foster Home</th>
<th>Group Home</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>$\chi^2$***</th>
<th>$P$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Determination</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privacy</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech/Thought</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression/Identity</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination/Inequity</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Liberties</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care Specific</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misconceptions</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. “Other” included responses that could not be placed into existing categories, e.g., Beliefs/Principles, Needs, Don’t Know/No Response.
**chi square results were not presented when cell counts were too low to conduct a reliable test.
In addition, independent $t$ tests did not support the prediction that children in group homes would show greater endorsement of self-determination rights on the CRA than those living in foster homes, $t(97) = .15, p < .87$. Instead, group home participants showed more positive attitudes toward nurturance rights than children in foster homes $t(98) = -2.55, p < .01$ (see Table 11). As predicted, paired sample $t$ tests showed that participants living in both group, $t(35) = 12.61, p < .01$, and foster homes, $t(63) = 11.89, p < .01$, held more positive attitudes toward nurturance rights relative to self-determination rights (see Table 11).

Table 11

Means and standard deviations for participant responses on the CRA according to Type of Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Foster Home N=64</th>
<th>Group Home N=36</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurturance</td>
<td>5.37</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Determination</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(iii) Changes in Placement – Children who become Crown Wards have frequently come into care numerous times before permanent removal from parents was deemed necessary. Once the child is in the long-term care system, every attempt is made to provide a placement that will be long lasting. In the current sample, as is often the case, the time a child has spent in care was significantly correlated with the number of placements he/she has had ($r = .20, p < .05$). More than half of the current sample, 51% had three or less changes in placement (median=3, range =22) and it was at this point the
The sample was divided into two groups for comparison. Chi-square analyses revealed a significant difference in the number of placements according to gender, $\chi^2 (1, 100) = 7.81, p < .01$, with more boys than girls having four or more placements.

Responses to the rights knowledge question, “What is a right?,” were used to test the prediction that understanding of rights for participants who had four or more changes in placement would lag behind those who had three or less changes. Results from chi-square tests did not reveal any significant differences in understanding of rights according to the number of changes in placement that participants had experienced (see Appendix U). The hypothesis that children with many changes in placement would view their rights as more revocable was tested using responses to the rights knowledge question “Can anyone take away your rights?” A chi-square test revealed a significant difference in maltreated children’s perspectives on the revocability of rights according to the number of changes in placement they had experienced. Children who had experienced a greater number of changes were significantly more likely to indicate that rights were not revocable than those with fewer placement changes, $\chi^2 (1, 100) = 3.80, p < .05$ (see Table 12).

Contrary to expectation, one-way ANOVAs for responses to “What rights do kids have?” showed that participants with fewer changes in placement did not generate a greater number of rights overall, $F(1, 98) = 1.08, p < .30$, (1.1% variance explained) nor did they provide more examples of nurturance rights than participants with many changes, $F(1, 98) = .01, p < .91$ (.01% variance explained) (see Table 13).
Table 12

Percentages, frequencies and crosstabs results for responses to “Can Anyone Take Away Your Rights?,” “Who?,” “Why or Why Not?” according to the number of Changes in Placement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change in Placement</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>$P$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No*</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>&lt; 3 %</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>&gt; 3 %</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Total %</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents/Adults</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police/Court/Law</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Authority/Power</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobody/Not Specified</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>&lt; 3 %</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>&gt; 3 %</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Total %</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laws/Rules</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authorities</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(table continues)*
Table 12 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHY (continued)</th>
<th>Change in Placement</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>( \chi^2 )</th>
<th>( P )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 or fewer</td>
<td>more than 3</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrongdoing/Punishment</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power/Manipulation</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHY NOT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laws/Rules</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authorities</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inherent Possession/Universality</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power/Manipulation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entitlement</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misconception</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. “Other” category included responses that could not be placed into existing categories, e.g., Beliefs/Principles, Needs, Don’t Know, No Response, Misconceptions.

*During the early stages of interviewing, responses of “no” to the question “can anyone take away your rights?” were not queried, resulting in 22 cases of missing data. Later interviews queried both yes and no responses to this question.

**chi square results were not presented when cell counts were too low to conduct a reliable test.
Table 13

Means and Standard Deviations for the Number of Nurturance, Self-Determination and Total Rights Participants gave in Response to “What Rights do Kids Have?” According to the Number of Changes in Placement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nurturance</th>
<th></th>
<th>Self-Determination</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 or fewer</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 3</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>1.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, participants with a greater number of changes in placement (recall that there were significantly more boys in this group) mentioned rights specific to the care experience significantly more often than those with fewer changes, $\chi^2 (1, 100) = 4.04, p < .05$, while those with few changes gave incorrect examples of rights significantly more often, $\chi^2 (1, 100) = 9.77, p < .01$ (see Table 14). In contrast to prediction, independent sample $t$ tests revealed that there were no differences in attitudes toward nurturance rights based on the number of changes in placement participants had experienced, $t(98) = -.50$, $p < .62$ (see Table 15).
Table 14

*Percentages, frequencies and crosstabs results for responses to “What Rights Do Kids Have?” according to No. of Changes in Placement*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change in Placement</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 3</td>
<td>&gt; 3</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurturance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse/Safety</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure and Recreation</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Needs</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Needs</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Determination</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Liberties</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making—General</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making—Health</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making—Disc. Time</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making—Total</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care Specific</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misconceptions</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* “Other” category included responses that could not be placed into existing categories, e.g., Child Labor and Military Service, Legal/Governmental/Social Support.

**chi square results were not presented when cell counts were too low to conduct a reliable test.
Table 15

*Means and standard deviations for participant responses on the CRA according to the Number of Changes in Placement*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nurturance</th>
<th></th>
<th>Self-Determination</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 or fewer</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 3</td>
<td>5.48</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(iv) *Time in Care* - Results of a Pearson correlation revealed that length of time in care was not related to participant age ($r = .01$, n.s.). Time in care was divided into four categories: less than 3 years, 3 years to 5 years, 11 months, 6 years to eight years, 11 months and nine years or more. There were significantly more female participants who had spent the least amount of time in care and boys significantly outnumbered girls for those who had spent 6 years to 8 years, 11 months in care, $\chi^2 (3, 100) = 12.88, p < .01$.

The hypothesis that children who had been in care for longer periods of time would describe rights in more accurate and precise terms than those who had been in care for less time was tested using responses to “What is a right?” Chi-square results did not support this prediction (see Appendix V). Contrary to expectation, children who had been in care longer did not generate more examples of rights in response to “What rights do kids have?” $F(3, 96) = .20, p < .85$ (see Table 16), nor did they more frequently see rights as irrevocable (see Appendix W). However, participants who had been in care for six years and over mentioned rights related to “abuse and safety” significantly more often than those who had been in care for less time, $\chi^2 (3, 100) = 10.25, p < .05$ (see Table 17).
Table 16

*Means and Standard Deviations for Total Number of Rights Given in Response to “What Rights do Kids Have?” According to Number of Changes in Foster Care Placement*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time in Care</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 3 years (6M,15F)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>1.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 years, 11 months (13M,17F)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8 years, 11 months (20M,6F)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>1.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 years or more (9M,14F)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 17

Percentages, frequencies and crosstabs results for participant responses to “What Rights Do Kids Have?” according to Amount of Time Spent In Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nurturance</th>
<th>Amount of Time in Care</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>( \chi^2 )**</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 3 years</td>
<td>3y–5y 11m</td>
<td>6y–8y 11m</td>
<td>≥ 9 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse/Safety</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurturance</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse/Safety</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure/Recreation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Needs</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Needs</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Determination</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Liberties</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care Specific</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misconceptions</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. “Other” category includes Child Labor and Military Service, Legal/Government/Social Support.
**chi square results were not presented when cell counts were too low to conduct a reliable test.
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION

The present investigation examined conceptions and attitudes about rights in children and youth who had experienced fundamental rights violations and been removed from their homes and families. The goals were threefold: first, to generally describe knowledge and understanding of children’s rights in maltreated young people; secondly, to examine age differences in their conceptions of rights; and, finally, to explore the association between specific maltreatment experiences and rights understanding. While considerable research has examined thinking about rights in varied cultural and ethnic groups, studies of those who have experienced fundamental rights violations have been rare. As some of society’s most vulnerable individuals, who in many ways must ‘fend for themselves’, understanding of and access to rights may have a greater than usual significance.

Maltreated children’s perspective on rights: Deficient or Unique?

As earlier discussed, it may be that the experiences associated with maltreatment, influence rights understanding in two ways that may seem somewhat contradictory, but are consistent with domain theory (Helwig, 2006; Smetana, 2006). On one hand, disadvantages common to children in child welfare care may limit the ability to appropriately interpret rights issues, or to trust in one’s access to rights – essentially depriving them of their rights. On the other hand, their atypical experiences may result in a particular perspective or interpretation of rights issues, one that influences the salience of certain concerns.
How, then, do maltreated young people’s views of children’s rights compare with those of the typically-developing youth on which the bulk of research is based? The current findings suggest that while maltreated children’s conceptions of rights did frequently vary from previous findings with non-maltreated children, there were also a number of broad-based similarities. For example, when asked to describe children’s rights issues or to name rights that children have, a wide variety of both nurturance and self-determination rights was forthcoming, supporting the notion that children see concerns in both of these areas as rights issues (Peterson-Badali et al., 2002; Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2008; Taylor, et al., 2001). Similar to non-maltreated participants, maltreated young people spoke regularly of civil liberties, psychological needs, decision-making, and abuse/safety, across a number of different settings (Peterson-Badali et al., 2002; Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2008). While attitudes were generally very positive, support for nurturance rights was significantly higher than for self-determination rights, a finding also consistent with earlier studies (Day et al., 2006; Peterson-Badali, et al., 2002; Peterson-Badali, Morine, et al., 2004; Peterson-Badali, Ruck, et al., 2004; Rogers & Wrightsman, 1978; Ruck, Abramovitch, et al., 1998).

In addition to such similarities, there were several striking and unexpected differences. For example, in contrast to what might be predicted based on the previously discussed deprivation perspective, there was little evidence that the disadvantages often associated with maltreatment and long term care were correlated with deficits in understanding of rights. In fact, the current findings often directly contradicted this notion. Rather than holding a deficient or ‘deprived’ view of rights, maltreated participants most frequently defined rights according to an individual’s inherent
‘entitlement’ (43%). For example, definitions indicating that a right was “not something you need to work to get, you already should have it…like a privilege is something you work your way to, and a right is something that you are born with” (16 year old girl) were quite common, as were statements that clearly conveyed an understanding of the conditional, or bounded, nature of rights, such as “a right cannot be taken away…but sometimes it can…like if you commit a crime” (17 year old girl) and “if you have a right to do something you can do it but not overdo it…you have freedom to do something but cannot take it too far” (16 year old boy). In general, maltreated children’s definitions of rights were considerably more accurate, referencing some form of entitlement, than those given by many non-maltreated children in previous research (e.g., 23%, Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2006; 5%, Ruck, Keating, et al., 1998; 27%, Taylor et al., 2001). However, these findings were consistent with a recent investigation in which 42% of maltreated young people in care defined rights as a form of entitlement (Costa, 2007).

Much of the previous research (e.g., Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2006; Ruck, Keating, et al., 1998; Taylor, et al., 2001) has found that non-maltreated children most typically defined rights rather imprecisely as something one “has” or “can do”, a category used relatively infrequently by maltreated participants in both the current study and in Costa (2007). Definitions of rights involving adherence to rules and laws were the second most frequent in the present study (15%). This finding was somewhat higher than in previous research with either maltreated (6%; Costa, 2007) or non-maltreated participants (5%; Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2006; 3%; Taylor et al., 2001), but was consistent with those from Ruck, Keating et al. (13%; 1998). Confusing rights with privileges has been
common in a number of the previous investigations (e.g., Costa, 2007; Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2006), but children in the current work rarely made this error.

In interpreting these results it appears that, at least in so far as the development of general conceptions of rights, the disadvantages associated with maltreatment and foster care did not result in limitations or delays in understanding. Instead, it seems that other shared experiences, such as early and regular rights discussions, may outweigh these disadvantages, contributing to an enhanced understanding of rights relative to those outside of child welfare care. This notion is supported by findings from Covell and Howe (1999), who assessed the impact of a rights education program on grade 5 and 6 students and found that “children who received the (rights) curriculum had a broader and more accurate understanding of what it means for children to have rights” (p. 179).

Results from responses to explicit rights knowledge questions also reveal some dramatic differences in maltreated children’s conceptions of rights, as compared to their non-maltreated peers. For example, when asked to list rights that children have and to provide an example of a children’s rights issue in the home, school or larger community, the current participants were highly focussed on rights to basic needs. Almost two-thirds mentioned rights to food (e.g., “three square meals a day”, “to eat when you’re hungry”, “nutritious food”), clothing (e.g., “laundry and clean clothes”, “clothes that fit, are comfortable, are not too small and right for your age”) and shelter (e.g., “to be allowed in the house, even if it’s after curfew”, “bed, food, clothes, bath every day!”), as well as other basic needs (e.g., “a shower or bath…or glasses if you need them…or sensitive face wash”, “to live in a free, safe, clean, stable environment and to have love and the necessities of life”). While this finding was consistent with previous work involving
maltreated children and youth (55%; Costa, 2007), non-maltreated children mentioned rights to basic needs very infrequently (9%; Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2006).

Further, in a finding remarkably consistent with results from Costa’s (2007) work, rights issues related to education were mentioned almost twice as often by maltreated children relative to their non-maltreated peers (Ruck, Keating et al., 1998; Taylor et al., 2001). When speaking about educational rights, young people’s responses were frequently revealing of the school related issues that commonly preoccupy maltreated children. For example, (I have) “the right to a proper education…my teacher was modifying my marks and I wanted to see how I can handle it… but I know I can function at a higher level but I am not given a chance to try” (16 year old boy) and, “you have the right to be educated according to your ability…if you need special help or are black or white…you have a right to it” (17 year old boy). Others referred to the interruptions in schooling that are sometimes part of life in foster care, such as: “if you’re not in school, you need to go…someone has to help you go to school…you need to go to school!” (16 year old male) and, (kids have) “the right to education…like when your foster mother does not let you go to school” (18 year old girl). The response of one 17 year girl provides some insight into how the academic struggles so common in this population take root: “if I am getting abused at home…that gives me limits to what I can learn in class because it interferes and limits my learning because I cannot concentrate…(you) have the right to learn without having to worry about when you’re done at school and have to go home…you’re not going to learn in school if you have been beaten the night before”.

