



KIDS: BEST INTEREST DOMAIN.

**DOTKIDS FOUNDATION**

**Committee on the Rights of the Child - 2014 Day of General Discussion Submission**  
**The Unaware Revolution on Cyberspace bringing influence to Children**

**Background**

The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), founded in 1998, is the regulator of Internet coordinating the Domain Names and IP address. It is with the responsibility of ensuring the security and stability of the domain name system (DNS). Domain name is the central tool for navigation on the Internet; it acts as the address on Internet. Domain names are names like “www.company.com”, which are distinguished by dot “.” separated labels, with the right most suffix being the Top-Level Domain (TLD), for instance “.com”, “.org”, “.net” are the common generic TLDs (gTLD) nowadays.

Back to June 2011, ICANN has launched the New gTLD Program<sup>1</sup>, which allowed people applying new top level domain names. Finally, ICANN received 1,930 applications for this new round of gTLDs application. Over 1300 new names will be available in the coming few years, till now around 300 new gTLDs have been delegated<sup>2</sup>.

With the upcoming gTLDs, some of them are highly related to children. During the process of new gTLDs delegation, The Government Advisory Committee (GAC) of ICANN has raised their concerns, and given advice to ICANN Board that these names require special safeguard on the registry operation, and identified the applications including .kid, .kids, .kinder, .game, .games, .juegos, .play, .school, .schule and .toys are in the category of child related strings<sup>3</sup>, and these strings shall be made aware of the importance of protecting children and their rights consistent with the UNCRC<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> ICANN, New gTLD Program, <http://newgtlds.icann.org/en>

<sup>2</sup> ICANN, Delegated Strings, <http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/program-status/delegated-strings>

<sup>3</sup> 31 July 2014, London GAC minutes, <https://gacweb.icann.org/display/gacweb/Governmental+Advisory+Committee>

<sup>4</sup> 11 April 2013, Beijing GAC Communique, <https://gacweb.icann.org/display/gacweb/Governmental+Advisory+Committee>



## **About Us**

DotKids Foundation, is the only community-based applicant submitting proposals for a new ".kids" domain to ICANN, and is endeavored to promote and develop a kids-friendly cyberspace for children globally by adopting the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Child (UNCRC) as our fundamental guiding principles. DotKids Foundation will become a self-sustainable resource, which contributes the domain registration revenue back to the children's rights community in supporting various child related initiatives. At the same time, our vision is that ".kids" domain must be a global platform to drive the creation of kids friendly content on the Internet. Since this cyberspace is for kids, it shall therefore also come from kids for which we highly value child participation and that it should enable and empower kids to participate in Internet governance with a core principle in advocating children's rights.

### **Our Mission:**

- Adopt the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as a fundamental guiding principle to protect the rights of children;
- Operate as a not-for-profit initiative promoting kids-friendly content on the Internet; Promote the well-being of children online and uphold children's rights;
- Value children's participation on Internet governance by making .kid(s) a platform for children as an important part of the multi-stakeholder approach to build a better Internet world together;
- Support child-right organizations and initiatives around the world, especially with relevance to the development of the Internet with the best interests of the child as a fundamental principle.



## **Children's enjoyment of their right of information access with protection**

For the best interest of children, children have the right to information access, however without appropriate guidance for children on the web surfing behavior especially for the upcoming domain name targeting children, will put them in high risk and be exposed to inappropriate content including child sexual abuse content. Child-related Domain registries should proactively take the lead to set up registry policies on preventing the content provider on their domain from creating website with content inappropriate for children and distributing these information. It means beyond the standard gTLD dispute resolution and suspension policies, the children related domain registry should ***develop and implement special dispute and suspension policies as protective mechanisms*** on avoiding child sexual abuse content and inappropriate content for children from appearing online. It is aimed to create a child-friendly cyberspace with child-related domain as mean, which dedicated for children, where children can have safe and free browsing experience online.

## **Participation of children in corporate policies and management process**

To strike the balance in children protection and content restriction on child-related domain, best practice will directly involve children. In additional to consisting International and local children rights groups for the formation of the board, advisory council as well as policy development and proceeds steering bodies with the leverage of knowledge and expertise to reflect the interests of children around the world. Children Advisory Council will be established in the structure of DotKids Foundation on “.kids” registry operation, child-led organizations can join the DotKids Foundation as Associate Members<sup>5</sup>. Each associate member could nominate one representative to the Children Advisory Council. A child-friendly discussion environment will be created where they may form different concern groups at times to freely express their opinion. The inclusion of children acts out the

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<sup>5</sup> While the child-led organization need not be a legally registered organization, they must be nominated by an existing member organization of the DotKids Foundation.



fundamental principles of the Foundation, and which aligns with Article 12 of UNCRC. Meanwhile, direct participation of children in Internet Governance Discussion is crucial, that DotKids Foundation will support the participation of children in various discussion platforms for example Internet Governance Forum organized by United Nations<sup>6</sup>.

**Social fund on supporting advocacy work, empowerment project, child participation scheme or any initiatives about promoting children’s online safety, child-friendly Cyberspace and children’s Internet Access**

DotKids Foundation as a self-sustainable resource, which contributes the domain registration revenue on sales of “.kids” domain back to the children’s rights community in supporting various child related initiatives, advocacy work, empowerment project or child participation scheme on the area of children’s Internet access, children’s online safety and child-friendly cyberspace development. DotKids Foundation will dedicate funds raised through the operation and registration of “.kids” domains to promote Children’s rights development around the world. The funds will especially be directed towards the development of kids-friendly content as well as to support children-led and children-centric projects highlighting the participation by children in the shaping and implementation of policies, including use of ICT to engage in Internet governance policies discussion or empower children, parents, caregivers and teachers on developing kids-friendly cyberspace, and beyond. At the same time, to create such child-friendly cyberspace, getting children online is significant first step to take. The fund will also act as a tool for digital literacy and a source for solving equitable Internet access of children especially filling the digital divide among gender, social-economic status, geographical location, language, cultural context and disability, with respect to the principle of non-discrimination of UNCRC.

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<sup>6</sup> Internet Governance Forum, <http://www.intgovforum.org/>



## **Recommendation to Committee on CRC**

With the upcoming development of the children related gTLDs, we strongly encourage Committee on CRC to adopt the following recommendations:

### *Working Group 1 – Children’s equal and safe access to digital media and ICT*

- To develop a universal Internet content guidelines for creating children-friendly cyberspace, especially for domain names and websites targeting children, and encourage domain registries, registrants and content providers to follow and further set specific guidelines for protecting children’s right online with consistent with UNCRC
- To urge the board of ICANN suggesting specific safeguard to be set for child-related domain registries, that awareness on children protection and their rights with consistent with the UNCRC can be raised

### *Working Group 2 – Children’s empowerment and engagement through digital media and ICT*

- To review the situation of Social Media and Children’s Rights every 3 years to be synchronizing with the fast development of Internet, and invite industries, NGOs and children for submission through voluntary reporting platform to better understand the latest developments and improve the mentioned guideline

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