

Appendix to Stolen Childhoods Teacher Resource Guide

Once upon a time there was a little chimney-sweep, and his name was Tom. That is a short name, and you have heard it before, so you will not have much trouble in remembering it. He lived in a great town in the North Country, where there were plenty of chimneys to sweep, and plenty of money for Tom to earn and his master to spend. He could not read nor write, and did not care to do either; and he never washed himself, for there was no water up the court where he lived...He cried half his time, and laughed the other half. He cried when he had to climb the dark flues, rubbing his poor knees and elbows raw; and when the soot got into his eyes, which it did every day in the week; and when his master beat him, which he did every day in the week; and when he had not enough to eat, which happened every day in the week likewise. And he laughed the other half of the day, when he was tossing halfpennies with the other boys, or playing leap-frog over the posts, or bowling stones at the horses' legs as they trotted by, which last was excellent fun, when there was a wall at hand behind which to hide. As for chimney-sweeping, and being hungry, and being beaten, he took all that for the way of the world, like the rain and snow and thunder, and stood manfully with his back to it till it was over, as his old donkey did to a hailstorm.

Charles Kingsley *The Water-Babies* (1919)

A Brief History of Child Labor Laws

- 1833 Britain prohibits work for children under the age of 9 and limits work for older children (this was the same year that Charles Dickens began his career as a writer of fiction. In 1824, at the age of 12, Dickens was sent to work for some months at a blacking factory, Hungerford Market, London, while his father John was in Marshalsea debtors' prison.
- 1836 Massachusetts adopts the first American Child Labor Reform law
- 1839 Prussia passes law regulating child labor
- 1840 France introduces legislation on child work
- 1843 India abolishes slavery
- 1870 Compulsory full-time schooling introduced in Great Britain
- 1919 International Labour Organization (ILO) established as part of the Peace Treaty of

- Versailles. First International Labour Convention on minimum age of admission to employment adopted
- 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly
- 1949 India introduces legislation to ban child labor
- 1956 Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery adopted by the United Nations. The Supplementary Convention identifies child labor as a form of slavery for the first time.
- 1959 United Nations proclaims Declaration of the Rights of the Child.
- 1973 New comprehensive international instruments on minimum age of admission to employment - Convention 138 and Recommendation 146 - adopted by International Labour Conference
- 1979 International Year of the Child. United Nations begins drafting a convention on the rights of the child. International Labour Conference adopts resolution on the progressive elimination of child labor and transitional measures.
- 1989 United Nations adopts Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- 1991 ILO creates IPEC, an action program to protect working children and to combat and eliminate child labor.
- 1993 Convention on the Rights of the Child ratified by 128 Member States (not the United States). Adoption of the United Nations Program of Action for the Elimination of Exploitation of Child Labor by the Commission on Human Rights.
- 2000 Millennium Goals proclaimed by the United Nations.
- 2005 Failure to meet Millennium Goals proclaimed by the UN.