One possibility for the frequency of responses involving the rights to basic needs and education is that these are two of the examples of rights explicitly mentioned in the
“Rights and Responsibilities” pamphlets that children receive when they first enter care (Catholic Children’s Aid Society, 1998a; 1998b). These pamphlets often frame the regular review of rights that child welfare workers have with children and youth in care (R. Ferguson, personal communication, March 6, 2013). Although rights to food, clothing, shelter, and education are not referenced with greater frequency than a number of other rights, it may be that the nature of these discussions, often emphasizing the very concrete and fundamental rights issues - those significant for everyday living (J. Noble, personal communication, March 7, 2013) - heighten the salience of the most tangible and immediate concerns. This emphasis on rights to basic needs in rights discussions, those legally mandated by the state, may serve to enhance understanding of entitlement generally, and to these rights in particular.

In addition, the nature of child welfare care, in essence the institutionalization of the parent-child relationship (The Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth [OPACY], 2012a), may serve to heighten the salience of these rights in a number of ways. First, while young people in care have a worker, or guardian, to oversee their well-being, in many respects, they enter a foster care placement very much on their own, and thus, have a primary responsibility for ensuring the provision of all of their own needs. As a priority, discussions about rights must arm them for this responsibility (J. Noble, personal communication, March 7, 2013). Secondly, foster care environments are generally more structured and restrictive than a typical family home (Curtis, et al., 2001; J. Noble, personal communication, March 7, 2013; Ryan, et al., 2008). Access to food, clothing, and other necessities for daily living are often unnaturally controlled and thus, may have a heightened salience for children in care, as evidenced by the following
comments from youth in foster homes: you have … “the right to eat whenever you’re hungry”, “the right to clean clothes”; and in group homes: “the right to a proper diet with choice… in the group home…only get certain food at certain times… denied the right to select”, or “you cannot eat when you want… not until dinner and not after dinner… kitchen is closed. You should be able to eat when you want”.

While the specific contributions of education about rights and the experience of maltreatment and child welfare care on rights understanding cannot be determined by the current investigation, findings are strikingly consistent with previous research involving maltreated young people (Costa, 2007), and quite distinct from studies with non-maltreated groups (Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2006; Ruck, Keating, et al., 1998; Taylor et al., 2001). Maltreated young people were highly focussed on very fundamental and immediate concerns - food, clothing and shelter - issues in the here and now versus those from the past. Further, their responses often reflected rights that they were striving for, and had yet to fully achieve, such as the right to education, an area in which children in care are disproportionately unsuccessful (Stone, 2007; OPACY, 2012a, 2012b).

Reinforcing this notion was the mention of a category of rights very unlike those from previous research and rather specific to children in child welfare care. Issues such as: the right to “visit your family…on special occasions”, “to know stuff about your past”, “to know what’s going on in your life…with your parents” and “when you talk to your worker you should have privacy…foster parent would not leave the room” were mentioned by 23% of the participants in both the current study and in Costa (2007). In contrast to some theoretical perspectives, this focus on rights yet to be achieved suggests
that children may not need to directly experience rights in order to know and talk about them (Melton, 1980; Ochaita & Espinosa, 1997).

Further reinforcing the notion that young people in child welfare care may hold a rather unique view of rights were findings related to decision-making. Relative to children outside of child welfare care from previous research, maltreated children generated fewer scenarios involving decision-making in both the home and school settings and less frequently mentioned decision-making as a right that children have. This was a somewhat curious result, as considerable research indicates that issues of decision-making take on a particular salience in adolescence (e.g., Day et al., 2006; Ruck, Keating, et al., 1998; Taylor et al., 2001). While some suggest that children in care are exposed to greater opportunities for decision-making relative to non-maltreated peers (Thomas & O‘Kane, 1999), others have reported that the experiences associated with maltreatment erode trust and confidence, often leaving children feeling unable or incompetent to participate in decision-making when opportunities are presented, and to believe that their input will have an influence when they do (Costa, 2007; Mueller and Silverman, 1989; Mullins & Tisak, 2006; Thomas & O‘Kane, 1999). Thus, with little expectation or belief in their ability to impact an outcome, the salience of decision-making rights for adolescents in care may be reduced relative to their non-maltreated peers.

Confirmation of such notions comes from discussions with child welfare workers regarding the participation of young people in their Plan of Care, a document that is revised and reviewed annually (Toronto Children’s Aid Society, 2011). Although it is the ideal to have young people participate in their Plan of Care, the process is often frustrating for youth, as it involves rather artificial decision-making over minute details,
decisions that are made automatically and usually without discussion in a typical family situation (J. Noble, personal communication, March 7, 2013). Research suggests that although children’s input is increasingly considered and their level of participation is improving, issues of protection and provision will always supersede those of participation (Costa’s, 2007). A child’s best interests must be balanced with his/her wishes and thus, cannot always be granted, a fact not always appreciated or understood by the young person, and one that may contribute to lack of trust and feelings of powerlessness (Costa, 2007; Thomas & O’Kane, 1999). For example, a 17 year old girl reported that “a youth should have a right of some say in where they want to be placed, for instance, I did not want to be in the group home I’m in and I told my worker and basically it’s like ‘we’re looking out for your best interests’, but it ain’t looking out for crap, it’s what she wants!” Similarly, a 15 year old boy voiced his frustration with the lack of consultation with him regarding planning for his immediate and long term future, by stating that “they have a plan of care without you knowing but it’s your right to know and participate in it!”

**Rationale for Rights?**

When asked about the rationale for children having rights, the most typical response given by maltreated children (41%) was the need for protection and safety. This was much higher than reported in previous research with non-maltreated children (18%; Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2006; 16%; Ruck, Keating, et al., 1998), who most often gave “self-expression” as the reason children should have rights (32%; Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2006; 28%; Ruck, Keating, et al., 1998). While some maltreated children thought self-expression (8%) was a reason that children should have rights, responses were much more likely to reflect specific experiences. For example, a 17 year old boy stated that
“kids have (the) right to be taken care of…parents should do it, but sometimes they don’t”, while another young man (15 years old) believed that “children should have rights so people don’t just do whatever they want...like so staff doesn’t use food as a punishment...like take it away from you”. Two 16 year old girls thought that children needed rights “to protect them from things they are unable to comprehend or defend themselves against” and “because it helps them cope with a bad situation and if you are in that situation you know you can get out”. Maltreated (24%) and non-maltreated children (Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2006; 22%) were somewhat more similar in their belief in the universality of rights, as reflected in the response that children should have rights “because they are as important as everybody else”, given by a 16 year old girl in the current study.

In addition to the possibility that the experiences associated with maltreatment and child welfare may heighten awareness of the protective value of rights versus that of self-expression, one further explanation for this difference may stem from Maslow’s hierarchy of needs theory (Brown & Cullen, 2006). According to this theory, issues related to protection and safety may be more salient for maltreated children because, although this need is currently fulfilled, past experiences may create a heightened sensitivity toward a set of needs or cause long-lasting insecurity that these needs will be consistently fulfilled. Being free from such experiences enables non-maltreated children to focus on needs further up the hierarchy, such as self-expression, when providing a rationale for rights.
**Revocability of Rights?**

The majority of children in the current study believed that rights were not revocable (62%), a somewhat higher proportion than both maltreated and non-maltreated children from previous research (Costa, 2007; 53%; Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2006; 45%; Ruck, Keating, et al., 1998; 45%). Most children indicated that rights could not be revoked because they were universal or inherent to all people (39%), a response given somewhat less often by non-maltreated children (Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2006; 23%; Ruck, Keating, et al., 1998; 23%). This result may be explained, in part, by the fact that the rights pamphlet given to youth in care state that rights are “guaranteed by law. No one can take them away from you.” However, the fact that this question did not distinguish between natural\(^{19}\) and legal\(^{20}\) rights may be problematic for the interpretation of this finding. One cannot know if children were thinking of natural rights, inherent to all people, or legal rights, which can sometimes be revoked.

Maltreated children who believed that rights were revocable thought that rights could be taken away by parents (45%) more than twice as often as non-maltreated children (Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2006, 12%; Ruck, Keating, et al., 1998, 21%) and, similar to other maltreated children, they gave wrongdoing and punishment (55%) most often as the reason (Costa, 2007; 77%). While the lack of distinction regarding the type of right in question makes interpretation of this finding somewhat difficult, one possible explanation may be a reflection of the generally very structured and strict environment established in foster care settings (Curtis, et al., 2001; J. Noble, personal communication,

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\(^{19}\) Natural rights are not contingent upon the laws, customs or beliefs of any particular culture or government, and are therefore, universal and inalienable.

\(^{20}\) Legal rights are bestowed on to a person by the laws of a particular political and legal system, and therefore, relative to specific cultures and governments.
March 7, 2013). Prospective foster parents receive mandatory training and both foster and group homes generally subscribe to a very explicit set of rules, routines and consequences. Infractions are usually handled with great consistency and may result in foster parents or group home staff limiting rights or removing privileges (R. Ferguson, personal communication, March 6, 2013; Ryan, et al., 2008).

In summary, the findings from the current research suggest that knowledge and understanding of rights in maltreated children are often different than their non-maltreated peers. Notions of rights conveyed by the young people in this investigation often appeared to reflect their shared experiences, perhaps particularly that of regular discussions about rights, but also likely those of maltreatment and long-term child welfare care. While their past experiences may heighten general sensitivity toward some rights issues, e.g. abuse and safety, their current circumstances appear to inform their most immediate and predominant rights concerns.

**Age and Conceptions of Rights**

The relationship between age and understanding of rights in maltreated children was the focus of the second research question. In contrast to previous research suggesting an age-linked progression in abstract conceptions of rights (e.g., Melton, 1980; Melton & Limber, 1992; Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2008), older maltreated children did not provide more accurate definitions of rights than younger children. In fact, at all ages, maltreated children accurately defined a right as a conditional or general entitlement, a finding supported by recent research in a similar population (Costa, 2007). This lack of age differences in definitions of rights likely reflects a general increase in awareness and
knowledge of rights issues associated with the rights reviews maltreated children receive while in care.

Consistent with predictions, maltreated children at all ages generated nurturance rights situations equally or more often than situations involving autonomy rights, and attitudes toward nurturance rights were significantly more positive than for self-determination rights across the age groups, findings in agreement with previous research involving non-maltreated children (e.g., Day et al., 2006; Peterson-Badali, Morine, et al., 2004; Peterson-Badali et al., 2002; Ruck et al., 2002).

In contrast to previous findings (e.g., Day et al., 2006; Peterson-Badali et al., 2003; Ruck, Abramovitch, et al., 1998; Ruck et al., 2002), where support for nurturance rights did not vary according to age, the youngest group of participants in the current study held significantly less positive attitudes toward nurturance rights than either of the two older age groups. One possible explanation for this result, related to early adolescent striving for greater freedom and autonomy and less parental oversight, was suggested by Day et al. (2006). These authors propose that in evaluating rights for a target child close to their own age (recall that the target child in the CRA was 12 years old), the youngest adolescents may downplay their need to be looked after and cared for, resulting in lowered endorsement of nurturance rights.

**Maltreatment and Care and Conceptions of Rights**

Generally, the current results reveal very few significant effects related to any of the maltreatment variables examined. While there was some evidence of an association between rights understanding and the predominant kind of care a child received, results must be interpreted with caution due to the significant interactions among several
variables. Recall that children in the “neglect only” maltreatment group were significantly more likely to live in family foster homes and to have had fewer changes in placement than those in the “abuse only” group. In addition, the number of changes in placement a child had experienced was significantly correlated with the amount of time spent in child welfare care.

Type of Maltreatment

Predictions regarding an association between the type of abuse children had experienced and the salience of particular rights were not upheld. The differences that did occur did not easily lend themselves to interpretation. For example, children in the “neglect only” group were significantly more likely to confuse rights with privileges and to mention the right to education than children in the “abuse only” or “abused and neglected” groups. In contrast, abused children were more likely than the other groups to provide examples of rights rather than a definition in response to the question “what is a right?” The lack of meaningful group differences according to maltreatment type may be the result of several factors. In addition to the aforementioned significant interaction among several variables, it is possible that differences in children’s conceptions of rights were further obscured by our inability to analyze “distinct” groups of maltreated children. However, as it is an unfortunate fact that various types of maltreatment do, more often than not, co-occur, creating distinct groups for study would not be truly representative of this population at any rate.

Type of Care

Only the prediction that children in both group and family foster care would view nurturance rights more positively than self-determination rights was upheld, a finding
consistent with earlier discussed results regarding attitudes toward these two types of rights, in general. Although the results were not supportive of the other hypotheses related to the type of foster care a child received, differences in conceptions of rights related to the participant’s current living situation were more numerous than those based on maltreatment history. For example, group home residents mentioned rights related to child welfare care significantly more often, and those related to decision-making significantly less often, than their foster home counterparts. Children living in group homes also held significantly more positive attitudes toward nurturance rights than those in foster homes. In addition, there were trends for rights involving basic needs, privacy and freedom of speech or thought to be more salient for those in group care.

