

**When Can I Go Home?**

# **What is happening to some children in Armenia**



## Who we are

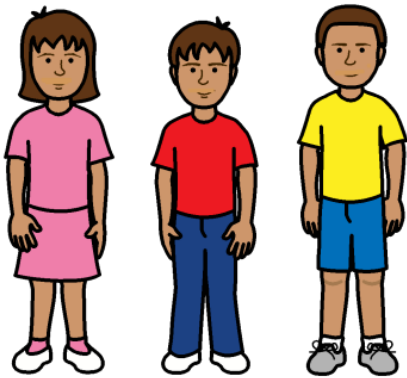
HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
WATCH

We are called Human Rights Watch.

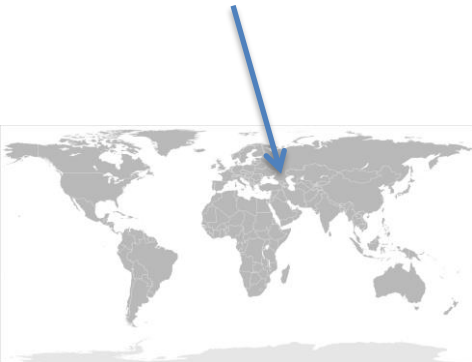


We work to make sure everyone in the world is treated fairly and gets their rights.

## What is this report about?



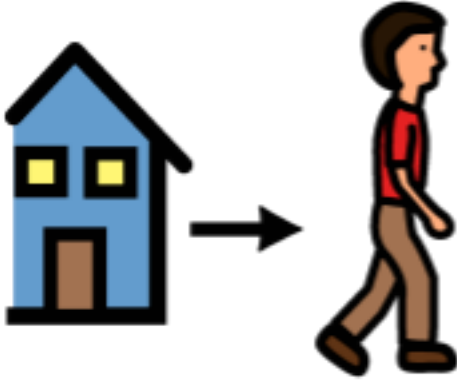
This report is about what is happening to some children in a country called Armenia.



Armenia is a country between Europe and Asia.



Some children in Armenia are sent to live in big homes for children without their parents.



The homes are often far away from their families and other people.



Children may go to these homes because:

- they have a disability
- their family is poor and cannot look after them



In 2016 we looked at what was happening to these children in Armenia.

We went to some homes for children and some schools.



We spoke to:

- children and their families
- staff who work in these homes and schools
- people from the government

## What we found out



### Homes for children

It is bad for children to live in homes away from their families and the community.



It can make children and their families very sad.

Life can be hard for children in the homes.



For example, in some homes children are put into large groups.

This means that:

- staff in the homes may not have time to help or care for all the children
- children may have to do the same things over and over each day

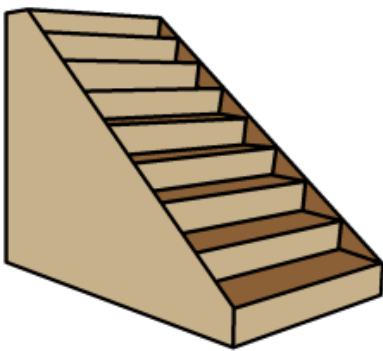




There are other problems for children in the homes.

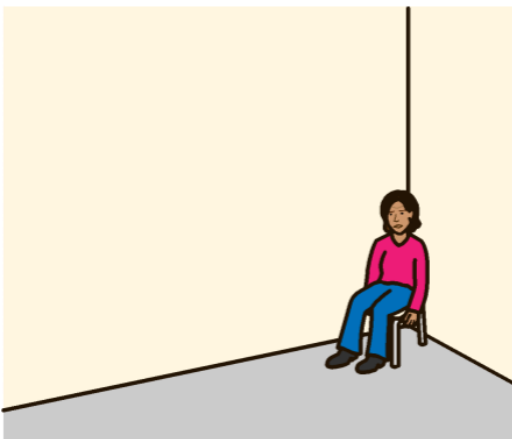
For example, many children do not learn the skills they need for the future.

Things are worse for children with disabilities.



For example:

- many homes are hard for children with disabilities to live in



- children with disabilities may live in homes like this for all of their lives

They may never get the chance to do things like have a job or a family



Many children and their families cannot get the right support near where they live, like healthcare, education and money.

They can only get support in the homes.



This means families may decide to send their children to these homes even though they do not want to.



Children should be able to live with their families where possible.



They should get good support and education near where they live.



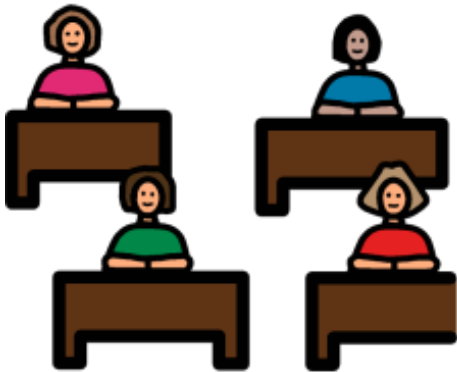
But this is not happening for many children and their families in Armenia.



