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CHILDREN'S VIEWS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (CRC). THE CASE OF CHILDREN IN STATE CARE, MALAYSIA

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This paper examines children's views on the implementation of the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC). Malaysia ratified the Convention in December 1994. Since then, the government through various social agencies such as the Social Welfare Department has conscientiously made efforts to deliver children services accordingly to the human rights standards set up by the Convention. Government reports confirm that most of the rights suggested by the CRC are being implemented in the child welfare system of the country. All reports of implementation of CRC; especially in the institutionalised care, are based on practitioners' assessments. In order to provide a balanced view, we conducted a self-report survey in March of 2010 to assess the implementation of CRC from the children's points of view. A total of 424 children, ranging from 13 to 18 years old, from both gender groups, and comprising all ethnic groups from all ten Children's Homes in the country were selected as respondents. A structured questionnaire was distributed, a series of focus group interaction was conducted and interviews with Social Welfare Officers were carried out. Most of the rights implemented were basic and fail to take into account the specific needs of the child per se. Some homes fail to provide security or deliver appropriate life skills programs as required by the CRC.