While interpretation of these results may be obscured by the significant interactions among several variables, it is possible that they reflect differences in the experience of group versus family foster care. For example, group homes are likely to be more institutional in nature with professionally trained staff (most often Child and Youth Workers), who oversee a household of young people and follow a regular schedule for meals, television time, etc. Children in group care tend to be those with more serious behavioural difficulties, who struggle with the intimacy of a family setting (J. Noble, personal communication, March 7, 2013). The environment tends to be very structured, and somewhat less nurturing than in a foster home, where group rules and routines strictly are enforced and where the residents often must take greater responsibility to see that their individual rights and needs are met (Curtis, et al., 2001; J. Noble, personal communication, March 7, 2013; Ryan, et al., 2008). For example, when asked to describe a rights issue related to the home, one 14 year old girl reported that “someone
said they were going to go (be) out to curfew…then she changed mind and came home early and the worker wouldn’t let her in... so now we have to let them know when we are changing our mind!”, while other group home residents complained about not having access to food outside of meal times or about restrictions on the use of the bathroom or “being restrained for absolutely no reason!” In contrast, while maintaining strict structure and routine, the environment in a family foster home is more likely to be similar to that of a typical family, where there may be other children, both foster and biological, with one or two parents.

Results suggesting that some differences in maltreated children’s conceptions of rights may be, in part, associated with the type of foster care in which they reside are consistent with earlier discussed notions regarding the significance of current versus historical circumstances for the salience of rights issues for maltreated children. In addition, and although there are many external checks and balances, and positive foster care experiences, maltreated children appear to be acutely concerned about the fundamental and concrete requirements for their own survival. For them, this is a real and urgent threat, as many worry about how they will ensure that these needs are met following their 18th birthday, when the state is no longer legally obliged to provide their care (I. Elman, personal communication, April 30, 2013).

**Changes in Placement and Time in Care**

Predictions related to both the number of foster care placement changes a child had experienced and the amount of time spent in care were not supported. At least some of the significant findings that did emerge may be related to the fact that an increase in either one of these two variables would be associated with a corresponding increase in the
number of rights discussions a child had received. For example, children with a larger number of changes in placement held significantly less misconceptions about rights and spoke more often about rights specific to the care experience than those with fewer placement changes. Recall here, that in addition to having spent more time in care, each change in placement required another review of rights. The only significant difference to emerge with respect to time spent in care was that the right to be safe and free from abuse was mentioned significantly less often as time in care increased. Consistent with the notion that current circumstances strongly inform the salience of certain rights issues, this finding may reflect the fact that with increasing time in care the experience of maltreatment becomes more distant, and concerns regarding protection less prominent.

In summary, the investigation of specific experiences associated with maltreatment and child welfare care did not reveal strong associations with particular rights issues. However, it seems more likely that current living circumstances, as well as the more general experiences of rights instruction and institutionalized care, may colour maltreated children’s perceptions of rights, creating a heightened sensitivity or insecurity regarding certain issues.

**Limitations and Future Directions**

While the current research was largely exploratory in nature, a number of constraints should be noted. One limitation was related to the study participants and the generalizability of findings to the larger population of youth in care. There are several reasons for this. First, all participants came from two child welfare agencies located in a large urban centre and, therefore, results may have limited generalizability to agencies serving smaller, more rural communities in Ontario and elsewhere. On the other hand, the
sample contained an ethnic diversity that may be representative of other large metropolitan cities, and future research in similar centres across Canada and the United States would be important in determining the generalizability of the current results.

Secondly, recruitment was limited only to children who had become permanent wards of the state, and thus, children who had been recently admitted to care (and who would have the most recent maltreatment experiences, as well as less exposure rights discussions) were mostly eliminated. In addition, requests for referrals of appropriate participants were answered by only a small minority of the workers who act as guardians for this group of children. Thus, the majority of the sample was recruited directly by the researcher at summer youth work programs, making recruitment of children in the youngest age category very difficult and contributing to the possibility of selection bias.

Future research should include a province-wide sampling of child welfare agencies, especially those that serve smaller communities, where more limited access to services and/or community support could influence the salience of particular rights issues. It would also be important to include maltreated children who are not in permanent child welfare care, as they may have had more recent maltreatment experiences, and less exposure to regular rights instruction than children who have become wards of the state. In addition, more direct recruitment contact with the child welfare workers may encourage participation.

A minor concern in the current study was the failure to specify whether the rights knowledge interview questions were pertaining to legal or natural rights, as discussed in Helwig (2006). For example, in the question regarding revocability of rights (i.e., “Can anyone take away your rights?”), a child thinking of legal rights may have responded
affirmatively to this question, while the response of one considering natural or moral rights may have been negative, contributing to an inaccuracy in the data regarding children’s understanding of this issue. However, questions used in the current investigation were largely designed to focus on children’s everyday experiences of rights rather than more abstract conceptions. Future research could attempt to clarify maltreated children’s understanding of this distinction and include situations involving rights in conflict with other moral or legal concerns, which have been shown to lag behind general understanding (Helwig, 1995).

The results of the current investigation suggest that both the experience of maltreatment and child welfare care and education about rights, influence children’s thinking about rights. Unfortunately, the relative contributions of these variables cannot be determined by the current research, as much of the rights instruction occurs as a result of the experiences of maltreatment and care, and thus, the two experiences are confounded. As previous research has indicated that specific rights instruction has an impact on rights understanding (Covell & Howe, 1999), it would be important to further clarify the influence of the rights instruction received while in child welfare care. A first step in doing so would be to collect data on young people’s knowledge and conceptions of rights at several points in time to better assess the changes that occur subsequent to entering the child welfare system. Research including maltreated children who are not in long-term state care may also bring some clarity to this issue.

Secondly, while it has been useful and informative to draw comparisons between the current participants and typically developing young people who were part of similar, previously conducted research, there is need for study of both maltreated and non-
maltreated young people in order to make more direct group comparisons regarding the impact of maltreatment on development of rights attitudes and understanding. In addition, there is a clear need for longitudinal study that would enable assessment of conceptualizations of rights prior to rights education/review, as well as changes over time.

In addition, while research on children’s understanding of rights has thus far provided valuable information regarding the development of this concept, little is known about how young people actually apply and use their knowledge and understanding in real life situations. The assumption has been that understanding and knowledge is critical for “a free and mature exercise of rights”, but the practice of advocating for and accessing rights has not been studied in young people. In future, it would be important to address this gap in the literature and to determine whether enhanced conceptions might lead to greater success in negotiating and securing one’s rights in practice.

In most studies of children’s rights, understanding has been measured by assessing children’s responses to examiner generated questions, questionnaires, or vignettes. Results from the present study confirms earlier findings indicating that the inclusion of a variety of different rights questions, e.g., self-generated, declarative knowledge and attitudes survey, contributed to a richer and more complete picture of an individual’s conceptions of rights (Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2008). For example, when young people were asked an open-ended question regarding the rights that children have, maltreated children more frequently reported the right to be to be safe and free from abuse than did non-maltreated children in previous research. However, when asked to generate an example of a situation involving a children’s rights issue, a question more
likely to draw upon current circumstances (Peterson-Badali & Ruck, 2008), maltreated youth described situations involving abuse and safety less frequently than those who had not been maltreated. These results suggested that while maltreated children definitely recognize protection issues as rights that children have, when asked to provide one example of a children’s rights issue in a specific context, concerns of a more current and immediate nature, such as food, clothing and shelter, versus those from their past, were more likely to take precedence. Future research should continue to include a variety of questions and methods to most fully capture children’s conceptions of rights.

**Implications for Policy and Practice**

Despite the aforementioned limitations and the exploratory nature of this investigation, several important implications emerge from this study. First, the current findings suggest that the rights issues most prominent for children within the child welfare system may be quite different from those of more “typically developing” young people. Their concern with the most fundamental rights issues – those necessary for basic survival, that most young people outside of the child welfare system likely take for granted - as well as the lack of meaningful distinctions according to their particular history of maltreatment, points to a heightened concern with rights that are immediately, perhaps urgently, important to them, rather than on violations that have occurred in the past. This focus on rights in the “here and now” has been absent in previous work with non-maltreated children and warrants further consideration in relation to current policy.

The results of this study indicated that maltreated young people generally know what it means to have rights and that while in the care of the state, provisions will be made for their ongoing safety and well-being. However, they also know that child
welfare care can be unpredictable (OPACY, 2012a), and even when settled in a stable foster care situation, the “threat” of independence at 18 years of age looms ahead and can be very frightening (OPACY, 2012a, 2012b). While adolescence is known to be a period of emotional tumult and striving for independence (Ochaita & Espinosa, 1997; Peterson-Badali et al., 2003), young people in care have the added burden of worry about their very survival following their 18th birthday, when the state is no longer legally responsible for their care (Toronto Children’s Aid Society, 2011; OPACY, 2012b). Although state care can be extended until the age of 21 for those who remain in school (known as Extended Care and Maintenance [ECM]), the fact that many of these young people experience academic failure and leave school early (in Ontario 44% graduate from High School, versus 81% of those outside care) means that the majority will be on their own at the age of 18 (OPACY, 2012b). At a time when many young people (more than 50% of Canadians aged 20-24), continue to rely on, and need, the support of their parents and families, children in state care are expected to fend for themselves (OPACY, 2012b).

In the current study, the prominence of the most fundamental rights issues – those related to food, clothing and shelter, supports the notion that fending for themselves is indeed a significant preoccupation for maltreated children and youth – lending support to a recent proposal to extend ECM until the age of 25 (OPACY, 2012b). As young people in care often take longer to develop the skills to become independent and to achieve their academic goals (OPACY, 2012b), such a change in policy may help to reduce heightened concerns regarding the fulfillment of basic needs, educational rights, and the early demand to become self-sufficient.
The current practice of rights review with children in care also warrants attention. While the process appears to be effective, in that understanding of entitlement to rights and their inherent nature appears to be enhanced relative to groups outside of care, discussions with child welfare workers indicate that rights reviews are often seen as repetitive and redundant by young people. As a result, workers often truncate the review, stressing the most tangible and concrete issues - those most essential for everyday living (R. Ferguson, personal communication, March 6, 2013; J. Noble, personal communication, March 7, 2013). Results from the present investigation suggest that this practice may contribute to the increased salience of particular rights issues. In addition, reports from those who work with young people in child welfare care reveal that rights issues related to basic needs, especially clothing, are the most common rights complaints (I. Elman, personal communication, April 30, 2013; R. Ferguson, personal communication, March 6, 2013; C. Raposo, personal communication, April 3, 2013). Issues that are normally resolved in the home, negotiated between parents and children, take on heightened significance, proceeding outside the home and through a hierarchy of child welfare staff (C. Raposo, personal communication, April 3, 2013). It is a constant dilemma for workers to negotiate complaints in a manner that will harmoniously maintain a foster care placement (J. Noble, personal communication, March 7, 2013). Currently, all rights complaints carry equal weight and it is challenging to help youth prioritize and negotiate their rights concerns (C. Raposo, personal communication, April 3, 2013). A standardized protocol for rights review that included suggestions for enhancing interest and broadening the scope of rights discussions is past due. Guidelines for prioritizing rights complaints and for conflict resolution should also be part of the template.
In addition, while the specific contribution of rights instruction to conceptions of rights was not determined in this investigation, consistent with the work of Covell and Howe (1999), the current findings argue in favour of the possibility that regular rights review was associated with enhanced understanding. The impact of specific discussions about rights may be that children develop an earlier and more accurate understanding which has relevance outside of the child welfare system. In addition, Covell and Howe (1999) have reported that direct rights instruction has been shown to promote citizenship and respect for the rights of others, which may have impact on other social problems common to young people in care, such as delinquency and incarceration.

Conclusion

In the body of research on understanding of rights, children who have experienced fundamental violations of their rights and been removed from the care of their families, have rarely been the subject of study. Findings from the current work have broadened our knowledge of children’s conceptions of rights generally, and more specifically, in relation to this vulnerable population.

In contrast to the notion that rights understanding may be limited as a result of specific and non-specific vulnerability, or disadvantage, associated with maltreatment and child welfare care, the results of the present investigation indicate that this group of young people hold a different, but not deficient, perspective on rights relative to their non-maltreated peers from previous research. Indeed, while conceptions of rights were broadly similar, children in care were generally more accurate in their definitions of a right. In addition, although the specific type of maltreatment was not significantly related to perspectives on rights, the particular combination of experiences associated with child
welfare care (e.g., maltreatment, rights instruction, institutionalized care) appeared to shape thinking and heighten the salience of specific issues.

Taken together, these results provide interesting insights into the conceptions of nurturance and self-determination rights in children and youth in long-term child welfare care. Findings outline the rather unique perspective on rights in this group, and are strikingly consistent with findings from Costa (2007), the only other investigation of understanding of rights in this population. Although both studies revealed a greater understanding of entitlement to rights, research in the areas of child maltreatment and foster care, as well as discussions with child welfare workers, suggest that children in care remain a very vulnerable group. Their preoccupation with the most basic and fundamental rights issues – those most critical for survival – reinforces this notion and clearly warrants further exploration. Further investigation of the role that rights discussions have in the development of conceptions of rights could help to inform policy and practice in child welfare, and contribute to developmental theory in this area.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A.

LETTER TO SOCIAL WORK STAFF FOR RECRUITMENT

To all LTC Social Work Staff:

RE: Research into the Understanding of Nurturance and Self-determination Rights in Maltreated Children and Youth in Care

Recently, there has been growing attention to the issue of the rights of children and youth in our society, but little is known about how young people understand and think about these issues. We are researchers in child development at the University of Toronto (OISE/UT), and we are conducting a study examining what children and youth think about a variety of rights. Thus far, we have explored rights understanding in several populations, including regular school aged children and young offenders. In this study, we aim to examine the impact of child abuse and/or neglect, both fundamental violations of children’s rights, and of long term care experience in shaping understanding of rights in children and youth.

In order to accomplish this goal, we will need some assistance from you, for which we thank you in advance. We are requesting that each of you examine your caseload for at least two young people who are representative of the normal range of children and youth serviced by your unit. Potential participants should:

- have been physically, sexually, or emotionally abused, or neglected;
- be approximately 11 years of age and older;
- not show evidence of major mental illness (i.e., DSM diagnosed) or cognitive impairment (i.e., IQ below 80);
- be able to participate in a verbal interview;
- have first come into care at approximately age 6 or later.

