

How are you doing? Survey Report

April 2020

All our lives have changed very quickly because of the Coronavirus, which is also called COVID-19. A lot of adults are in the news and online saying what it is like for them – at Children's Parliament we want to share how it is for children too.

At the beginning of April, we launched our How are you doing? wellbeing survey. Nearly 4000 children chose to

participate in our survey – thank you! We know lots of adults made this possible too. This is a short report on what we have learned so far. It is just a short report because we want to spend more time looking at what we have been told.

The survey is now open for May so that we can keep an eye on how children are doing.

About the children who did the April survey

3,968 children took part, they were aged between **8 and 14 years old**.
55% were girls and **45% were boys**.

What are we hearing from children?

Please read this short summary report in full. And come back again as we do more thinking about the results of our first survey. These are our first impressions about what children are telling us.

1. Most children are doing well, with the support of parents, carers, sisters and brothers and friends. Most children have an adult at home or outside the home they can go to with worries (although less so for boys compared to girls). Most children are safe at home.

2. There are indications that girls are doing less well than boys in a number of ways including their general mood, feeling bored, worries, feeling like they lack 'energy' and they are less likely to feel in current times that they will be okay.

What are we hearing from children? (contd.)

3. There are indications that older children aged 12 to 14 are doing less well than younger children age 8 - 11 in a number of ways including loneliness, their general mood, feeling bored, being able to exercise, feeling they can express their opinions and less of a connection with family.

4. While we want to highlight how positive and resilient children are we must remember that some children are struggling with boredom, loneliness and a range of worries including about their own health and wellbeing and that of their family; 1 in 5 worry about their family having enough money.

5. Being indoors more and learning at home impacts on the physical and mental health of children. Some children feel like they lack energy or do not make healthy choices. There are indications that children do not feel enough control over what they are learning or that they are not enjoying and worrying about learning at home, this is especially true for 12 to 14 year olds.

These are only our first thoughts.

Enjoy this report and remember our new May survey is now open!

How are you doing? May 2020 bit.ly/Coronavirus_Kids

Learning and activities

One of the main changes to children's lives is spending more time at home and not going out to school.

I have fun things to do in my day

Most children (75% agree or strongly agree) feel that they have fun things to do in my day. Boys (80%) are more likely to say this than girls (73%) as are 8 to 11 year olds (79%) compared to 12 to 14 year olds (68%).

I often feel bored

More than half of the children doing the survey (52%) agree to some extent that they often feel bored. This is especially true for older children (55%) compared to younger children (49%) and for girls (55%) compared to boys (47%).

I enjoy learning new things

80% of children agree or strongly agree that I enjoy learning new things. There is little difference between boys and girls and between younger and older children.

I have a choice in what I am learning just now

Fewer than half of children (48.3%) agree that they feel like I have a choice in what I am learning just now. This is especially true for 12 to 14 year olds where only 37% feel they have a choice; while 55% of 8 to 11 year olds feel they have choice in what they are learning.

There are things that I am good at

93% of children strongly agree or agree that there are things that I am good at. Boys (95%) are more likely to say this than girls (91%) as are 8 to 11 year olds (94%) compared to 12 to 14 year olds (91%).

Feelings, opinions and finding information

The survey asked children about a range of things to do with how they feel, how they can express themselves and find information.

I often feel lonely

26.5% of children strongly agree or agree that they often feel lonely. Slightly more 12 to 14 year olds say they often feel lonely (27.5%) compared to 8 to 11 year olds (25%). Girls (29%) are more likely to feel lonely than boys (22%).

Generally, I feel cheerful and I am in a good mood

Overall, 65% of children strongly agree or agree that generally, I feel cheerful and I am in a good mood. However there are differences by sex and age. Girls are less likely to feel cheerful (62% compared to 68% of boys) and older children aged 12 – 14 are less likely to feel cheerful than 8 to 11 year olds (56% compared to 70%).

Even if I am having a difficult time, I feel I will be okay

8% of children disagree or strongly disagree with the statement: Even if I am having a difficult time, I feel I will be okay. Girls are less likely to think that they will be okay (9%) compared to boys (7%) if things are currently difficult.

I can be creative. I can look for and find information that I need

92.5% of children strongly agree or agree that they can be creative. 88% say they can look for and find any information that they need. Boys and girls and children of different ages feel the same way.

