



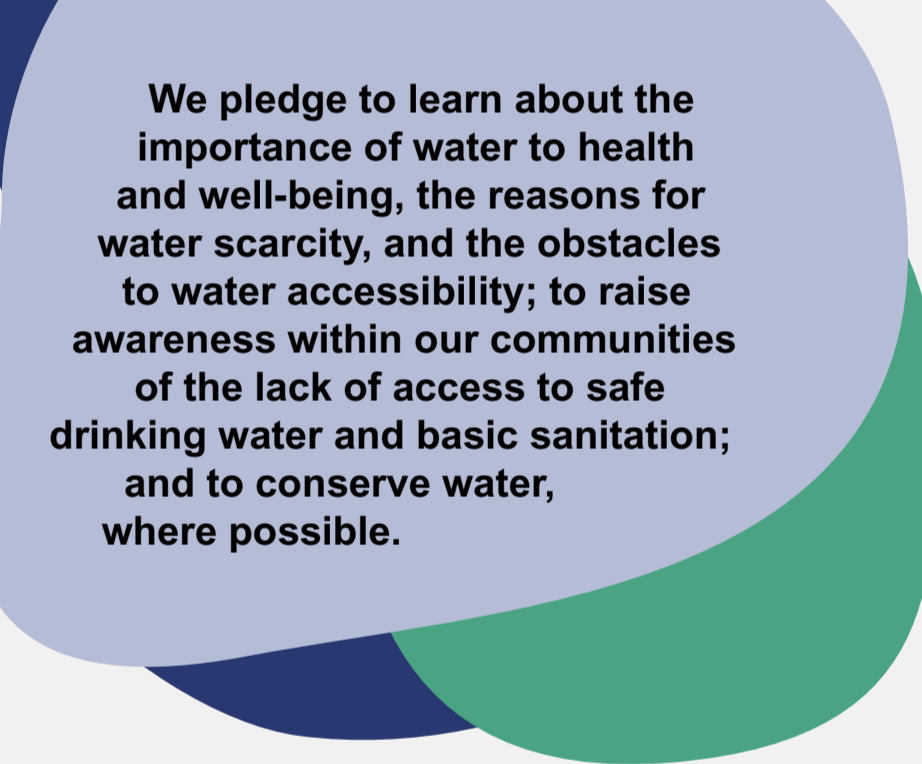
THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S MANIFESTO ON HUMAN RIGHTS ACTION

We pledge to learn about the importance of water to health and well-being, the reasons for water scarcity, and the obstacles to water accessibility; to raise awareness within our communities of the lack of access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation; and to conserve water, where possible.

RIGHT TO WATER

Water is essential to human life – we drink it, we use it for sanitation, we use it to produce our food. In fact, in order to meet their basic needs, each person needs 50-100 litres of water per day. But hundreds of millions of people lack access to safe drinking water, and billions have no access to basic sanitation. Water scarcity and accessibility are already significant challenges and are becoming more acute as a result of climate change.

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BACKGROUND

On 17 July 2019, we – members of the Boston Children's Chorus (USA) and students from Granville South Creative and Performing Arts High School (Australia) – came together on Bedegal land at UNSW Sydney to discuss some of the most intractable human rights challenges of the present day.

Through this manifesto, which we collaboratively developed, we pledge to take specific action on each of the challenges and call on our schools, colleges, communities and governments to do the same.

We presented the manifesto's ideas to the President and Vice-Chancellor of UNSW Sydney, Professor Ian Jacobs. We called on UNSW Sydney, and colleges generally, to demonstrate leadership, including through research, education and investment, to address these and other human rights challenges.



RIGHT TO VOTE AND PARTICIPATE

Though free and fair elections allow voters to take part, through chosen representatives, in their state's government, in most countries the voting age is 18 – it is 16 in fewer than a dozen. But many issues that give rise to human rights challenges, like climate change, will affect young people the most. Importantly, technology is making it possible for voters and non-voters alike to express opinions and share information and ideas in powerful new ways.

We pledge to learn about issues that give rise to human rights challenges; to use the platforms at our disposal to participate in the global dialogues on these issues, including by amplifying the voices of those less able to participate; to engage with and participate in democratic processes, where possible; and to support others to do the same.



