

## **Adult privileges checklist**

(Translation, revision and layout by Zoff Leinberger & queer\_topia\*translate | queertopia.de)

Link (deutsch): [www.queertopia.de/dl-Erwachsene-Privilegien-Checkliste](http://www.queertopia.de/dl-Erwachsene-Privilegien-Checkliste)

Link (english): [www.queertopia.de/dl-adult-privileges-checklist](http://www.queertopia.de/dl-adult-privileges-checklist)

Original source: <http://shutupsitdown.co.uk/2009/11/16/the-adult-privilege-checklist/>

The following checklist was written by Quinn Norman Capes-Ivy in his "Blog Shut Up, Sit Down." In this particular blog post, he lists "The Adult Privilege Checklist." We do not know the extent to which children and youth were involved in the creation of the original checklist. We have revised the list and added a few items. For suggestions and feedback, feel free to write to: [mail@queertopia.de](mailto:mail@queertopia.de).

As a child:

1. I don't get to vote, even though the government makes decisions about me and people like me.
  1. My knowledge, expertise and needs are not taken into account in political decisions.
  2. There is no representation or representatives in the political and economic system for me.
2. It is often considered acceptable, appropriate, and even desirable for my caregiver to physically assault me if I do not please them.
  1. In many places in the world, I can be lawfully physically chastised in my educational institution.
  2. If I am hit by a caregiver, even just once, it is often socially accepted.
  3. It is likely that I am smaller than the person attacking me and that I am not able to defend myself.
  4. If I behave in a way that others do not like (or my caregiver has decided that they no longer want to be in a certain place), it is considered acceptable to physically lift me up and forcibly remove me from the area/situation.
3. If I am regularly yelled at, criticized, and devalued in my own home, this is often not considered violent behavior.
  1. My physical and emotional needs are often not treated as appropriate and important.
  2. When I am angry or upset, this is often not taken seriously and I am often treated in a patronizing and condescending manner.
4. I am almost always dependent on others for my economic sustenance.
  1. I can't make my own decisions about family finances or when and on what I spend money.
  2. If I want to earn money, and I'm allowed to earn money at all, it should be at a lower hourly rate than adults who do exactly the same work.<sup>^</sup>
5. I am routinely ignored or silenced.

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<sup>^</sup> Tension between legitimate, (vital) protection or arbitrary rule. This tension exists in many of the items listed. This point illustrates the tension particularly well.

1. When I am the only child in a group of people, I am often excluded from the conversation or patronized.
2. It is considered acceptable to talk over me or interrupt me while I am speaking.
6. When I exhibit age-appropriate behavior, other people find it unacceptable.
  1. I can't be "louder/more active than average" in a public place without people questioning my right to be in that place.
  2. If I am "louder/more active than average" in a public place, I risk that someone will kick me and my caregiver out or we will be punished with stares.
7. I do not have free choice in my choice of language. If I use words that are "unacceptable for my age," I am often punished.
8. When I suffer from mental health problems, I am often dismissed and they are attributed to my age.
  1. Behaviors that do not fit into the system, on the other hand, are also quickly pathologized (e.g., premature ADHD diagnoses).
9. Adults often think they have the right to bully me.
  1. Adults think it is their right to talk to me, even if I make it clear that I don't want to.
  2. Adults think it is their right to touch me (comb my hair, pinch my cheek) without my permission.
  3. Adults consider it their right to ask me or my caregivers about my assigned gender or age.
10. Society and the media often portray people like me in a negative light.
  1. The media often describes people like me as lazy, silly, annoying, ignorant, or ...
11. People often make decisions for me and tell me they know better than I do what is best for me.
12. The world is generally too big for me:
  1. I am usually not able to find a seat made for someone my size.
  2. Light switches, windows, sinks, toilets, and sales counters are generally not located in a way that is easy for someone my size to reach.
  3. I can't be sure I can lock the door to my toilet stall or reach the toilet paper when I sit down.
  4. It is very possible that I am trapped in a place that I cannot leave without help.
  5. Cutlery, plates and glasses are usually not small enough to fit in my hands.
13. If the wait for a meal or conversation seems unreasonable and I complain, people generally don't show understanding or apologize.
  1. I can't speak with my mouth full without people attributing it to my age.

