

SRI LANKA

National policies & Laws for Child Protection and Child Rights

Laws related to Children in Sri Lanka

1. Who is a child in Sri Lanka?

For the purposes of this common purpose, a child is a person under the age of 18 years. This is the age at which a person gains the legal status of an adult.

2. What is the age for legal marriage?

In Sri Lanka, the marriageable age for both males and females is 18 years.

3. What is the minimum age for employment or work?

It is currently 16 years old. No child under 16 years can be employed. 16 to 18 years, there are some restrictions, such as not being allowed to do dangerous or life-threatening work, no night duties, and needing regular breaks between work, etc.

4. What is the minimum age for selling liquor and tobacco?

Liquor and tobacco cannot be sold to any person below 21 years of age in Sri Lanka.

5. What is the age of consent for sexual intercourse for a girl child?

In Sri Lanka, no male can have sexual contact with a girl below 16 years of age, even with her consent. This will constitute an offence of rape.

Reference:

[Chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://royalcollege.lk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Laws-related-to-Children-in-Sri-Lanka.pdf](https://royalcollege.lk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Laws-related-to-Children-in-Sri-Lanka.pdf)

THE HEALTH FIRST MAGAZINE

PARLIAMENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF SRI LANKA

<https://childprotection.gov.lk/images/pdfs/acts-guidelines/National%20Child%20Protection%20Act,%20No.%2050%20of%201998.pdf>

By Government Authority

Legal & Policy Documents

<https://childprotection.gov.lk/en/resource-centre/legal-policy-documents>

By National Child Protection Authority

Five Year National Action Plan on National Policy on Child Protection 2025 – 2029

<https://www.childwomenmin.gov.lk/uploads/common/five-year-national-action-plan-on-national-policy-on-child-protection-2025---2029-en.pdf>

Source: National Child Protection Authority

National Child Protection Policy

<https://www.iccwnispncanarc.org/upload/pdf/9264704711National%20Child%20Protection%20Policy.pdf>

Source: National Child Protection Authority

Child Rights in Sri Lanka: Legal Framework

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/346062732_Child_Rights_in_Sri_Lanka_Legal_Framework

Source : Research Gate

Child Labour/ Child trafficking for Labour

Child Labor and Forced Labor Reports

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/sri-lanka>

Source: US Department of labour

The National Policy on Elimination of Child Labour in Sri Lanka

https://labourmin.gov.lk/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/the_national_policy_child_labour_sl_compressed.pdf

Source: Ministry of Labour, SriLanka

Ending Child Labour In Sri Lanka: Tackling Root Causes First

<https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/ending-child-labour-in-sri-lanka-tackling-root-causes-first/>

Source: Colombo Telegraph

PROFILE OF CHILD LABOUR IN SRI LANKA

<https://www.res.cmb.ac.lk/private.comparative.law/yashodha/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2021/02/LAW-134.pdf>

By E. M. Y. G. Ekanayaka in International Journal

Child Trafficking

<https://childprotection.gov.lk/en/child-traffickings>

Source: National Child Protection Authority

CHILD ABUSE

NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION AUTHORITY ACT

<https://www.srilankalaw.lk/n/760-national-child-protection-authority-act.html>

BLACKHALL PUBLISHING

Child Welfare and Child Justice in Sri Lanka – no time like the present for reform

<https://www.unicef.org/srilanka/press-releases/child-welfare-and-child-justice-sri-lanka-no-time-present-reform>

UNICEF

Child rights in Sri Lanka: Legal framework

Child rights in Sri Lanka: Legal framework

CHILD RIGHTS IN SRILANKA – A LEGAL FRAMEWORK

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/346062732_Child_Rights_in_Sri_Lanka_Legal_Framework

ACADEMIA

CHILD MARRIAGE

Reforms Regarding Child Marriage in Sri Lanka

<https://childmarriagedata.org/country-profiles/sri-lanka/#:~:text=WHERE%20DOES%20CHILD,Search>

Source: The Borgen Project

Juvenile system

As per current Law children up to 12 years old are freed from criminal liability in Sri Lanka

JUVENILE JUSTICE LAW

https://www.lawlanka.com/lal_v2/consShortTitleView?selectedAct=1981Y3V31C

law lanka

Juvenile Laws at Sri Lanka

<https://www.lawgratis.com/blog-detail/juvenile-laws-at-sri-lanka>

Source: Law Gratis

JUVENILE JUSTICE IN SRI LANKA

<https://www.probonoconference.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/JUVENILE-JUSTICE-IN-SRI-LANKA-FINAL-PDF.pdf>

By Srilanka Attorney General

Legal status of Juvenile justice in Sri Lanka

https://www.academia.edu/115758493/Legal_status_of_Juvenile_justice_in_Sri_Lanka

Source :ACADEMIA

SENTENCING SYSTEM IN SRI LANKA FOR A JUVENILE OFFENDER

https://www.academia.edu/15311874/Sentencing_policy_on_juvenile_in_Sri_Lanka_guidelines_on_sentencing_in_Sri_Lanka_State_Cost_in_Sri_Lanka_Judicial_Discretion

ACADEMIA

EDUCATION

Education is compulsory for every child between 5 to 16 years of age

EDUCATION IN SRI LANKA

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Sri_Lanka

Source: WIKIPEDIA

An Overview of the Education System in Sri Lanka , Nov 28, 2024

<https://generisonline.com/an-overview-of-the-education-system-in-sri-lanka/>

Source: Generis global

National Education Policy Framework (2020-2030)

https://www.nec.gov.lk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/NATIONAL-EDUCATION-POLICY-FRAMEWORK-2020-2030_Full-Text.pdf

NATIONAL EDUCATION COMMISSION – SRI LANKA

NEW EDUCATION ACT FOR GENERAL EDUCATION IN SEILANKA

<https://nec.gov.lk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Towards-a-New-Education-Act.pdf>

PROPOSAL BY COMMITTEE

Level of education in Sri Lanka

https://www.worlddata.info/asia/sri-lanka/education.php#google_vignette

World Data

THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR IN SRI LANKA

<https://cedsrilanka.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Education-in-Sri-Lanka-booklet.pdf>

By: Coalition for educational development

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Disability-Inclusive Education Practices in Sri Lanka

<https://www.unicef.org/rosa/media/17016/file/Country%20Profile%20-%20Sri%20Lanka.pdf>

Country Profile -Sri Lanka

Special education needs and inclusive education: A Sri Lankan perspective

<https://www.sundaytimes.lk/240825/education/special-education-needs-and-inclusive-education-a-sri-lankan-perspective-568498.html>

Source :The Sunday Times

Sri Lanka's Invisible Children: The Need for Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs

<https://www.ips.lk/talkingeconomics/2016/04/25/sri-lankas-invisible-children-the-need-for-inclusive-education-for-children-with-special-needs/>

Source: Talking Economics

PARENTS TRAINING SKILLS

POSITIVE PARENTING MANUAL Disciplining children without the use of corporal punishment

<https://www.unicef.org/srilanka/reports/positive-parenting-manual>

By UNICEF

INTRODUCTION TO POSITIVE PARENTING

<https://www.unicef.org/srilanka/media/3531/file/English%20Introduction.pdf>

By UNICEF