It was suggested at a focus group with some of the Long Term Care Unit staff that children and youth with regular school attendance may be good candidates for this research (as this is seen to be a normative feature). In addition, potential participants should have been subject to a recent Crown Ward Audit with an available report. In lieu of accessing individual files and to avoid further imposition on your time, this report will enable the researchers to gather the background information necessary to sample a demographically similar comparison group from the community. Finally, as the researcher will be travelling to the participant’s homes, we ask that you choose children and youth residing in or near Toronto (although appropriate children in other locations will also be considered).
Following the identification of a potential participant, we would appreciate it if you would make initial contact to inform the child or youth and his or her caregivers that we are conducting this study and ask whether the child or youth would speak with the researcher and consider participating. As the legal guardian, we ask that you complete and sign a consent form (copies attached) for those who are willing to participate and who are under 16 years of age. Please include a number where we can reach the participant and the names of the caregiver(s) at the child’s home. For youth over 16, please provide the names and phone numbers of those willing to participate and be contacted by the researcher, who will obtain written consent at the time of the interview. **Please note:** youth who are attending PARC will be contacted at one of their regular meetings and will be asked to self-identify.

When we meet with the child or youth, we will explain the study to him or her in detail and obtain assent (or written consent for those over 16) before commencing the research. If the participant is living in foster care, we will ask the foster parents to answer 4 or 5 background information questions (e.g., how many children live in your home?, how many are biological children?, what is your education?, occupation?), in order to match this sample with a demographically similar sample in the community. Whether or not the foster parent agrees to answer these questions **will not** affect participation in the research.

During the interviews, participants will be asked to respond to a series of knowledge questions about rights. Secondly, they will be given a questionnaire which surveys general attitudes toward rights. Finally, children and youth will be asked for some basic demographic information (e.g., age, date of birth, who lives with you?, were you born in Canada?, etc.). We will emphasize that there are no “right” or “wrong” answers to these questions. Participants will be interviewed in the most convenient location, i.e., either in their homes or at the CAST. The interviews will take approximately 45 minutes to an hour. (Our past experience is that young people find the interview interesting).

This study has been approved by the Children’s Aid Society of Toronto and the University of Toronto. Participation in the research project is not required. Each participant will be paid **five dollars** for their time. The child or youth may stop participating at any time, and can choose not to answer questions that he/she does not want to. Every attempt will be made to keep all information from the study confidential. Only the research team will have access to the information except as required by law (e.g., a disclosure of child abuse must be reported to the legal guardian at the CAST). Information will be pooled for statistical analysis and reporting. The interview materials will be kept in a secure filing cabinet at OISE/UT until the data analysis is complete, and then stored in the OISE/UT archives.
The results of the study will be used to fulfill the research requirements for a Doctoral thesis and to write one or more research papers for scholarly journals, and may be reported at scientific conferences. The data gathered during this study may also be used in future research projects. For those interested, a copy of the results of the study will be available at the CAST once the information has been analysed. Participants can also indicate if they wish a summary mailed directly to them.

If you have any questions, please call one of the researchers at the numbers listed below. Please complete one consent for each client under 16 you deem suitable and who indicates willingness to consider participating. For those 16 and over, please provide the researcher with names and contact numbers of appropriate candidates who will consider participating. Consent will be obtained directly from young people age 16 and older. Please keep a copy of the form and this letter for your records. Thank you very much for taking the time to consider this information!

Yours truly,

Michele Peterson-Badali, Ph.D.        Janet Bone
Assistant Professor                  Doctoral Candidate
Department of Human Development      Department of Human Development
and Applied Psychology               and Applied Psychology
OISE/University of Toronto           OISE/University of Toronto
(416) 923-6641, ext. 2586             (416) 526-7323
APPENDIX B.
CAREGIVER/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM

Study Name: Research into the Understanding of Nurturance and Self-determination Rights in Maltreated Children and Youth in Care

Investigators: Michele Peterson-Badali, Ph.D. Janet Bone
Assistant Professor Doctoral Candidate
University of Toronto (OISE/UT) University of Toronto (OISE/UT)
(416) 923-6641, ext. 2586 (416) 526-7323

I understand that the purpose of this study is to examine young people’s understanding of and attitudes toward rights.

I understand that the study will take approximately 45 minutes to an hour to complete and includes individual interviews. Participants will be asked to respond to several questions about rights, complete a questionnaire and to provide some basic demographic information.

I understand that participants may withdraw from the study at any time and may choose not to answer any questions that they do not wish to. I also understand that there is no direct risk or benefit from participating in this study.

I understand that the researcher will need to look at the Crown Ward Audit report for each participant to get some background information (i.e., when the child became a Crown Ward, in what type of care is he/she residing, how many placement changes, etc.).

I understand that every attempt will be made to keep all information obtained during the study confidential. Names will be deleted from all study materials as soon as all necessary information is collected. Only the researchers will have access to the information and it will be released to others only if required by law (e.g., disclosure of an incident of abuse or neglect must be reported to the legal guardian at the CAST).

I understand that if I have questions, I may call the researchers at the above numbers.
Please sign below if you agree to participate in the study, (or agree to have this child participate) and return one copy of this form to the researcher. Keep one copy of the form and the information letter.

I give permission for _____________________________ to participate in this research.

Name of participant

Date: ___________________ Contact Number: __________________________

Name(s) of caregiver(s) at participant’s residence: __________________________

____________________________

Name of person providing consent       Signature of person providing consent       Relationship to participant (e.g., legal guardian)

If you wish to receive a copy of the results, please fill in your complete mailing address, below.

____________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________
Dear Caregiver/Guardian:

RE: Research into the Understanding of Nurturance and Self-determination Rights in Maltreated Children and Youth in Care

Recently, there has been growing attention to the issue of rights for children and youth in our society, but little is known about how young people understand and think about these issues. We are researchers in child development at the University of Toronto (OISE/UT), and are conducting a study to examine what children and youth think about a variety of rights. Thus far, we have explored rights understanding in several populations, including regular school children and young offenders. In this investigation we would like to explore the impact of abuse and/or neglect, both fundamental violations of children’s rights, and the long term CAS care experience, in shaping children’s understanding of rights.

The study consists of several parts. First, we will ask each participant some general questions about children’s rights. Next, we will ask him or her to complete a questionnaire which surveys general attitudes towards rights. Finally, we will also ask the child or youth for some basic background information, such as: date of birth, current age, birthplace, etc. We emphasize that there are no “right” or “wrong” answers to these questions. Participants will be paid five dollars for their time and will be interviewed in the most convenient location, i.e., either in their homes or at the CAST. Total participation time will be 45 minutes to an hour. While there are no direct risks or benefits to participation in this study, most participants find it to be an interesting experience.

This study has been approved by the Children’s Aid Society of Toronto and the University of Toronto. Participation in the research project is not required. The child may stop participating at any time, and can choose not to answer questions that he/she does not want to. Every attempt will be made to keep all information from the study confidential. Only the research team will have access to the information except as required by law (e.g., a disclosure of child abuse must be reported to the legal guardian at the CAST). Information will be pooled for statistical analysis and reporting. The interview materials will be kept in a secure filing cabinet at OISE/UT until the data analysis is complete, and then stored in the OISE/UT archives.

The results of the study will be used to fulfill the research requirements for a Doctoral thesis and to write one or more research papers for scholarly journals, and may
be reported at scientific conferences. The data gathered during this study may also be used in future research projects. For those interested, a copy of the results of the study will be available at the CAST once the information has been analysed. Participants can also indicate if they wish a summary mailed directly to them.

If you have any questions, please call one of the numbers listed below. Please keep a copy of this letter for your records. Thank you very much for taking the time to consider this information!

Yours truly,

Michele Peterson-Badali, Ph.D.  Janet Bone
Assistant Professor  Doctoral Candidate
Department of Human Development  Department of Human Development
and Applied Psychology  and Applied Psychology
OISE/University of Toronto  OISE/University of Toronto
(416) 923-6641, ext. 2586  (416) 526-7323
APPENDIX D.

LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

Dear Young Person:

RE: Research into the Understanding of Nurturance and Self-determination Rights in Maltreated Children and Youth in Care

Recently, there has been growing attention to the issue of children’s rights in our society, but little is known about how young people understand and think about these issues. We are researchers of child development at the University of Toronto (OISE/UT), and are conducting a study examining what young people think about a variety of rights. The study has been approved by the Children’s Aid Society of Toronto and University of Toronto.

As young people who have been in various forms of care, we believe that you have valuable knowledge, experience and opinions to bring to the work we are doing on children’s rights. Therefore, we would like to include you in this research. If you decide to participate, we will conduct an individual interview with you. During the interview, we will ask you some general questions about rights and for examples of rights situations. Next, you will fill out a questionnaire which asks for opinions about whether children and youth should have a number of different rights. Finally, we will need some basic information about you, like your birth date, current age, where you live, etc. All of this will take about 45 minutes to an hour to complete and you will be paid five dollars for your time. It is important to remember that there are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions we will be asking during this study. Further, it will be important for us to have some information about how you came into care and what has happened to you since then. To get this information we will need to look at a few pieces of specific information in your CAST records.

After the individual interviews have been completed, we will conduct a group discussion with other young people who attend the Pape Adolescent Resource Centre (PARC). In this discussion, we would like to hear your opinions about and experiences of children’s rights. We would also like to know what rights you consider to be important or relevant to you. The discussion will take place at PARC, during one of your regularly scheduled sessions, and will last about an hour. It will be audiotaped so that we can remember and write down what you say afterwards. After the discussion has been transcribed (written down), we will erase the tape. No names will be recorded in the written record of the discussion.
You do not have to participate in this research. If you do choose to participate, you may stop participating at any time, and can choose not to participate in discussions of issues that you do not want to. There is no direct risk or benefit to you as a result of participating in this study. All participants will be asked to keep the discussions that occur in the group confidential, except as required by law (e.g., a disclosure of child abuse must be reported to your guardian/worker at the CAST).

If you are willing to participate, please sign the attached consent forms. Please keep one copy of the form, as well as the letter, for your records and return the other copy to ____________________. If you have any questions about the study, you may call the researchers at the numbers listed below. Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in this study!

Yours truly,

Michele Peterson-Badali, Ph.D. Janet Bone
Assistant Professor Doctoral Candidate
Department of Human Development Department of Human Development
and Applied Psychology and Applied Psychology
OISE/University of Toronto OISE/University of Toronto
(416) 923-6641, ext. 2586 (416) 331-0905 (pager)
APPENDIX E.

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Study Name: Understanding of Nurturance and Self-determination Rights in Maltreated Children and Youth in Care

Investigators: Michele Peterson-Badali, Ph.D. Janet Bone
             Assistant Professor Doctoral Candidate
             University of Toronto (OISE/UT) University of Toronto (OISE/UT)
             (416) 923-6641, ext. 2586 (416) 526-7323

I understand that I am being asked to participate in an individual interview about children’s rights. The interview will take place at my home, the Pape Adolescent Resource Centre (PARC) or the Children’s Aid Society of Toronto (CAST) and will include answering some questions about young people’s rights, filling out a questionnaire giving my opinions about rights children and youth should have and providing some background information about myself.

I understand that all information collected by the researcher will be kept confidential and that only the people involved in the study will see my answers.

I understand that it will be important for the researcher to have some information about how I came into care and what has happened to me since then and that to get this information the researcher will need to look at a few specific items in your CAS record.

I understand that I will be paid for my time.

I understand that I do not have to participate in this research. If I choose to participate, I may stop participating at any time, and can choose not to participate in discussions of issues that I do not want to. I further understand that there is no direct risk or benefit to me as a result of participating in this study.

I understand that if I have any questions about the study at any point in time, I may call the researcher at the number listed above.
If you agree to participate in the study, please sign below and return one copy of this form to the researcher. Keep one copy for yourself.

☐ I agree to participate in the interview and discussion group described above.

Date: ___________________________

__________________________________________  __________________________________________
Name of person providing consent            Signature of person providing consent
(Please print)

If you wish to receive a copy of the results, please fill in your complete mailing address, below.

__________________________________________
__________________________________________
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APPENDIX F.

ASSENT FORM

Study Name: Understanding of Nurturance and Self-determination Rights in Maltreated Children and Youth in Care

Investigators: Michele Peterson-Badali, Ph.D. Janet Bone
Assistant Professor Doctoral Candidate
University of Toronto (OISE/UT) University of Toronto (OISE/UT)
(416) 923-6641, ext. 2586 (416) 526-7323

Why are we doing this study? I am a researcher of child development at the University of Toronto, and I am part of a study looking at what young people think about children’s rights.

What will happen during the study? There are several parts to this study. First, I would like to ask some general questions about kids’ rights and for examples of rights situations. Next, you will be requested to answer a questionnaire which asks for opinions about whether children should have a number of different rights. Finally, I will also need some basic information about you, like your birth date, current age, where you live, etc. All of this will take about 45 minutes to an hour to complete. You will be paid for your time. It is important to remember that there are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions I will be asking you during this study.

It will be important for me to have some information about how you came into care and what has happened to you since then. To get this information I will need to look at a few specific items in your CAST record.

Can I decide if I want to be in the study? You do not have to participate in the study if you don’t want to, and if you do decide to participate, you can decide not to answer any questions that you don’t want to. You can also stop participating in the study at any time and no one will be upset with you.

Who will know what I did in the study? I will write down your answers to the questions that I ask. If you fill out a questionnaire, those answers will also be kept in the form you see them. You will be asked to write your name at the top of the questionnaire. To protect your privacy, your interview information will be given a number and when it is matched with your CAST file information, your name will be removed from all data.
collected for this research. All of this information is confidential and *only the researchers involved in the study will see your answers*, except as required by law (e.g., if you disclose an incident of abuse or neglect it must be reported to your worker at the CAST).

If you do not understand a question or a word or need something explained better, you can ask me at any time throughout the interview. If you or your guardian/caregiver want information about the results of the study, we will send you a summary of the results.

**Do you have any questions? Would you like to participate?**

---

**Assent**

I was present when ___________________________ read/was read this form and gave written/verbal assent.

__________________________________________  ______________________________________
Name of person who obtained verbal assent  Name of person giving written assent

__________________________________________  ______________________________________
Signature  Date
APPENDIX G.

RIGHTS QUESTIONS

ID # ____________________________  Date: ____________________________

1. (a) Describe a situation involving a children’s rights issue. It does not have to be a situation that has happened to you.

