THE PLAN

- All children must have the best possible start in life. Helping children begins with good health care for their mothers even before the children are born. Young children must have good nutrition, immunizations and grow up in a safe and healthy environment.
- All children must have a quality education. Primary schools should be free so that all children—boys and girls, rich and poor—can attend. All schools should be safe and friendly places. All children must have teachers who are trained properly and who encourage them to learn.
- All young people must have the opportunity to develop the skills they need to participate in and contribute to their communities. Governments and societies must make sure that all children are physically and mentally healthy. They must protect young people from violence. They must ensure that young people have the kind of education that prepares them to earn a living.

ACT NOW!

1. Get in touch with the department or ministry in your government that handles education or youth services. Discuss what has been happening to children and young people in your country. Let the people there hear your thoughts and feelings.
2. Work with children’s organizations and local and national youth groups in your community. Make sure that your voices are heard loud and clear at the Special Session in September 2001.
3. Call or write the UNICEF office in your country. Get more information about the Special Session.
4. Raise the issue of the Special Session in your school, youth center or organization.
5. Join discussions at youth conferences, forums, and other meetings and events where the Special Session is being discussed.

Voices of youth:

MEETING IN CYBERSPACE

Take up the issues of HIV/AIDS, gender discrimination, child labour, the environment, armed conflict and youth rights in the UNICEF youth rights web project, Voices of Youth (VOY) at www.unicef.org/voy. Give your opinions and hear from other young people around the world. The “Take Action” forum encourages participants to share their experiences about getting involved and making a difference in their communities. All the discussions and materials are available on-line in English, French and Spanish.

SO...

how about getting involved?

Young people have been invited to the planning meetings or to the Special Session itself to take part in a variety of activities, forums and panels. Governments may have youth representatives in their official delegations and many NGOs are expected to bring young people to the Special Session to share their opinions, experiences and suggestions for solutions to the problems we all face.

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What’s up?

with the
Special Session
on Children at the UN

What do you think....

- Are the biggest problems the world faces today?
- Would make the world a safer place?
- Would make the world a better place?

WANTED:

YOUNG PEOPLE

United Nations General Assembly
New York, 19 - 21 September 2001

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The real work of meeting the needs of children and young people will be done in homes, communities, villages, towns and cities in countries around the world. It will require a huge commitment from governments and from all parts of societies — youth activists, civic leaders, government agencies, NGOs and private corporations.

The Global Movement for Children is a worldwide campaign to help make sure that governments keep their promises to children. It is a coalition of committed people and organizations whose number one priority is taking action to improve conditions and ensure the well-being of all children and young people in the world.

### Goals of the Special Session

- To take a look at what’s been done during the past 10 years to improve the lives and protect the rights of children and young people.
- To come away with commitments that all children will get the best possible start in life, a quality education and the skills they need to become full and active participants in the world around them.
- To agree on what to do next to improve the quality of life for children and young people.

The Special Session is a follow-up to the 1990 World Summit for Children. The Summit inspired worldwide support for meeting the needs of children. At the 1990 Summit, governments pledged to give every child a better life and a promising future. They signed the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and a Plan of Action for Implementing the World Declaration.

A lot has happened in the last 10 years to improve the well-being of children.

- More children were in school.
- The lives of millions were saved because of vaccines.
- Millions were spared blindness and mental disabilities because they had more micronutrients, such as vitamin A and iodized salt, in their diets.

The Special Session is an official United Nations meeting, so mostly it will be Heads of State and Government who will attend. But many other people and groups have been invited to both the Special Session itself and to preliminary planning meetings for the Session. We expect non-governmental organizations (NGOs), children’s organizations, advocates for children, and children and young people themselves.

### The dream

A world where the best interests of children and young people are always taken into account. A world that protects children’s rights. A world that treats every child equally and lets boys and girls play and learn, and grow to adulthood in health, peace and dignity. A world that involves children and young people in making decisions about their lives and finding ways to make the world a better place for all.

### Change the world with Children

Children and young people throughout the world still experience far too many hardships in their everyday lives. The lives of millions are shattered by extreme poverty, armed conflict, AIDS and discrimination. Consider this:

- 160 million children under the age of five are malnourished. About 10 million severely malnourished children die each year.
- 110 million children do not attend primary school, two thirds of them girls.
- 600 million children live in families earning less than $1 a day.
- 1.4 billion people do not have safe water in their communities.
- 13 million children have been orphaned by AIDS and 8,500 children and young people each day are infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.