14. I may not understand the unspoken rules of behavior in public spaces, they may not feel natural to me, and I may not be able to follow them without getting myself into trouble.
15. I may not be fluent in my first language and often not understood by other first language learners.
  1. It is considered acceptable for another speaker to laugh at me or constantly improve me because of my choice of language or my inability to express myself.
16. I usually don't have a choice about where I go to school (or whether I attend classes). If I am sent to school, I am legally expected to attend whether I want to or not. If I am homeschooled, I may not have a choice to go to school if I want to.
  1. If I am late to my educational institution, I am likely to be reprimanded, even if it is the fault of my adult caregiver.
  2. I almost never get to set my own curriculum, material, or pace.
  3. My academic assessments are often based on circumstances over which I have no control - the behavior of other students, my caregivers, or the learning materials available to me. Also circumstances like financial / domestic, linguistic and educational situation of my family of origin.
17. If I feel ill, I may not be able to communicate this appropriately to my caregiver. If I can, I may not be taken seriously or treated properly.
  1. If I need to go to a medical facility, I depend on my caregiver there to take care of everything for me.
  2. Medical professionals often ignore me completely and instead only talk to my caregiver about my needs.
  3. I am not able to make my own medical decisions. The right to make these decisions rests exclusively with other people (usually my adult caregivers).
  4. In some places, my adult guardians must be notified if I need an abortion, which can sometimes put me in great danger.
18. I may not be able to meet my physical needs (housing, food, water, toilet, health needs, putting myself to bed) without relying on the help of others.
  1. I am often forced to eat foods I don't like.
  2. I am often forced to eat quantities I don't want or finish.
  3. My bedtime and length is set (often arbitrarily) by my caregiver, and I often have no control over it.
  4. I often have no choice about my living space - the house I live in, its décor, the arrangement of furniture, etc.
  5. I often have no choice about my physical appearance - haircut, clothing, etc.
19. I usually don't have a choice about which religion I belong to.
20. If I want to spend time with other people, I need permission and sometimes help from my caregiver to organize it.

1. If I don't want to spend time with a certain person or people, I usually don't have the option to avoid them.
21. My sexual/gender development is often not explained to me, and sometimes I am actively discouraged.
  1. If my sexuality/gender identity is not cisgender and heterosexual, I must expect to be told that it is "wrong" and that efforts will be made to change it. The use of violence is considered acceptable in this situation.
  2. It is considered unacceptable for me to act out my sexuality.
22. My things can be taken away from me (often by my adult caregiver) and this is not considered stealing.
23. If I am in public unaccompanied by an adult, any adult may request to accompany me and restrict my movement or call the police. This is considered acceptable, regardless of my own opinion or that of my legal caregiver.<sup>^</sup>
24. I am limited to watching movies on my own, regardless of my opinion or that of my caregiver.<sup>^</sup>
25. It is considered acceptable or even "reasonable" for me to be discriminated against and viewed with suspicion when I visit a store or other establishment.
26. As a rule, I am not allowed to have a say in which people look after / accompany me when my primary caregivers do not have time. I can also often not co-determine whether I want to and can endure this separation.
27. There are discriminatory words in (German) usage that refer to behavior with negative connotations and have the word child in them, for example: "childish" or also "underage".
28. As a rule, people do not get down to my eye level to talk to me. In general, my environment is not geared towards signs/advertising /product descriptions are at my eye level.
29. My growth/cognitive and physical development is medically supervised, categorized and standardized and I am compared with the development of other children from birth. Deviations from the (medical) norm are accompanied by pathologization and stigmatization.
30. There is no scientific research/study on children that is also designed/conducted by children.
31. There are many books on children, behavior, development, guidebooks on 'proper' companionship, but almost no books by other children, on any subject.
  1. There is no scientific research/study on children that is also designed/conducted by children.
32. I am denied access to and denied understanding of certain knowledge in many places and by many people.

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