1. (b) What right is involved?

2. (a) Describe a situation involving a children’s rights issue that typically happens in the home or involves parents. It does not have to be a situation that has happened to you or your family.

2. (b) What right is involved?
3. (a) Describe a situation involving a children’s rights issue that typically happens at school. It does not have to be a situation that has happened to you or at your school.

3. (b) What right is involved?

4. (a) Describe a situation involving a children’s rights issue that typically happens, not at home or at school, but in society, or out in the world (for example, it can be a situation that happens in a hospital, in a bank, in your neighbourhood, in our city, or in other countries).

4. (b) What right is involved?
APPENDIX H.

KNOWLEDGE RIGHTS QUESTIONS

ID # ___________________________  Date: _______________________

1. What is a right?

2. What rights do kids have?

3. Why should kids have rights?

4. Can anyone take away your rights? Who and why, or why not?

5. What rights do parents have?
APPENDIX I.

QUESTIONNAIRE TO ELICIT OPINIONS ABOUT CHILDREN’S RIGHTS

Name: ________________________________  ID #: __________________

This questionnaire asks for your opinions about children’s rights. We are interested in understanding how children and adults think about what rights children should have. **When reading the statements on this survey, please think of children aged 12.**

Each sentence in this questionnaire represents an opinion and there are no right or wrong answers. You will probably disagree with some sentences and agree with others. We are also interested in how much you agree or disagree with each sentence.

**Some of the questions may sound similar,** so read each sentence *carefully*. Then circle the number which best corresponds or matches your opinion. The numbers and what they mean are listed below.

- If you disagree strongly, circle 1.
- If you disagree somewhat, circle 2.
- If you disagree slightly, circle 3.
- If you agree slightly, circle 4.
- If you agree somewhat, circle 5.
- If you agree strongly, circle 6.

First impressions are usually best. Read each sentence, decide if you agree or disagree and how much you agree or disagree, and then circle the appropriate number.

If you feel that the numbers do not reflect your opinion adequately, circle the number closest to the way you feel.

Thank you for filling out our questionnaire!

😊
1. *Parents should be required to take their children for counselling when they are having emotional problems at school*

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2. *Money from taxes should be used to ensure that children receive quality child care*

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3. *Children should have the right to decide which recreational activities they will participate in*

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4. *Even if parents are extremely busy, they should always make themselves available to talk with their child if the child has a problem*

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5. *Decisions about a child's medical treatment should be made by the child, even if the child's life is at stake*

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6. *Children should have the right to express ideas or opinions in school newspapers, even if many teachers may not agree with them*

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7. *Children should have the right to adequate clothing*

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8. Children should have the right to a quality education

1 2 3 4 5 6
strongly disagree  somewhat disagree  slightly disagree  slightly agree  somewhat agree  strongly agree

9. Children should have the right to receive adequate dental care

1 2 3 4 5 6
strongly disagree  somewhat disagree  slightly disagree  slightly agree  somewhat agree  strongly agree

10.* Children should have to get permission from their parents before taking a job

1 2 3 4 5 6
strongly disagree  somewhat disagree  slightly disagree  slightly agree  somewhat agree  strongly agree

11. Children should have the right to choose what they wear even if their parents disapprove

1 2 3 4 5 6
strongly disagree  somewhat disagree  slightly disagree  slightly agree  somewhat agree  strongly agree

12. Children should have the right to decide which school they will attend

1 2 3 4 5 6
strongly disagree  somewhat disagree  slightly disagree  slightly agree  somewhat agree  strongly agree

13. Children should have the right to choose which religion they practice, even if it is different from their parents

1 2 3 4 5 6
strongly disagree  somewhat disagree  slightly disagree  slightly agree  somewhat agree  strongly agree

14. Children should have the right to quality child care

1 2 3 4 5 6
strongly disagree  somewhat disagree  slightly disagree  slightly agree  somewhat agree  strongly agree
15.* Parents should be able to enter a child's room without the child's permission

1  2  3  4  5  6
strongly disagree  somewhat disagree  slightly disagree  slightly agree  somewhat agree  strongly agree

16. Children should have the right to an adequate breakfast

1  2  3  4  5  6
strongly disagree  somewhat disagree  slightly disagree  slightly agree  somewhat agree  strongly agree

17. Children should have the right to choose their friends

1  2  3  4  5  6
strongly disagree  somewhat disagree  slightly disagree  slightly agree  somewhat agree  strongly agree

18. Children should have the right to keep their diary private from their parents

1  2  3  4  5  6
strongly disagree  somewhat disagree  slightly disagree  slightly agree  somewhat agree  strongly agree

19.* Adequate clothing for children may be a goal of our society, but it should not be a right for every child

1  2  3  4  5  6
strongly disagree  somewhat disagree  slightly disagree  slightly agree  somewhat agree  strongly agree

20. Children should have the right to an adequate home environment

1  2  3  4  5  6
strongly disagree  somewhat disagree  slightly disagree  slightly agree  somewhat agree  strongly agree

21.* Dental care should be provided to children only when their parents can pay for it

1  2  3  4  5  6
strongly disagree  somewhat disagree  slightly disagree  slightly agree  somewhat agree  strongly agree
22.* Parents should be able to keep children from seeing television shows dealing with content that parents consider inappropriate

1 2 3 4 5 6
strongly disagree somewhat disagree slightly disagree slightly agree somewhat agree strongly agree

23.* Money from taxes should be spent to ensure that all children receive a quality education whether they are rich or poor

1 2 3 4 5 6
strongly disagree somewhat disagree slightly disagree slightly agree somewhat agree strongly agree

24. Parents should be able to read their child’s diary if they have concerns about their child

1 2 3 4 5 6
strongly disagree somewhat disagree slightly disagree slightly agree somewhat agree strongly agree

25. Children should have the right to keep their room locked even if their parents are concerned about what might be in it

1 2 3 4 5 6
strongly disagree somewhat disagree slightly disagree slightly agree somewhat agree strongly agree

26. Children should have the right to receive medical treatment even if their parents forbid it on religious grounds

1 2 3 4 5 6
strongly disagree somewhat disagree slightly disagree slightly agree somewhat agree strongly agree

27. Children should have the right to practice their religion

1 2 3 4 5 6
strongly disagree somewhat disagree slightly disagree slightly agree somewhat agree strongly agree

28. The government should be required to help parents provide an adequate home environment for children

1 2 3 4 5 6
Strongly disagree somewhat disagree slightly disagree slightly agree somewhat agree strongly agree
29. Children should have the right to receive medical treatment when necessary

1 2 3 4 5 6
Strongly disagree somewhat disagree slightly disagree slightly agree somewhat agree strongly agree

30. Children should have the right to wear what they want

1 2 3 4 5 6
Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree slightly disagree slightly agree somewhat agree strongly agree

31. Schools should be required to provide breakfasts for those children who don't get adequate breakfasts at home

1 2 3 4 5 6
Strongly disagree somewhat disagree slightly disagree slightly agree somewhat agree strongly agree

32. Children should have the right to work if they choose

1 2 3 4 5 6
Strongly disagree somewhat disagree slightly disagree slightly agree somewhat agree strongly agree

33.* It is up to parents to decide which recreational activities are too rough or dangerous for their children to play

1 2 3 4 5 6
Strongly disagree somewhat disagree slightly disagree slightly agree somewhat agree strongly agree

34. Children should have the right to choose what they watch on television

1 2 3 4 5 6
Strongly disagree somewhat disagree slightly disagree slightly agree somewhat agree strongly agree

35. Children should have the right to have their emotional needs taken care of by their parents

1 2 3 4 5 6
Strongly disagree somewhat disagree slightly disagree slightly agree somewhat agree strongly agree
36. Children should have the right to express their ideas and opinions

1 2 3 4 5 6
strongly disagree somewhat disagree slightly disagree slightly agree somewhat agree strongly agree

37. Children should have the right to counselling when they are having emotional problems at school

1 2 3 4 5 6
strongly disagree somewhat disagree slightly disagree slightly agree somewhat agree strongly agree

38. Decisions about a child's routine medical treatment, e.g., getting a needle, should be made by the child

1 2 3 4 5 6
strongly disagree somewhat disagree slightly disagree slightly agree somewhat agree strongly agree

39. Children should have the right to choose which school to attend, even if their parents disagree

1 2 3 4 5 6
strongly disagree somewhat disagree slightly disagree slightly agree somewhat agree strongly agree

40. Children should have the right to choose their friends even if their parents don’t approve

1 2 3 4 5 6
strongly disagree somewhat disagree slightly disagree slightly agree somewhat agree strongly agree
# APPENDIX J.

## DEMOGRAPHIC INTERVIEW AND QUESTIONNAIRE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>ID #</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. **What is your age?**  
   
   ________ years and ________ months old  
   
   **Date of Birth:**  

2. **What is your sex?**  
   
   [ ] Male   [ ] Female  
   
   Do you go to school?  
   
   [ ] Yes   [ ] No  
   
   **Grade:**  

3. **Who lives with you?**  

4. **How long have you lived with those you are living with now?**  

5. **Which language do you speak?** Any others?  

6. **Were you born in Canada?**  
   
   [ ] Yes   [ ] No  

7. If you were **not** born in Canada, what country were you born in?  

8. If you were **not** born in Canada, how many years have you lived in Canada?  

9. **What do you consider your ethnicity to be?**  
   
   [ ] Aboriginal   [ ] Black   [ ] East Asian   [ ] Hispanic   [ ] Mid Eastern   [ ] South Asian   [ ] South East Asian   [ ] White or European   [ ] Other (please specify)
NOTE: closed-ended categories will be developed for questions in consultation with CAST frontline staff and supervisors (e.g., CAST may have internal definitions or categories for severity of abuse).

1 At what age did this child
   a) first come into care? _______________________
   b) become a Crown ward? _______________________

2 For what reason, i.e., what kind of abuse?
   □ Physical       □ Sexual       □ Emotional       □ Neglect

3 How severe was the abuse?

4 In what type of home does this child currently live? for how long?

5 In socioeconomic terms, how would the child’s current situation be described?

6 How many changes in placement has this child had?
APPENDIX K.
CODING GUIDE

Coding for Self-Generated Questions

June 2002 Revisions

Coding Categories

1. Code for Nurturance (N) (care, protection) and then one of the categories within it, e.g., N7
2. Self Determination (SD)(choice, freedom, decision-making) and then one of the categories within it, e.g., SD9
3. Misconception (kids have too many rights, kids have the right to obey their parents)
4. Vague/Other (cannot fit into one of the above categories or is too vague to code)
   Examples: right to live, right to use public places

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nurturance</th>
<th>Self-Determination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Abuse and Safety</td>
<td>8. Privacy*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Education</td>
<td>9. Speech /Thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Medical</td>
<td>10. Religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Leisure and Recreation</td>
<td>11. Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Child Labor and Military Service</td>
<td>12. Expression / Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15. DM Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16. DM Discretionary time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17. DM Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                                                | 18. **Nurturance or Self-determination -**
|                                                |   legal/gov’t/societal                   |
|                                                | 19. **Nurturance or Self-determination -**
|                                                |   care specific                         |
|                                                | 20. Misconception                       |
|                                                | 21. Other                               |
|                                                | 22. Don’t know/no response              |

Note:  * 8-13 are considered one “civil liberties” category
       ** 14-17 are considered one “decision-making” category
General Coding Rules

Code the first question “Describe a situation . . . ,” then combine the information from “What makes it a children’s rights issue?” and “What right is involved?” together to form the second code.

Code into one of the content categories (of either nurturance or self-determination). Note: some categories (i.e., Discrimination) could be coded as either Nurturance or Self-Determination. You can code as either one, as they will be entered as two separate variables. This issue will be explored further at a later date.

Matching Rule: You should code one idea only. If there are multiple ideas listed, code the idea which is overriding for the respondent. For example, if the child gives an example of physical abuse as the situation, and then talks about the right to speak out and the right to be safe in the second section (“What makes it a children’s rights issue?” and “What right is involved?”), code the second part as Abuse and Safety. Conversely, there may be multiple ideas described in the first part (the situation), such as kids being forced to work and therefore not being able to go to school. In this case, you would look at the second part and see what the main idea is for the respondent (i.e., child labor or education) and code the first part for this idea. If there are identical rights described in both parts, code the first one listed.

Basic Needs Rule: If there are multiple ideas in both sections and one idea does not appear to stand out, and one of the basic needs is listed, code as Basic Needs, i.e., respondent says, “food, shelter, education, the right not to be abused,” etc. in their answer, code as Basic Needs.

Deciding between Multiple vs. Basic Needs Rules: If there are multiple ideas in both sections, and Basic Needs in only one section, choose the Matching rule over the Basic Needs rule.

Specific Rule: If there is both a specific and a general idea mentioned, code for the most specific, i.e., “Children should be able to decide what activities they want to do. Their parents should tell the kids in advance what they’re going to do, so the child doesn’t get disappointed or upset. They should have the right to say that they want to do something or they don’t want to go to that place.” While this could be coded as Decision-Making general or Decision-Making Discretionary time, code as the second (DM16) as it is more specific.

Consultation Rule: When the situation is described so that it is difficult to know what issue is being discussed, consult the second part to find out what the issue is. However, if the description is vague and/or does not sound like an issue, code as Other.
Notes re. some Difficult Categories:

**Discrimination** covers items which pertain to equal and equitable treatment. This includes various forms of non-inclusion or unfair treatment because someone is different in some way. This treatment can include denial of access to opportunity (such as not being allowed to play with the other kids, or not being allowed to get a job), teasing, etc. The criteria for being different can include both inherent attributes (i.e., age, race, religion) or voluntary lifestyle choices (wearing a nose ring, being a vegetarian).

**Examples of Discrimination (Equity):**
“The house has Internet access in one of several computers and is shared by all members of the family. The children like to monopolize the computer to play games with friends connected to the Internet.”