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We call on our schools, universities and communities to incorporate civics, including the operation of democratic processes, into our curriculums and to facilitate participation in democratic processes by community members. We call on our governments to adopt policies that make participation in democratic processes fairer, such as allowing those interacting with the justice system to retain and exercise voting rights, reducing the voting age to 16, holding elections on weekends or national holidays, and prohibiting gerrymandering that disadvantages a segment or segments of the community.

INDIGENOUS RIGHTS

Indigenous peoples have many rights, including the right to participate in decision-making on relevant or important matters and the right to participate in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the state. While some states have executed treaties or made comparable arrangements with Indigenous peoples, others have not. Of those states that have executed treaties, not all have honoured them in letter and spirit.

We recognise that the dispossession of traditional lands and seas has had a devastating impact on Indigenous peoples, who have been the owners and stewards of those territories for generations and whose cultures and identities have strong connections to those territories. We recognise the ongoing discrimination and structural disadvantage to which Indigenous peoples continue to be subjected.

We pledge to learn about and respect the cultures of Indigenous peoples; to speak out against the discrimination and structural disadvantage to which Indigenous peoples continue to be subjected; and to demonstrate our support for initiatives that will advance the position of Indigenous peoples in our societies.

We call on our schools, universities and communities to better incorporate Indigenous languages, cultural practices and histories into our curriculums and to make education more accessible for Indigenous students. We call on our governments to listen to Indigenous peoples on relevant or important matters, including by providing for better Indigenous representation to and within government, and to execute and honour treaties with Indigenous peoples.