## Education

Many children with disabilities in Armenia do not get a good education.

Some children do not go to school at all.



Some children with disabilities go to the same schools as other children.

But they often get a bad education there.

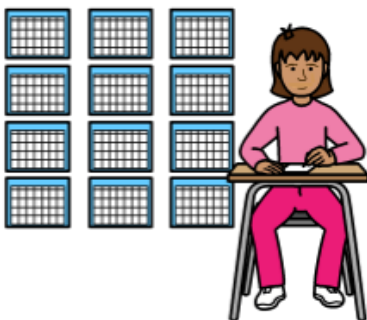


There are many reasons for this.

For example:

- many school buildings are not good for children with disabilities

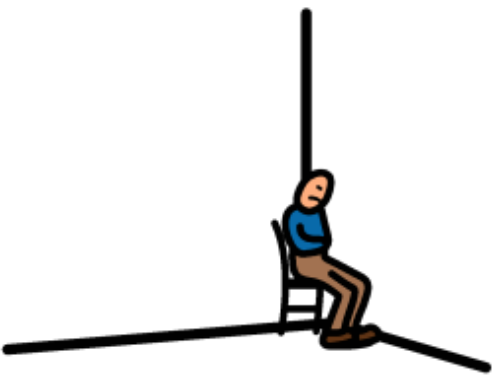
Toilets and other things may be hard for them to get to and use



- many children with disabilities do not learn together with other children



- many children with disabilities do not get the support they need at school



Some children with disabilities may have to stay at home all the time because of this.

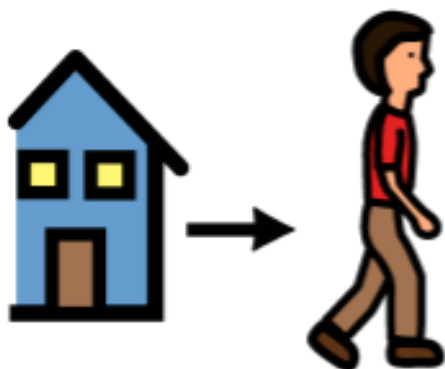


Some families think that special schools or learning at home may be better for their children.

But there are problems with this too.

For example:

- many special schools are far away from home



This means children may have to live at the schools away from their families and communities



- children with disabilities cannot play and make friends with children without disabilities



# What is the Government in Armenia doing?



All children have the right to:

- live in the community



- live with their families unless there is a very good reason not to



- get a good education and learn together with other children



Children with disabilities have these rights too.

The Government is doing more to make this happen.

For example, the Government plans to:

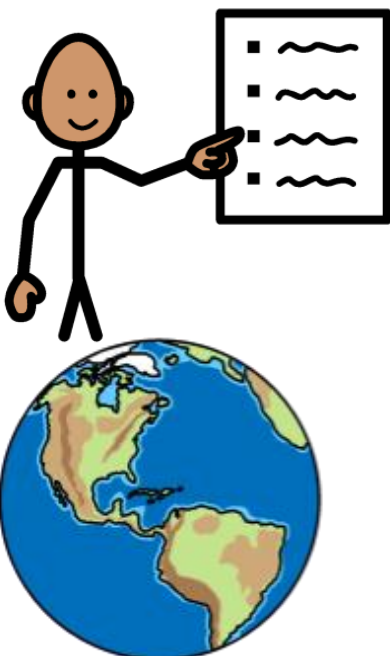
- move many children from these homes back to their families

- give children and families more support near where they live

- make sure that children with disabilities get a good education in the same schools as other children

But we think the Government needs to do more to make these plans work.

Other countries can help with this too.



## What should happen next?



The Government in Armenia should:

- stop children being sent to these homes unless there is a very good reason



- make sure children in the homes only stay a short time and can live with a family afterwards



- make sure money is spent on good support for children and families in the community



This means families will not have to send their children to these homes



The Government in Armenia should make sure that:

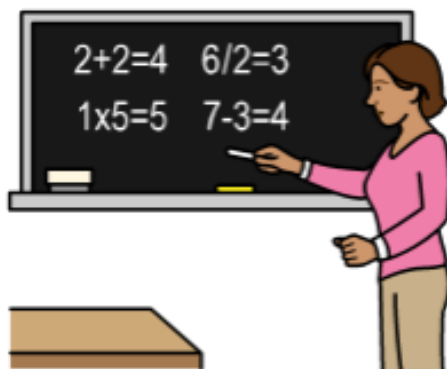
- children can live with other families if they cannot live with their own families  
They should not be sent to big homes



- children with disabilities are not left out and get this support too



- all children with disabilities can get a good education and learn together with other children



- there are enough teachers and staff to support children with disabilities