**Expression/Identity** has to do with the ability to express oneself freely through appearance and life style choice. It also has to do with the right to be yourself and have your own identity. In this case, the respondent does not mention discrimination by others due to their choices, i.e., the child being allowed by the parent to get her belly button pierced because the child feels that it is part of her identity. **DOES NOT INCLUDE** “what to wear” (coded as SD14)

**Examples of Expression/Identity:**
“To choose . . . to be able to be who you are without being criticized. The right to be yourself and still have love and friends.”
“To be whatever you want.”

**Speech/Thought** has to do with the child having the right to speak, have a say in the family, express an opinion. A good example of this category is the right to “say what you think.” This differs from **Psychological Needs** in that the focus is on the child’s expression, not on the parent’s responsiveness. For example if the child talks about “being heard” without talking about “being responded to,” code as Speech/Thought. If there is reference to the child’s right to have a parent be responsive to a child’s opinions, code as Psychological Needs. Speech/thought differs from **Decision-Making** in that the child is not necessarily having his/her opinion exercised.

**Leisure and Recreation** - has to do with the right to play and have fun. This differs from DM Discretionary Time in that there is no mention of the child making decisions about where to play, type of play, rules to play by, etc.

**Example of Leisure and Recreation**
“Kids have the right to play so if their parents make them read for a really long time after school then they should be able to play . . . if they don’t really like reading they should be able to play.”
Example of DM Discretionary Time

"Sometimes in the fall they rake up the leaves and the kids like to jump in them and then they get mad at the kids. It’s not right. They put them out in the open and they don’t have a sign saying “Don’t jump in the leaves.”

Psychological Needs (formerly Dignity and Respect) has to do with the way the child is treated. For example, this includes dignity and respect, caring, fairness, due process, sensitivity, inclusion, acceptance and affective responsiveness. In some cases, due process can include the child being able to “explain their side of the story.” It can also pertain to the parent acting as an “advocate” for the child, protecting, or “guiding” the child in some way. Issues of discipline, reward, punishment or parenting are coded under this category. Issues of the child “knowing what is going on” (i.e., parents keeping secrets from their kids) are also coded under this category. This category also includes examples of developmental needs, including physical development. However, if only “the right to be a child” is mentioned, with no other elaboration, code this response as Other.

Psychological Needs vs. Abuse and Safety:

In general, when deciding between Abuse and Safety and Psychological Needs code all physical abuse, security (i.e., children in war-torn countries), protection or safety issues under Abuse and Safety. Also code as Abuse and Safety when situations describe verbal intimidation or threats, using words such as “bullying” or “verbal abuse.” Spanking as a form of discipline is normally coded under Psychological Needs. Some situations with the word “bullying” should coded carefully, as the word is often used indiscriminately when the situation does not imply a threat to someone’s safety. Situations describing “yelling,” “teasing,” “making fun of someone,” “hurting someone’s feelings” or “not being nice to someone” are coded as Psychological Needs. If unclear, go with Psychological Needs.

Psychological Needs vs. Discrimination:

The major difference between this category and the Discrimination category is that Discrimination denotes unequal treatment based on a comparison with other people (i.e., being teased because you are different from other kids), and Psychological Needs does not do so. For example, unfair treatment coded as Psychological Needs could be the following:

“Getting called down to the office for something you didn’t do. For example, one of the teachers thought you were picking a fight with somebody when you were really just talking (arguing). It’s unfair. You weren’t fighting really. It was just an argument. It’s unfair for kids.”

Other Examples of Psychological Needs:

e.g., “Children’s parents should not be too busy to pay attention to them. They should not be too caught up in their own lives to spend time with them.”
“Children should have a right to an advocate who will act on their behalf in dealing with anyone in the medical system. Children do not command the attention, nor do they know when to speak up in situations involving stays to the hospital or visits to doctors.” (NOTE: this response may be best considered as “discrimination” response—it is not from the CAS study)

“A child should be responded to when he or she has a problem in their life. It shouldn’t just be parents who have to respond quickly; she has the right to ask a question and she must be answered.”

“Children have the right to have a family that is nice to them.”

“Parents shouldn’t yell at kids.” “Right to have a family.”

“Right to talk to their friends.” “Right to be happy.” “Right to enjoy themselves.”

“Right to be treated fairly.” “Right to be loved.” “Right to a stable home.”

**Summary of Nurturance Examples**

1. **Abuse and Safety:** children have the right to be safe, to not to be beaten up in school, bullying, verbal abuse denoting intimidation, verbal threats, “the right to life” (i.e., not being killed because you are of the wrong gender)
   *e.g., right to live in a safe home/environment*

2. **Education:** a child needs to be able to go to school
   *e.g., right to be taught in a way you understand, right to ask the teacher questions and get answers*

3. **Medical:** children have the right to immunizations, access to medical care
   *e.g., right to proper hygiene when in hospital, to have a healthy environment*

4. **Leisure and recreation:** children have the right to have fun and play, not have to do home work all the time, to get weekends off from school, to have friends, to socialize, to have a social life

5. **Child Labour:** should not be forced to work long hours, military service, sweatshops, conditions of labour (i.e., babysitting without getting paid)

6. **Basic Needs:** have food, clothes, shelter, clean air and water, to be able to wash and have personal hygiene

7. **Psychological needs**
   **Dignity and Respect**
   Caring/Affective Responsiveness: such as needing friends/friendship, being loved
   Advocacy: including asking for help for oneself, someone sticking up for you
   Guidance: including having someone to talk to
   Fair Treatment/Discipline
Developmental Concerns: including stability

Summary of Self-Determination Examples

8 Privacy: child can keep a diary and not have others read it, right to personal property/information, theft, includes issues of personal space, right to keep opinions to yourself

9 Speech /Thought: children should be able to voice their opinions and be heard, voting, speaking/standing up for yourself, includes free speech, right to disagree with parents and have own opinions, express feelings

10 Religion: have right to practice a religion without persecution, or to have a religion that is different from your parents, or to not practice your parents’ religion.

11 Association: the right to spend time with individuals of their choosing

12 Expression / Identity: can have earrings, colored hair, be a vegetarian, can “be yourself,” what clothes to wear e.g., “some people have their own way of dressing”

13 Discrimination: not being allowed into a store because you are a kid, being teased because you are “different” in some way

14 Decision Making (DM) general/other: not otherwise specified below, includes “freedom,” “being able to do what you want,” “being independent,” “the right to autonomy,” “the right to say no,” “the right to self-determination.” Also includes those self-determination examples not covered by other categories, such as having a bank account (spend your money how you want), deciding whether to have an abortion, deciding which parent to live with after a separation/divorce, whether to date, freedom of movement (walking to school by yourself), kissing someone because your parents make you, marriage outside culture, right to property, business opportunities, passport, right to drive, work, wear/eat what you want, right to be in a public place

15 DM Health: make decision about health and medication, medical treatment, proper diet, sleep, proper clothing, bodily functions (being let out of class to go to the washroom), right to your body, exercise, personal hygiene, e.g., to have a shower 3x a day if I want, doing drugs

16 DM Discretionary time (career, job, rec /leisure, church): to have a job, what to be, household duties, recreational time, time management, extra-curricular activities, rules of play, type of play, specific activities

17 DM Education: what school they go to, courses to take, curriculum
18 Legal/governmental/societal: access to a lawyer, to call the police for help, welfare, right to defend yourself or protect your property (could be either Nurturance or Self-Determination)  
e.g., “like if you’re having a problem, you can talk to the police about it” (9)

19 Care Specific: having to do with being in the child welfare system (could be either Nurturance or Self-Determination)  
e.g., “right to have contact with family,” “if kid doesn’t like where they stay they have the right to call CAS and get placed in foster care or move or something”

20 Misconception  
e.g., “right to get an allowance (104),” “people looking at you bad . . . provoking (002),” “neighbours should be kind to each other . . . should not get mad if neighbour comes on your grass” (102)

21 Other

22 Don’t know/no response
APPENDIX L.

CODING MANUAL FOR DECLARATIVE RIGHTS QUESTIONS

Revised February 2006

Q1: What is a right?
Q2: What rights do kids have?
Q3: Why should kids have rights?
Q4: Can anyone take away your rights? Who? Why?
Q5: What rights do parents have?

Categories for Coding “What is a right?”
Created August 8, 2000 (M. Peterson-Badali & S. Correia)
1st revision August 13, 2001 (based on training with Tara; given to Barb)
2nd revision July 12, 2004
3rd revision October 2006 (J. Bone)

Each answer is coded as present (1) or absent (0), according to the following categories:

1 Unconditional Entitlement
This category refers to an answer in which a right is described as the (innate) ability, or entitlement, to do whatever one pleases, without mentioning any limits or boundaries. It may also involve an element of “freedom.” Entitlement is broader than desire. It is . . .
e.g., “when you can do whatever you want,” “something you can do . . . no one can stop you,” “to get/have freedom,” “something people cannot tell you not to do, because it is your right (003),” “something that should not be questioned . . . (044),” “something you can do . . . you’re allowed to do . . . and you won’t get in trouble (049)”

2 Conditional Entitlement
This category refers to an answer in which a right is described as the (innate) ability, or entitlement, to do whatever one pleases, with certain limits imposed, such as the rights of other people.
e.g., “a right is something you are entitled to do by yourself and no one else can stop you unless what you’re doing offends someone or harms someone in any way,” “something you are allowed to do and if it’s not bad, then no one can stop you,” “a protection . . . some rights protected by law . . . cannot be taken away unless invading someone else’s rights”
3 Privilege/Something someone is allowed or deserves
This category refers to an answer in which a right is described as a privilege, or something one is allowed or deserves to do. Essentially, someone else grants the ability or freedom to do something, or something that is allowed by someone else. It may also involve something someone deserves.
e.g., “when someone is given the privilege to do something,” “a privilege you get . . . something you’re allowed to do,” “something that gives you permission . . . the option,” “a right is something that you are allowed to get, to do, that you are allowed to have”

**Note:** responses will frequently include both a “to do/to have/can do” response as well as an “allowed to/deserves to/has permission to.” In such cases, use the entire response to determine the appropriate way to categorize it and to determine whether the response has been improved from category 5 to 3 (or otherwise).

4 Desire
This category refers to an answer in which a right is described as the desire to do something. It may be more vague than the above listed categories.
e.g., “a right is what someone wants to do”

5 To Do/You Have/Can or Are Able to do
This category refers to an (vague) answer in which a right is simply described as something one can do, has, or is able to. If the answer is more specific, code it appropriately as described, i.e., if a right is described as something one wants to do, it should be coded as Desire; if a right is described as something one is allowed to do, it should be coded as a Privilege; if a right is described as the ability to do whatever one wants, it should be coded as Unconditional Entitlement.
e.g., “right to have things . . . to own things . . . your own rights . . .,” “when you have the power to do something like talk when you want to talk . . . to do stuff”

6 Belief/Principle
This category refers to an answer in which a right is described as a belief or a principle.
e.g., “something you believe in”

7 Law/Rules
This category refers to an answer in which a right is described as a law, or rules that need to be followed.
e.g., “they’re kind of like laws” “guaranteed under a constitution” “a rule you should obey, something that you have to obey” “set of guidelines,” “like a rule that should be obeyed . . . what you’re allowed to do and can’t do (019),” “. . . kind of like a list of things of what you should and should not do . . . (088)”
8 Needs
This category refers to a response in which a right is described as something that someone needs.
e.g., “a right is when you have . . . when you need something . . . like when you need health care (046)”

9 Entitlement
This category refers to a response in which a right is described as something that someone must/should have, is entitled to (by virtue of being human).
e.g., “something you are entitled to,” “an entitlement,” “something all kids have . . . cannot be taken away,” “something you have to have . . . not something that’s given . . . something you are born with,” “an inherent possession,” “something everybody should have . . . to live in the world and society . . . to make everything fair,” “it’s like a MUST,” “something you are allowed to do . . . like a personal need . . . you have to have it (008),” “it’s like a privilege, but you have it all the time . . . (043)”

10 Examples Without a Definition
This category refers to a response in which the participant provides examples of various rights instead of trying to describe what a right is.
e.g., “I have a right to food, clothing, shelter” “I have a right to privacy,” “right to know some things . . . like what the punishment is . . . (024)”

11 Misconception
This category refers to an answer in which a right is clearly misunderstood, and (usually) confused with another (homonymous) meaning of the word “right.”
e.g., “a right is when you write something,” “a right is when you do something good,” “something that helps you to be safe . . . fulfills you as a person . . . helps you to express things”

12 Other
   e.g., “it’s like an oath . . . kind of like a list of things that you should and should not do,” “something that keeps you safe (006)”

13 Don’t know/No Response
***if rights examples are given for this question (e.g., to eat, to privacy, etc.), please include these as responses for question “What rights do kids have?”
CODING INSTRUCTIONS

The goal is to code in a mutually exclusive way. That is, NOT to code every answer a participant gives, but to code the overall idea of what he/she is describing as a right. If a participant gives 2 (or more) distinct ideas which cannot be coded into one general category, then code the “intended” answer or the category to which the answer culminates, whenever possible.

In a similar vein, when a participant gives an answer which involves both a misconception and another answer, (e.g., “you mean to write something . . . (Q) . . . oh, a right is something you can do”), then only code the other answer (something you can do: coded as TO DO).

The goal is to be able to order the categories in an ordinal fashion, according to how rights are conceptualized (lower to higher conceptual understanding of rights). For example, understanding a right as a conditional entitlement is more conceptually complex or mature than understanding a right as an unconditional entitlement.

****N.B. if a response to a later declarative question indicates that a participant has a higher order understanding of rights than was originally coded for “what is a right?” (e.g., something is clarified by an answer to another question), go back and include in the coding for the “what is a right?” question (i.e., recode “what is a right?”).

