

We need the Rule of law

Too often the rule of law is seen as an abstract concept strictly for lawyers and politicians, but it plays a huge role in each of our lives. And so we would think that it is naturally in the interests of world governments to protect it. Nothing could be further from the truth; the [World Justice Project](#) recently found that most of the human population live in a place that is less rule-of-law-compliant than before the pandemic. [Over 4 billion people](#) are denied the opportunity to escape poverty and improve their lives because they lack access to the rule of law.

That's why this week we're launching [videos](#) kindly funded by the Sybil Shine Memorial Trust. Along with our partners EachOther, The Defendant, Leducate and the Law in 60 Seconds we'll be releasing a new educational video each day in order to inform children about their rights, set them on track to become active citizens and ultimately democratise the rule of law.

These videos are an accompaniment to the Bingham Centre Public and Youth Engagement Programme, which is a headline volunteering initiative. This involves introducing young lawyers to Lord Bingham's '[The Rule of Law](#)' training them in the fundamentals of teaching, and supporting them to convene interactive workshops in schools where students have the opportunity to debate current issues within a rule of law framework.

We believe that lawyers going into schools and leveraging social media to tell inspirational stories about the rule of law will make a difference. But I'd like to talk a bit about why the rule of law is so important to me.

But why is it so important?

I have often felt disempowered and voiceless when others made decisions about me. Despite approaching this from a professional standpoint I've found that the issues we will discuss in these videos resonated strongly with my lived experience.

At primary school I was made to attend a regular isolated 'anger management' session where I would be removed from my class; I was not informed of my rights to challenge this decision, and didn't feel that I would have been listened to if I had raised a problem. I needed the rule of law then; the rule of law in that instance would have seen me provided with adequate advice in order to understand what I could do.

I also need the rule of law now. When I'm going between my duties as a working professional I cannot know that I will be able to get to my destination without police hassle. As a young black man I have been presented throughout my life with constant obsession at the hands of police officers with my every twitch or yawn. I need the rule of law today to protect me from the injustice of unequal treatment.

The rule of law gives us 'equality of arms', the opportunity to fight back on equal footing against those who would unlawfully restrict our rights. I was brought up being told stories of African dictators who held total power and corruptly abused their people. Those kleptocrats used to be untouchable, but over the course of my career developments like the International Criminal Court have happened. It has been amazing to see vulnerable people, including former child soldiers, take to the stand in the Hague to speak their truth, ultimately holding tyrants to account.

All of this is why I believe passionately that everyone needs the rule of law. From my school, to crime, to the most grandiose of international matters, the certainty and fairness of the rule of law is the greatest tool we have in fighting for justice and equality across the world.

These videos are for everyone who has ever felt disempowered. They are for anyone who hasn't been given an opportunity to speak up. They are for all of us. In that spirit we would ask that you make sure as many people as possible are able to see them, and if you would like to journey deeper with us, join our online course '[Citizenship and the Rule of Law](#)' and take your first steps towards becoming a rule of law activist.

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This blog post was originally published by [Each Other](#)

URL: <https://www.biicl.org/blog/41/we-need-the-rule-of-law>