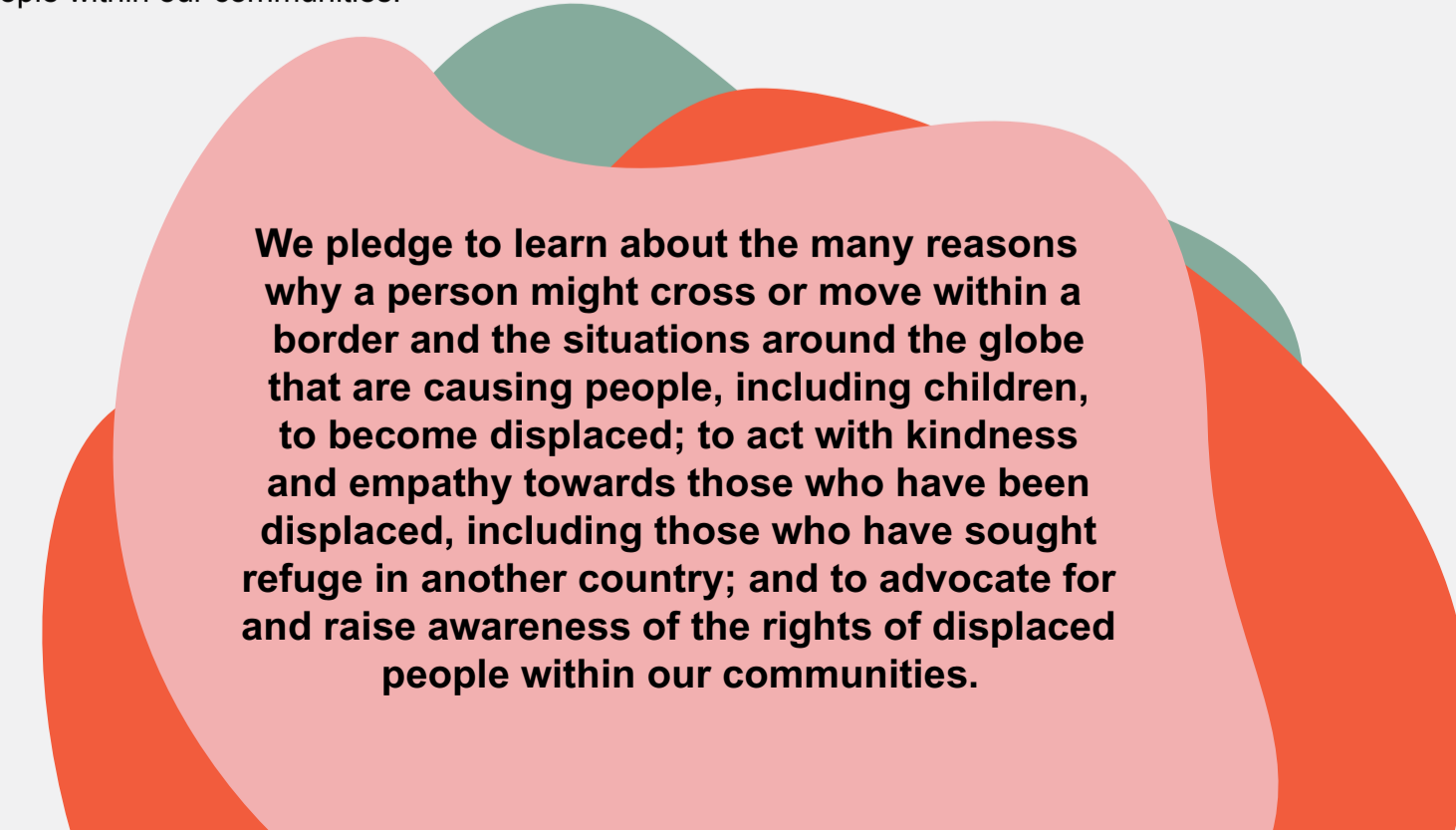
CROSSING BORDERS

There are many reasons why a person might have to cross or move within a border. Displaced people often embark on perilous journeys because life at home has become so difficult or dangerous. Many displaced people are children – in fact, half of all refugees, of whom there are tens of millions worldwide, are under the age of 18.

We pledge to learn about the many reasons why a person might cross or move within a border and the situations around the globe that are causing people, including children, to become displaced; to act with kindness and empathy towards those who have been displaced, including those who have sought refuge in another country; and to advocate for and raise awareness of the rights of displaced people within our communities.



We call on our schools, universities and communities to volunteer time and energy and donate resources, where possible, to support those who have been displaced, including those who have sought refuge in another country. We call on our governments to adopt empathetic policies for those who have sought refuge – to make the pathways to protection, including residency and citizenship, and participation, including education and employment, easier and fairer.



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We pledge to learn about the obstacles to universal healthcare and how those obstacles differ from country to country and between different segments of the community; to raise awareness within our communities of the impact of lack of access to healthcare; and to make – and support others to make – healthier choices, where possible.

RIGHT TO HEALTHCARE

Despite having the right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and the right to have a standard of living adequate for health and well-being, hundreds of millions of people have no access to basic healthcare. The availability of preventive, curative and palliative care to all is an important part of ensuring that people can live healthy lives; so too is the availability of health-related information.

We pledge to learn about the obstacles to universal healthcare and how those obstacles differ from country to country and between different segments of the community; to raise awareness within our communities of the impact of lack of access to healthcare; and to make – and support others to make – healthier choices, where possible.

We call on our schools, universities and communities to adopt health-related initiatives, such as community healthcare centres, gardens, foodbanks and immunisation programs. We call on our governments to adopt policies that improve accessibility to healthcare, especially for economically disadvantaged or otherwise vulnerable people.



THIS MANIFESTO IS PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY:

The Australian Human Rights Institute

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Boston Children's Chorus

@BCChorus @BCChorus

Granville South Creative and Performing Arts High School

@GSCAPAHS

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE AND HUMAN RIGHTS?

Human Rights Watch

hrw.org/students-and-educators

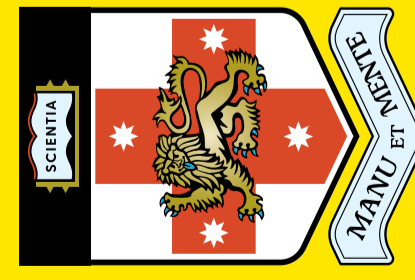
Amnesty International

amnesty.org/en/human-rights-education/

Unicef

unicef.org/child-rights-convention/what-are-human-rights





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