Typical examples of each category:

Unconditional Entitlement
10603 “is when you can do anything you want”
10604 “nobody tells you what to do—you live your own life”
10605 “Black people never had rights to do what they wanted to do”
10606 “could do something without anyone telling you what to do”
10607 “right to do something, if someone tells you to do something, you don’t have to”
10608 “the right way . . . Q . . . freedom to say what you want to say”
054 “something you have no matter what . . . no one can take it away from you”
013 “something no one can tell you not to do or not to have”
058 “something that you are given . . . cannot be taken away . . . gives you more freedom”
Conditional Entitlement

“something you’re entitled to do by yourself and no one else can stop you unless what you’re doing offends someone or harms someone in any way”

“not a privilege . . . something every individual is supposed to have . . . you can do whatever you wish . . . like swing your arms around but as soon as u start to hit someone it stops . . . there’s a limit to what you can do”

“something you are supposed to have, not something given to you . . . like I have the right to privacy but if I’m always hiding weapons and drugs and stuff . . . it might get taken away and I have to earn it back”

“. . . if you have a right to do something, you can do it but not over do it . . .”

“like you have freedom . . . but there are some things you can do and some you can’t . . .”

Privilege

“when someone is given the privilege to do something”

“. . . something you’re allowed to do”

“. . . like a privilege . . . you can lose it or earn it”

“something that is given to you and you should not abuse it . . . take care of it . . . basically a privilege”

“a right is something that you are allowed to get, to do, that you are allowed to have”

Desire

“What someone wants to”

To Do/You Have/Can Do

“something that you are able to do or can do”

“to write something . . . Q . . . right to do things, e.g., to vote”

“right to do something”

“when you have the power to do something like talk when you want to talk . . . to do stuff”

Belief/Principle

“something you believe in”
Laws/Rules

20601 “like your privilege, not privilege. A right is like privileges, and if someone broke them . . . a right is kind of like a law or something”

20604 “. . . they’re kind of like laws”

107 “like a rule made so everyone can be treated equally”

103 “. . . a rule to enforce a better standard of living”

Entitlement

“everyone is supposed to have rights . . . it’s essential for humanity”

“something you have, no matter what, no one can take it away from you”

092 “something you have that should not be compromised . . . it is a right! . . . isn’t it in the law? . . . tries to make everyone equal”

105 “something that is given to you . . . that you should have, not something you need to work to get, you should already have it . . . like a privilege is something that you work your way to and a right is something you are born with . . . ”

009 “something you should be able to do, without people saying why do you want that . . . should be able to because you have the right to”

047 “a right is something given to everybody inside a country . . . for safety . . . for equality”

Categories for Coding Q2 “what rights do children have?”
August 13, 2001 (S. Correia, based on Martin Ruck’s coding scheme)
Most examples were taken from Martin’s coding scheme.
Revised July 12, 2004

(**should code in conjunction with self-generated coding scheme)

(**if examples of children’s rights are given in response to other questions, they should be included here)

This category is not mutually exclusive. Each answer is coded as present (1) or absent (0), according to the following categories:
(Each category is self-explanatory and is elaborated only when necessary)

1 Abuse and Safety
   e.g., “to not be abused”

2 Education
   e.g., “to learn,” “to go to school,” “to get an education”
3 Medical
4 Leisure and Recreation
   e.g., “to play baseball,” “to play after school,” “to talk to friends . . . socialize”
5 Child Labor and Military Service
6 Basic Needs
   e.g., “to have food and clothing,” “to do your laundry”
7 Psychological Needs
   e.g., “to be happy and loved,” “to be healthy,” “to be cared for,” “children have the right to be respected,” “to be nurtured,” “to know what is going on around them,” “attention, that should be a right . . . even if bad kid . . . to have a relationship with someone who cares about you so you can grow up good”
8 Privacy
   e.g., “to be alone”
9 Speech/thought
   e.g., “speak our mind,” “to say no,” “to ask questions”
10 Religion
11 Association
   e.g., “freedom of association”
12 Expression/identity
   e.g., “freedom of speech,” “to express their opinions,” “to say what they want,” “to be themselves”
13 Discrimination/inequity
14 Decision-making (DM) general/other
   e.g., “right to drive a car when I reach the proper age,” “to do what I want,” “to go where I want to go,” “to live their lives”
15 DM Health
16 DM discretionary time
17 DM education
18 Legal/gov’tal/societal
   e.g., “right to an attorney,” “right to silence,” “right to be notified of court dates”
19 Care specific
e.g., “right to talk privately with your worker or your family,” “right to have supervision, a guardian,” “to visit family on special occasions,” “to contact your family . . .,” “to know why they are in care,” “right to know what is going on in their life . . . where they are going to move to when they are older (024)”

20 Misconception
e.g., “right to do thing they are told to do,” “right to help parents if the need it . . . to listen to parents”

21 Other
e.g., “none,” “very few,” “same as adults,” “basic right to live their life,” “human rights,” “to receive mail (008)”

22 Don’t know/no response

In addition, each answer should be coded (1 or 0) according to the following categories:

Self-Determination
Self-Determination is reflected in the answer.

Nurturance
Nurturance is reflected in the answer.

N/SD not applicable

Note: Do not code nurturance or self-determination if the response is a misconception.

Categories for Coding Q3 “Why should kids have rights?”
August 13, 2001 (S. Correia) based on Martin Ruck’s coding scheme
Most examples were taken from Martin’s coding scheme.
Revised July 12, 2004
2nd Revision February 2006

This category is not mutually exclusive. Each answer is coded as present (1) or absent (0), according to the following categories:

(Each category is self-explanatory and is elaborated only when necessary.)

1 Don’t Know/No Response
2 Universality/Inherent Possession
e.g., “rights are for everyone,” “we all have them,” “everyone needs rights,” 
“because children are people too,” “because all people deserve rights, “because 
they’re human beings,” “because they are individuals,” “because everybody has 
rights and kids should not be any less than everybody else,” “rights are a basic 
need to live a proper life,” “because everybody has right and kids should no be any 
less than everybody else”

3 Responsibility/Future Dev’t/Learning/Maturity
e.g., “to teach responsibility, “so we will know how to use them as adults,” “they 
makes you more mature,” “so they can make their own decisions and know what is a 
proper decision,” “learn to fend for themselves,” “when kids are growing up, they 
are learning and should have some rights . . . (009),” “so they will know what to do 
when older (111),” “lets them know what they can do . . . what’s supposed to 
happen and what should not happen (019),” “so they cannot blames anyone else for 
the things they are responsible for (043),” “it’s like a rule you follow (010)”

4 Protection/Safety
e.g., “to keep us safe from abuse,” “to protect us,” “not to be taken advantage of,” 
“because without rights they would be slaves,” “to not be prisoners,” “so that they 
get basic needs met,” “so they are not ordered around,” “if kids did not have rights 
than world would not be a safe place for kids . . .,” “cause if not, the world would 
probably stomp on us,” “. . . so if they are being treated the wrong way they can 
change it . . .,” “so they can feel secure . . . knowing what their rights are (020)”

5 Self-Expression
e.g., “so we can say what we want,” “to do the things we want to do,” “be 
independent,” “so they’ll have a chance to explore, experience and find their own 
happiness,” “so that they get what they want,” “because if I did not get a say . . . I 
should be able to stand up and say ‘I don’t want this’ . . .,” “. . . they wouldn’t 
have the opportunity to speak their mind (041),” “so they can be heard (070)”

6 Equality of treatment
e.g., “it’s important for kids to be treated equally,” “everyone is equal,” “we are 
all equal and without rights we might not be treated equally,” “cause we need to be 
treated fairly . . .,” “if kids did not have rights, would probably get short end of the 
stick (016)”

7 Misconception
e.g., “so kids can do what is right, not wrong,” “so we’ll be correct,” “so they 
know right from wrong,” “so they can follow thru with what they are doing and 
know what is going on,” “if kids don’t have rights, won’t have fun,” “it’s like a 
rule you follow . . . directions,” “because if no rights, kids would do what they 
want . . . wouldn’t listen (051)”
8 Other
e.g., “they are important,” “you need them,” “children should NOT have rights,”
“to be heard,” “cause if you did not have rights, can’t do nothing in this world (003),” “because we don’t always know what is going on, but if we know our
rights, we know we have that to turn to,” “for your own good (104),” “to experience life (044)”

Categories for Coding Q4 “Can anyone take away your rights? Who? Why?”
August 13th, 2001 (S. Correia) based on Martin Ruck’s coding scheme
Most examples were taken from Martin’s coding scheme.
Revised July 12, 2004
2nd revision February, 2006

This category is not mutually exclusive. Each answer is coded as present (1) or absent (0), according to the following categories:
(Each category is self-explanatory and is elaborated only when necessary)

Part I (Q4): “Can anyone take away your rights?”
1 = “yes,” “sometimes”
0 = “no”

Part II (Q4b): If Part I is yes, then code, “Who can take away your rights?”
1 Don’t Know/No Response
2 Parents/Adults/Grownups
e.g., “parents can take away your right,” “teachers can take away your rights in
school”
3 Government
e.g., “sometimes the government restricts people’s rights,” “the prime minister can
take away your rights in emergencies,” “like the government or the police (coded in 3 and 4)”
4 Police/Court/Law
e.g., “if the police arrest you, then you have no rights,” “in some cases the court
will restrict your rights,” “like the government or the police (coded in 3 and 4),”
“in the legal system they can take away your rights . . . like house arrest or jail,”
(references to being in jail)
5 General Authority or Power
e.g., “if someone is bigger than you, then they can take away your rights,” “if they
threaten you, they can take away your rights,” “to show they have power
6 Nobody/Not Specified

7 Misconception/Other

Part III: (Q4ci) When answer to Part 1 was ‘yes’, then code, “Why?”

“WHY?”

8 Laws/Rules
   e.g., “people can take away your rights, but they’re not supposed to because it’s against the law”(107)

9 Authorities
   e.g., “because parents are older and you should listen to older people,” “parents can take away your rights to control children and guide them,” “cause they are higher than me . . . in the world . . . adults control”(91), “used to think there would be a good reason . . . authority threatened in some way”(40)

10 Wrongdoings/Punishments
   e.g., “if you murder someone, you lose your rights,” “if you are bad, you can lose your rights,” “if you go against the rules, you will lose all rights,” “if you are imprisoned,” “if you’re not showing you can use the right properly”

11 Power/Manipulation
   e.g., “if they have a bigger person who is stronger and beats them up,” “they think they control people because they are bigger and older,” “because they have a lot of power,” “to make things better suit themselves,” “neighbors can try because of jealousy,” “because they have more power and control . . . to make them feel powerful,” “because they think you are less of a person (050)”

12 Misconception
   e.g., “you should have the right to say if something is right or not right,” “if people laugh at you they could take away your rights,” “racist people”

13 Other
   e.g., “rights can be taken away if teachers go on strike or something . . . only temporarily”(84), “sometimes people lose their rights,” “if they feel it’s unsafe (97),” “not supposed to, but everyday children’s rights get taken away”(28)
Part III: (Q4cii) When answer to Part 1 was ‘no’, then code, “Why not?”

14 Laws/Rules
  e.g., “the law says your rights can’t be taken away,” “it is written in the Constitution,” “depends on the law at any given time,” “because that’s official . . . the law”

15 Authorities
  e.g., “because they are given by the government and someone can get arrested for that” (69)

16 Inherent Possessions /Universality
  e.g., “they are your rights and no one can take them away from you,” “rights belong to you,” “you can do what you want because they are your rights,” “because I’m a Canadian citizen,” “even people who have done bad things and get sent to jail have rights,” “they are not something you can take or give,” “because you are a human being,” “rights are a basic need to live a proper life,” “you are entitled to them,” “like in house arrest or jail, everybody still has own rights,” “because you cannot take away a right, you have it forever,” “because it’s something you have that says your allowed to do these things . . . you’re protected,” “you’d be telling them they cannot do something that they can do! (114)”

17 Internal State (Principles/Beliefs)
  e.g., “rights are in your mind so you can’t take them away,” “rights are not material they are what you believe in,” “rights are what you think, so no one can take them away from you”

18 Motivation
  e.g., “I won’t let them”

19 Power/Manipulation
  e.g., “because you have the power over them (060)”

20 Entitlement
  e.g., “we have the right to have rights,” “you have the right to do anything in the world . . . nobody can take away your rights but yourself”

21 Misconception
  e.g., “because you know if something is right or wrong, so do it” (49), “you have a family and they care about you and if something happens they look after you” (117), “because it’s your decision if you want someone to take your rights away” (126), “you need rights to you can live better and teach others right from wrong (111)”

22 Other
e.g., “rights can change, like of you go from a group home ot custody”(6), “because it is a free country,” “I don’t think they should,” “. . . because if you have no rights you may as well live on the streets . . . (067),” “because we need them (65),” “if they feel it’s unsafe (97),” “cannot take away your rights, but can tell you that you cannot do something like walk on someone’s personal property”(122), “because it’s not them . . . it’s not one person . . . everyone has their own rights (64),” “because we need them (65)”

23 Don’t Know/No Response/Not Queried or Specified

Categories for Q5: “What rights do parents have?” - July 26th, 2004 (K. Thompson) Revised February 2006 (J. Bone)

This category is not mutually exclusive. Each answer is coded as present (1) or absent (0), according to the following categories: (Each category is self-explanatory and is elaborated only when necessary)

***should code in conjunction with self-generated coding scheme

**if examples of rights are given in response to other questions, they should be included here

1 Abuse and Safety
e.g., “to health and safety,” “safe workplace”

2 Education
e.g., “to learn”

3 Medical
e.g., “to health and safety”

4 Leisure and Recreation

5 Child Labor and Military Service

6 Basic Needs
e.g., “to proper food,” “to eat, sleep”

7 Psychological Needs
e.g., “to respect,” “healthy environment,” “to know . . . what is going on”

8 Privacy

9 Speech/thought
e.g., “freedom of speech,” “to ask questions”
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</table>
| 12 | Expression/identity  
* e.g., “to express themselves” |
| 13 | Discrimination/inequity |
| 14 | Decision-making (DM) general/other  
* e.g., “to drive” |
| 15 | DM health |
| 16 | DM discretionary time |
| 17 | DM education |
| 18 | Parenting: Guidance  
* e.g., “teach us right from wrong,” “to guide us,” “to help kids,” “tell you what to do in a polite way” |
| 19 | Parenting: Monitoring  
* e.g., “to know what is going on in child’s life” |
| 20 | Parenting: Discipline  
* e.g., “to discipline in a safe manner,” “not to yell,” “to discipline children” |
| 21 | Parenting: Authority  
* e.g., “have authority over kids,” “to make house rules,” “kick children out after they are sixteen,” “make a decision for you,” “to keep you inside from activities,” “they know what is best . . . and no one can tell them they don’t,” “to tell us what to do . . . to bring us up how they want,” “to raise children the way they feel best,” “to have a say in what is going on in kids life” |
| 22 | Parenting: General/other  
* e.g., “to care for you, love you,” “to be kind,” |
| 23 | Societal Support  
* e.g., “should be supported by society to provide the best for their children,” “to put you in foster care if they can’t handle you (2),” “right to give kid up for adoption if they couldn’t care for the child/baby (21)” |
| 24 | Legal/governmental/societal  
* e.g., “should get help from the government . . . if they can’t make ends meet, should get help” |
25 **Duties or Responsibilities**
e.g., “to feed us,” “responsible for their kids actions,” “right to take care of the kids,” “to go to their jobs”

