



Down  
Syndrome  
Ireland

# THE CHILDREN REFERENDUM

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 10TH



**EASY-TO-READ GUIDE**

Prepared by  
Down Syndrome Ireland



On Saturday November 10<sup>th</sup> you will be asked to vote in a referendum.



A **referendum** is a time when you vote to change a part of the constitution of Ireland.

The **Constitution** of Ireland sets out the rules of the Country.

All citizens must obey these rules.



This referendum is about the rights of children in Ireland.



You will be asked to vote Yes or No.

Vote Yes if you agree with the changes.

Vote No if you want the constitution to stay the same.

There are 4 main parts of information about the suggested change to the Constitution.



1. The State will recognise that children have rights.  
The State must support and protect the rights of children.

**The State** = The government

Sometimes a child's parents may not provide enough care to keep the child safe.

If this happens the State will get involved and help. This will happen if a child's parents are married or unmarried.



3. When parents have failed over a period of time to look after the child and keep the child safe:

The State may decide that it is best for another family to **adopt** the child.

This means the child will live with new parents all of the time.

The State will only do this if it is the best decision for the child.



4. The judges in the courts will listen to the opinions of the child when a decision is being made about that child.

### Find Out More Information:

This easy-to-read guide gives you some of the important pieces of information about the referendum. There is much more information available.

### Use the Internet

Search for information using:



Google



Facebook



Twitter



You Tube



Visit this website:

[www.referendum2012.ie](http://www.referendum2012.ie)

### Write a Letter

Write a letter asking for more information and send it to:



The Referendum Commission,  
18 Lower Lesson Street,  
Dublin 2,  
Ireland.

### Television

Watch the news and other television shows about the referendum.



### Ask Questions

Talk to your friends and family about the referendum. Ask questions about any parts that you don't understand.



### Disclaimer:

This document represents a very brief outline of the proposed amendment to the constitution as interpreted by Down Syndrome Ireland.

Hello. My name is David.  
I am a citizen.

**I have a vote!**



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