



Policy guidance on AI for children

Overarching recommendations

- Apply requirements whenever AI systems interact with or impact children, regardless of whether the system was designed for or aimed at children.
- Develop and deploy AI systems in a way that simultaneously upholds children’s collective rights to protection, provision and participation.
- Foster a multi-stakeholder approach both in government and in business.
- Adapt to the national or local context to reflect and meet local needs.

1. Support children’s development and wellbeing

- Prioritize how AI systems can benefit children, in particular in AI policies and strategies.
- Develop and apply a design for a child rights approach.
- Leverage AI systems to support and increase children’s wellbeing and environmental sustainability.

2. Ensure inclusion of and for children

- Strive for diversity amongst those who design, develop, collect and process data, implement, research, regulate and oversee AI systems.

- Adopt an inclusive design approach when developing AI products that will be used by children or impact them.
- Support meaningful child participation, both in AI policies and in the design and development processes.

3. Prioritize fairness and non-discrimination for children

- Actively support the most marginalized children so that they may benefit from AI systems.
- Develop datasets so that a diversity of children’s data are included.
- Seek to eliminate any prejudicial bias against children, or against certain groups of children, that leads to discrimination and exclusion.

4. Protect children's data and privacy

- Follow a responsible data approach for the handling of data for and about children.
- Promote children's data agency.
- Adopt a privacy-by-design approach.
- Consider protections at the group level.

5. Ensure safety for children

- Call for mechanisms for assessing and continually monitoring the impact of AI systems on children in AI policies and strategies.
- Continuously assess and monitor AI's impact on children throughout the entire AI development life cycle.
- Require testing of AI systems for safety, security and robustness.
- Leverage the use of AI systems to promote children's safety.

6. Provide transparency, explainability and accountability for children

- Strive to explicitly address children when promoting explainability and transparency of AI systems.
- Use age-appropriate language to describe AI.
- Make AI systems transparent to the extent that children and their caregivers can understand the interaction.
- Develop AI systems so that they protect and empower child users according to legal and policy frameworks, regardless of children's understanding of the system.
- Review, update and develop AI-related regulatory frameworks to integrate child rights.
- Establish AI oversight bodies compliant with principles and regulations and set up mechanisms for redress.

7. Empower governments and businesses with knowledge of AI and children's rights

- Ensure capacity-building on AI and child rights for policymakers, top management and AI system developers.
- Capitalize on customers' demand for trusted and transparent AI solutions for children.
- Commit to child-centred AI and put in place mechanisms to realize this in practice.

8. Prepare children for present and future developments in AI

- Develop and update formal and informal education programmes globally to include technical and soft skills needed to flourish in an AI world, including in the future workplace.
- Consider a national self-assessment for teachers to assess and then develop their AI awareness and skills.
- Leverage the use of AI systems in education, when it is appropriate.
- Facilitate and encourage collaboration between businesses and educational institutions.
- Develop and promote awareness campaigns for parents, caregivers and society as a whole.

9. Create an enabling environment for child-centred AI

- Support infrastructure development to address the digital divide and aim for equitable sharing of the benefits of AI.
- Provide funding and incentives for child-centred AI policies and strategies.
- Support research on AI for and with children across the system's life cycle.
- Engage in digital cooperation.

Source: UNICEF (2021): Policy Guidance on AI for children.