26 **Same as Kids:** if this response is given, then code same as Q2

27 **Misconception**
e.g., “to not stay out all night when they have a two year old,” “give them what they want,” “to give us away when 16 . . . make us move out,” “to keep their rooms tidy,” “to treat child equally as everyone,” “right to be there for us . . . to be responsible and reliable” “to grandchildren,” “to do whatever they want”

28 **Other**
e.g., “human rights,” “to do certain things,” “right to send kids to school . . . look for a job,” “to provide a civil society for the child,” “to create their own rights within the law,” “right to request anything they like”

29 **Don’t know/No response**

In addition, each answer should be coded (1 or 0) according to the following categories:

**Self-Determination:**
Self-Determination is reflected in the answer.

**Nurturance:**
Nurturance is reflected in the answer.

**Note:** Do not code nurturance or self-determination if the response is a misconception.
### APPENDIX M.
FREQUENCIES AND CROSSTAB RESULTS FOR “CAN ANYONE TAKE AWAY YOUR RIGHTS?”
“WHO?” “WHY OR WHY NOT?” ACCORDING TO AGE

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*Note: “Other” included responses that occurred infrequently and/or could not be placed into existing categories, e.g., Beliefs/Principles, Not Specified, Misconceptions, Don’t Know/No Response.
*During the early stages of interviewing, responses of “no” to the question “can anyone take away your rights?” were not queried, resulting in 22 cases of missing data. Later interviews queried both yes and no responses to this question.
**chi square results were not presented when cell counts were too low to conduct a reliable test.
APPENDIX N.

FREQUENCIES AND CROSSTAB RESULTS FOR DEFINITIONS OF A RIGHT ACCORDING TO AGE

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<td>Privileges/Deserves</td>
<td>18 6</td>
<td>11 4</td>
<td>7 2</td>
<td>12 12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laws/Rules</td>
<td>15 5</td>
<td>24 9</td>
<td>4 1</td>
<td>15 15</td>
<td>5.12</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed to do/have/can do</td>
<td>12 4</td>
<td>8 3</td>
<td>14 4</td>
<td>11 11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples w/o definition</td>
<td>9 3</td>
<td>11 4</td>
<td>4 1</td>
<td>8 8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misconception</td>
<td>9 3</td>
<td>3 1</td>
<td>7 2</td>
<td>6 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3 1</td>
<td>5 2</td>
<td>7 2</td>
<td>5 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. “Other” included inaccurate responses that occurred infrequently and/or could not be placed into existing categories, e.g., Beliefs/Principles, Needs, Don’t Know/No Response.

**chi square results were not presented when cell counts were too low to conduct a reliable test.
### APPENDIX O.

**FREQUENCIES AND CROSSTAB RESULTS FOR “WHAT RIGHTS DO KIDS HAVE?” ACCORDING TO AGE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Pre-Early Adolescence</th>
<th>Mid-Adolescence</th>
<th>Late Adolescence</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>$\chi^2$**</th>
<th>$P$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurturance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse/Safety</td>
<td>32 11</td>
<td>47 18</td>
<td>43 10</td>
<td>39 39</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>35 12</td>
<td>58 22</td>
<td>26 12</td>
<td>46 46</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>15 5</td>
<td>18 7</td>
<td>29 8</td>
<td>20 20</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure/Recreation</td>
<td>15 5</td>
<td>8 3</td>
<td>21 6</td>
<td>14 14</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Needs</td>
<td>68 23</td>
<td>61 23</td>
<td>68 19</td>
<td>65 65</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Needs</td>
<td>44 15</td>
<td>42 16</td>
<td>57 16</td>
<td>47 47</td>
<td>1.64</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Determination</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Liberties</td>
<td>47 8</td>
<td>50 13</td>
<td>50 12</td>
<td>49 49</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>38 13</td>
<td>21 8</td>
<td>14 4</td>
<td>25 25</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misconceptions</td>
<td>12 4</td>
<td>8 3</td>
<td>14 4</td>
<td>11 11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care Specific</td>
<td>18 6</td>
<td>26 10</td>
<td>25 7</td>
<td>23 23</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other*</td>
<td>9 3</td>
<td>34 13</td>
<td>18 5</td>
<td>21 21</td>
<td>7.40</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. “Other” included responses that could not be placed into existing categories, e.g., “to be responsible”, “right to do almost anything”, “right to be a kid”.

*significant difference for gender, $p < .05$.

**chi square results were not presented when cell counts were too low to conduct a reliable test.
APPENDIX P.

FREQUENCIES AND CROSSTAB RESULTS FOR “WHY SHOULD CHILDREN HAVE RIGHTS?” ACCORDING TO AGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Pre-Early Adolescence</th>
<th>Mid-Adolescence</th>
<th>Late Adolescence</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>$\chi^2$**</th>
<th>$P$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>$N$</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>$n$</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>$N$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universality</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility/Future Development &amp; Learning</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection and Safety</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Expression</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality of Treatment</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. “Other” included responses that could not be placed into existing categories, e.g., “because we don’t always know what’s going on but can turn to our rights” and “if you don’t have rights you can’t do nothing in this world.”

**chi square results were not presented when cell counts were too low to conduct a reliable test.
### APPENDIX Q.

**FREQUENCIES AND CROSSTAB RESULTS FOR “WHAT IS A RIGHT?” ACCORDING TO MALTREATMENT GROUP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Abuse Only</th>
<th>Neglect Only</th>
<th>Abuse and Neglect</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>(\chi^2**)</th>
<th>(P)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conditional Entitlement</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entitlement</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional Entitlement +</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entitlement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unconditional Entitlement</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privileges</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laws/Rules</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed to do/have/can do</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misconceptions</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. “Other” category included responses that could not be placed into existing categories, e.g., Beliefs/Principles, Needs, Don’t Know/No Response.*

**chi square results were not presented when cell counts were too low to conduct a reliable test.**
### APPENDIX R.

**FREQUENCIES AND CROSSTAB RESULTS FOR “WHY SHOULD CHILDREN HAVE RIGHTS?” ACCORDING TO MALTREATMENT GROUP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Abuse Only</th>
<th>Neglect Only</th>
<th>Abuse and Neglect</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>$\chi^2$**</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Universality</strong></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.42</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility/Future</strong></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development &amp; Learning</strong></td>
<td>42</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protection and Safety</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Expression</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equality of Treatment</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* “Other” category included responses that could not be placed into existing categories, e.g., “because it is right and good that kids feel they own something like privileges”, “because if they don’t have rights, can’t do nothing in this world.

**chi square results were not presented when cell counts were too low to conduct a reliable test.
APPENDIX S.
FREQUENCIES AND CROSSTAB RESULTS FOR “CAN RIGHTS BE TAKEN AWAY? WHO CAN TAKE AWAY RIGHTS? WHY OR WHY NOT?” ACCORDING TO TYPE OF MALTREATMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Abuse Only</th>
<th>Neglect Only</th>
<th>Abuse and Neglect</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>(\chi^{*})</th>
<th>(P)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No*</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHO

Parents/Adults 25 2 34 4 64 9 44 15
Government 13 1 8 1 7 1 9 3
Police/Court/Law 25 2 25 3 29 4 27 9
General Authority/Power 25 2 17 2 14 2 18 6
Nobody/Not Specified 13 1 8 1 0 0 6 2
Other 25 2 17 2 7 1 15 5

WHY

Laws/Rules 13 1 8 1 0 0 6 2
Authorities 13 1 0 0 7 1 6 2
Wrongdoing/Punishment 25 2 75 9 71 10 62 21
Power/Manipulation 38 3 0 0 14 2 15 5
Other 25 2 8 1 0 0 9 3
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHY NOT</th>
<th>Abuse Only %</th>
<th>Neglect Only %</th>
<th>Abuse and Neglect %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WHY NOT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laws/Rules</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authorities</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inherent Possession/</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power/Manipulation</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entitlement</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misconception</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. “Other” category included responses that could not be placed into existing categories, e.g., Beliefs/Principles, Needs, Don’t Know/No Response, Misconceptions.*

*During the early stages of interviewing, responses of “no” to the question “can anyone take away your rights?” were not queried, resulting in 22 cases of missing data. Later interviews queried both yes and no responses to this question.*

**chi square results were not presented when cell counts were too low to conduct a reliable test.**
### APPENDIX T.

**FREQUENCIES AND CROSSTAB RESULTS FOR “WHAT IS A RIGHT?” ACCORDING TO TYPE OF CARE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Foster Care</th>
<th></th>
<th>Group Care</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
<th>( \chi^2 )**</th>
<th>( P )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conditional Entitlement</strong></td>
<td>14% 9</td>
<td>14% 5</td>
<td>14% 14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Entitlement</strong></td>
<td>22% 14</td>
<td>17% 6</td>
<td>20% 20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conditional Entitlement and Entitlement</strong></td>
<td>36% 23</td>
<td>31% 11</td>
<td>34% 34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unconditional Entitlement</strong></td>
<td>8% 5</td>
<td>11% 4</td>
<td>9% 9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Privileges/Something one Deserves</strong></td>
<td>17% 11</td>
<td>3% 1</td>
<td>12% 12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Laws/Rules</strong></td>
<td>13% 8</td>
<td>19% 7</td>
<td>15% 15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Allowed To Do/Have/Can Do</strong></td>
<td>9% 6</td>
<td>14% 5</td>
<td>11% 11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examples Without Definition</strong></td>
<td>8% 5</td>
<td>8% 3</td>
<td>8% 8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Misconceptions</strong></td>
<td>6% 4</td>
<td>6% 2</td>
<td>6% 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td>3% 2</td>
<td>8% 3</td>
<td>5% 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* “Other” included responses that could not be placed into existing categories, e.g., Beliefs/Principles, Needs, Don’t Know/No Response. **chi square results were not presented when cell counts were too low to conduct a reliable test.*

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APPENDIX U.

FREQUENCIES AND CROSSTAB RESULTS FOR “WHAT IS A RIGHT?” ACCORDING TO NUMBER OF CHANGES IN PLACEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change in Placement</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<th>( P )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 or fewer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional Entitlement</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entitlement</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional Entitlement and Entitlement</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unconditional Entitlement</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privileges/something one deserves</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laws and Rules</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed To Do/Have/Can Do</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples Without Definitions</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misconceptions</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. “Other” category included responses that could not be placed into existing categories, e.g., Beliefs/Principles, Needs, DK/NR.
**chi square results were not presented when cell counts were too low to conduct a reliable test.
### APPENDIX V.

**FREQUENCIES AND CROSSTAB RESULTS FOR “WHAT IS A RIGHT?” ACCORDING TO AMOUNT OF TIME SPENT IN CARE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount of Time in Care</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<th>$P$</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 3 years</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional Entitlement</td>
<td>14 3</td>
<td>13 4</td>
<td>19 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entitlement</td>
<td>29 6</td>
<td>10 3</td>
<td>19 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional Ent. +</td>
<td>43 9</td>
<td>23 7</td>
<td>39 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entitlement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unconditional Entitlement</td>
<td>10 2</td>
<td>10 3</td>
<td>8 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privileges/something</td>
<td>5 1</td>
<td>3 1</td>
<td>19 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one deserves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laws/Rules</td>
<td>14 3</td>
<td>30 9</td>
<td>4 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed To Do/Have/Can Do</td>
<td>10 2</td>
<td>17 5</td>
<td>15 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples without</td>
<td>10 2</td>
<td>7 2</td>
<td>15 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misconceptions</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>7 2</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10 2</td>
<td>3 1</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* “Other” category included responses that could not be placed into existing categories, e.g., Needs, Beliefs, DK/NR.

**chi square results were not presented when cell counts were too low to conduct a reliable test.**
APPENDIX W.
FREQUENCIES AND CROSSTAB RESULTS FOR “CAN ANYONE TAKE AWAY YOUR RIGHTS? WHO? WHY OR WHY NOT?” ACCORDING TO LENGTH OF TIME IN CARE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount of Time in Care</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>$P$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 3 years</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No*</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>Amount of Time in Care</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>$P$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 3 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents/Adults</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police/Court/Law</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen. Auth/Power</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHY</th>
<th>Amount of Time in Care</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>$P$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 3 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laws/Rules</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authorities</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrongdoing/Punishment</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table continues)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount of Time in Care</th>
<th>&lt; 3 years</th>
<th>3y–5y 11m</th>
<th>6y–8y 11m</th>
<th>≥ 9 years</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>χ²**</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power/Manipulation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHY NOT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laws/Rules</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authorities</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inherent Possession/Universality</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power/Manipulation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entitlement</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misconception</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* ‘Other’ included responses that occurred infrequently and/or could not be placed into existing categories, e.g., Beliefs/Principles, Needs, Don’t Know/No Response, Misconceptions.

*During the early stages of interviewing, responses of “no” to the question “can anyone take away your rights?” were not queried, resulting in 22 cases of missing data. Later interviews queried both yes and no responses to this question.

**Chi square results were not presented when cell counts were too low to conduct a reliable test.