

Behaviour with children

Important!

In Lithuania, a child is a person who is under the age of 18, unless otherwise provided by law. The lawful representatives of the child are parents, foster parents, carers and other individuals who, under the law or other legal act, must care for the child, educate him, provide custody, represent him, protect his rights and legitimate interests.

[The Law on the Protection of the Rights of a Child of the Republic of Lithuania](#), emphasises that:

- parents or other legitimate representatives of the child must create conditions for the child to grow, develop and improve; they must educate their children in a humane way making them honest people;
- both parents have the same duty to take care of the child's education, provide proper care, material maintenance, and housing;
- In the event of a dispute regarding the establishment of paternity (maternity), all possible evidence to prove that the defendant is the child's parent (mother) must be taken into account.

In Lithuania, it is necessary to respect certain duties for parents when raising children, i.e.:

- The child must be cared for, dressed, fed.
- Parents must develop the child hygiene skills, take care of their health and well-being, teach communication culture and educate him/her.
- The residence must be clean and adapted to the child. For example, he needs to have a bed to sleep, children of different sexes should not share a bed, have access to the toilet, water. Of course, the child's living conditions are usually in line with the financial capabilities of the parents, but they must strive to create the best possible conditions for him/her to grow and develop.
- The child's living conditions must be as safe as possible, without endangering his health or life.
- Parents cannot leave the child unattended if he / she is in danger of it. For

example, laws do not prohibit leaving a child at home, but parents should ensure that they cannot use devices, other items that pose a risk to their health or life (firearms, drugs, etc.). There are cases when parents leave a child unattended at home for a long time, so he / she cannot properly feed himself / herself and thus his / her life is in danger due to exhaustion, frostbite, etc. Moreover, the child cannot be left alone under hazardous weather conditions so that he / she does not suffer from frost or heat. Such behavior of parents is a breach of their duty to ensure a safe living environment for a child and for this the criminal liability is foreseen by the law.

- A child has the right not only to a normal physical development but also mental. Therefore, he / she should be protected from the negative influence of the social environment, i.e. parents and other people's immoral behaviour, drunkenness, bullying, exposure to physical and mental violence, and an anti-social lifestyle. Parents must ensure that they do not get alcoholic beverages, do not use drugs or psychotropic substances, or be involved in illegal, criminal activities. The child should also be protected from any information, press, films that directly encourage or promote war, cruel behavior, violence, pornography or otherwise harm his or her spiritual and moral development.
- Parents and others who notice that alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, unauthorized press, videotapes are sold to minors should inform the seller or the police about it. (More information is presented in I. Lemežytė's article ["Inappropriate Parents' Behavior with Children. What it is?"](#)).

In Lithuania since 2017 Amendments to the Fundamentals of the Protection of the Rights of the Child which prohibit any violence against children, including physical punishment, came into force. The amendment define all kinds of violence against a child: physical, psychological, sexual, the lack of supervision.

Further information is available [here](#).

Parents who have problems with a child can apply for pedagogical, psychological and social assistance, further information is available on the following [document here](#).