



Together to promote human rights

The first "Cultural Salon"

Children and human rights: a film and a story

May 15 at NCHR's headquarters in New Cairo

The Cultural Rights Committee of the National Council for Human Rights (NCHR) held the first Cultural Salon under the title “Children and Human Rights: A Film and a Story” on Monday, May 15, 2023, at NCHR’s headquarters in New Cairo.

The salon came within the framework of the work plan of the Cultural Rights Committee for the year 2023, within the framework of the role of NCHR in supporting the culture of human rights in all fields. He addressed the topic of creating content for children, whether in relation to children’s literature or animation. Writers, animators, publishers, educators, production companies, and official bodies, in addition to journalists and media professionals, participated in the event. It was opened by Dr. Noha Bakr, Secretary of the Cultural Rights Committee, and Dr. Nevin Massad, a member of the committee, who managed the salon’s work. The salon was attended by Ambassador Mushira Khattab, President of the Council, where she participated in the dialogue with the attendees.

Cultural salon recommendations

The salon issued the following recommendations:

- NCHR is not satisfied with presenting recommendations, as implementation is the most important. It is necessary to go to implementation mechanisms, follow them up, know who the stakeholders are and network among them.



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- Working to integrate children's rights values into children's stories and animation, providing capacity-building opportunities, and encouraging writers and animators to address children's rights through training, awarding awards, and holding workshops.
- Emphasizing the importance of the word, especially directed to children, as the word is the backbone and basis of work, and in the age of artificial intelligence, renewable mechanisms must be used to spread the word, and the word and animation must be directed in the Arabic language to build the child's right to identity.
- Children's stories are one of the mechanisms for supporting, encouraging and developing the child's personality, and therefore it is important to pay attention to them and use them to support the child's rights issue because they have an important role in building the Egyptian personality.
- The importance of documenting previous works that have already been done and using appropriate ones, working to revive the heritage of children's stories and animation works that support children's rights and re-using them, and continuing to emphasize what has been covered in previous works to achieve sustainability (such as avoiding bullying) .
- The importance of finding communication channels that display, publish, and republish works that support children's stories and animation, and finding an Egyptian children's channel that will be a tool for communicating stories and animation.
- The importance of having a comprehensive vision and a clear strategy for children's rights to convey them through multiple mechanisms that are now available with technology, and the most important of these mechanisms are children's stories and animation.



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- Focusing on children's media and developing a clear media strategy to spread awareness of children's rights, including supporting their rights, and the necessity of having a clear and specific budget for producing children's stories and animation.

- Allocating a portion of daily news segments on television channels (similar to what is followed in many foreign countries) to mention a book or a series of books, provided that the mention is made of books for adults and children alike. A minute or two at most may be sufficient for that paragraph, in which it is mentioned the name of the author and publisher, the year of publication, the classification of the book, and a quick idea of its content.

- Do not deal - on television channels, especially those affiliated with the state, with locally published books as commercial goods, meaning when hosting writers, painters or publishers in programs, they allow the covers of their books to be shown on the screen, and to mention the titles of the books under discussion, and not to treat them as commercial advertisements, in particular Children's magazines suffer from weak circulation numbers, and the publishing field in general has been suffering for years from several factors, especially recently after printing prices have also doubled. Efforts are being made to encourage publishing, especially since the expected profits from selling books in general are not huge, and books are exempt from value-added tax.

- Directing children's stories and cartoons to the family and not just to the child, as the family needs awareness in the field of children's rights. It is suggested to mention the titles of newly published books in an animated strip of those strips that appear at the bottom of the screen when broadcasting news segments, or programs of a family nature, or with high viewership, such as cooking programs, for example, that are watched by a wide base of mothers, using the hashtag: #Read_On_Vacation or #Read_to_your_child, or #In_Reading_Life, for example.

- Listening to children when writing to a child or making an animated film, to understand them and realize the differences between cultures, while realizing that today's child lives in a different technological world, and preparing the appropriate



Together to promote human rights

language of speech, in addition to encouraging children to read and offering competitions to encourage them to read and watch what is shown. cartoons.

- Producing programs presented by children to children that talk about values, morals and good behaviour. These programs can be supported by animations or short videos of situations from daily life that highlight healthy values and behaviors, and explain the reasons on which wrong behaviors are classified. Proposing children as presenters helps generate a greater response from viewers, both children and adults. This is in light of the state's interest in teaching values and morals in schools and the recent cases of bullying, harassment, and violent crimes against humans in general.

- Producing awareness-raising animation programs for children, explaining to them in a simple and non-intimidating manner the different forms of harm or dangers (whether physical or psychological) to which they may be exposed, and how to deal with them courageously and with practical methods and steps. In these programs, books that deal with these topics can be used, such as: "I Am Ghali" and "A Touch and a Touch," or mentions of such books can be made through this type of program.

- Producing (television) competition programs for reading and writing for children, similar to the "Arab Reading Challenge" program, which follows the various stages of these competitions and their qualifiers, and hosts the participants and winners, in order to encourage more children to participate, and to establish the idea that reading and writing are fun activities, and that knowledge is A treasure worth working to acquire.

- Integrating children's stories into educational curricula because they are closer to the child and more convey concepts to the child. Assisting children's literature writers and children's book illustrators in writing the reading topics assigned to schools, within the framework of developing curricula, provided that this also takes place within the framework of competitions offered by the Ministry of Education, in which the standards approved by the Ministry are announced. This is with the aim of achieving more diversity and space for imagination in the stories presented to school children, in addition to revitalizing and enriching the children's writing movement in Egypt once again in line with the developments of the times.

In the context of the Ministry of Education's interest in including the ethics curriculum in schools, it is proposed to hold a story-writing or research competition on topics related to ethics and behavior in general, and bullying in particular, so that the



Together to promote human rights

winning stories or research must address wisdom and courage in confronting bad actions and behaviors, and that Encourages the reader to have good morals. A competition of this size can be run online, with contestants submitting their written texts electronically.

- Launching a national campaign to encourage reading. This could be done under the auspices of the Ministries of Culture and Education, or in cooperation between them. The campaign could include a reading competition for children, in which children record videos presenting presentations of their favorite books, which are published and circulated on social media. This increases their self-confidence in presenting topics that interest them, encourages other children to read, and promotes their favorite books and authors, which may increase the sales of those books, thus benefiting all concerned parties.

- Evaluating what already exists in terms of work and looking for gaps in values that have not been focused on and shown, such as: the child's right to express an opinion and teach him how to integrate with society and negotiate without adopting zero-sum thinking, the right to dignity, self-respect, and the respect of others, and the right to Education, emphasizing the Egyptian and Arab identity, language and its use to support the child's right to identity, in addition to focusing on teaching the child not to inflate the "ego" while developing the self, and the necessity of stories and animation building the ability to analyze and think, which builds children's capabilities and does not make them follow any idea. Unnatural.

- The importance of networking and creating bridges of communication with those working in the file of children's rights, children's literature, and animation so that efforts do not continue to be scattered, and finding a mechanism to connect schools, writers, content makers, publishing houses, and media outlets with each other.

- Creating a national platform for children that brings together all elements such as production authorities, the General Authority for Cinema, and the Ministry of Culture, and conducting a survey on successful works.

The next meeting should be with students, especially those studying animation films, those involved in writing, and content creators.



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- The return of the International Children's Festival, which was canceled by the Ministry of Culture.
- Seeking the help of specialized companies to study the child's needs.

Attention must be paid to creating stories for children with disabilities, printing the stories in Braille, and also teaching the child how to deal with children with disabilities through stories and animation, provided that these films are converted into sign language.