I feel free to express ideas and opinions

78% of children feel free to express ideas and opinions. Boys and girls feel the same way but younger children (8 to 11 years old) are most likely (81%) to feel free to express their opinions compared to 12 to 14 year olds (74%).

I feel like my rights are respected by others

81% of children say (strongly agree or agree) they feel like their rights are respected by others. This is more true for 8 to 11 year olds (83%) compared to 12 to 14 year olds (78%).

Feelings, opinions and finding information (contd.)

I feel safe online

81% of girls and 84% of boys say they feel safe online. Older children age 12 to 14 feel safer (85%) than younger children aged 8 to 11 do (81%).

Health

The survey asked children to think about areas of health, including making healthy choices, if they feel they have plenty of energy and getting enough exercise. They also considered if they have someone to speak to if they have a question about their health.

I am making healthy choices in my life

Most children (72%) say they are making healthy choices in their life.

I have plenty of energy

79% of children say that they have plenty of energy (strongly agree or agree).

There are differences though between boys and girls (85% of boys and 76% of girls) when it comes to having plenty of energy. Also, younger children (86%) are more likely to say they have plenty of energy compared to older children aged 12 to 14 (70%).

I am getting enough exercise

78% of younger children age 8-11 say (strongly agree or agree) they think they are getting enough exercise. Fewer 12 to 14 year olds agree at 64%. This is the same for boys and girls.

I know who to speak to if I have a question about my health

88% of children say (strongly agree or agree) that they know who to speak to if they have a question about their health.

Family and Friends

The survey asked children to think about life at home and about friends.

I enjoy being with my family

92% of children enjoy being with their family (strongly agree or agree). Children who are 8 to 11 years old are more likely to enjoy being with their family (95%) compared to 12 to 14 year olds (87%). Younger children are also more likely to 'strongly agree' rather than 'agree' with this statement.

My family gets along well together

80% of children strongly agree or agree that their family gets along well together.

I feel safe at home

97% of children strongly agree or agree that they feel safe at home.

When I want to be alone I can have privacy

82% of children say that when they want to be alone they can have privacy.

I am happy with my friends

91% are happy with friends that they have and 83% feel supported by their friends.

Worries

Children were asked what things they worry about. Children could say if they were generally worried about 'a lot of things' or about their own health or the health of someone in their family. Children were also asked if they have someone in their family or outside the family who they can talk to about a worry.

There are lots of things I worry about in my life

37% of children say there are lots of things I worry about in my life. This is more common for 12 to 14 year olds (42%) compared to 8 to 11 year olds (33%). It is also more likely that girls (41%) say this compared to boys (31%).

What I worry about

The most common worry children have is about the future (54%) followed by how family is doing (50%) and how friends are doing (50%).

Worrying about health

When it comes to their own health 23% of 8 to 11 year olds worry (strongly agree or agree). Slightly more 12 to 14 year olds (29%) also worry about their own health. More children worry about the health of someone in their family: 61% of 8 to 11 year olds have this worry as do 63% of 12 to 14 year olds.

Worries (contd.)

Worrying about School and Learning

When it comes to education, 36% of children worry about doing their school work, 32% worry about future exams and 28% are worried about learning at home.

Worrying about home

Children also have worries about things at home. 23% of children are worried about their pets. 18% of children are worried that their parents don't have enough money for their family.

Girls are more likely to worry about all of the areas asked about except one - not being able to play or be creative where there is little difference between boys and girls.

Girls are especially more likely to worry about friends (10% more for girls) and family (9% more for girls).

Children aged 12 to 14 are more likely to worry about doing school work, the future, exams and that their parents don't have enough money for their family.

93% of children say have someone to talk to in their family if they have a worry (strongly agree or agree). The biggest difference between girls and boys is that 81% of girls say they have someone to talk to outside their family if they have a worry, compared to 71% of boys. The 8 to 11 year olds are also more likely to have someone to talk to within their family when they have a worry (95%) compared to 12 to 14 year olds (91%). However the 12 to 14 year olds are more likely to have someone to talk to outside their family if they have a worry, 80% say they do compared to 74% of younger children.

Things that make you feel good at the moment

We asked children questions about what makes them feel good. The thing most likely to make children feel good at the moment is their parents and carers (82%). 8 to 11 year olds are more likely to say this (88%) compared to 12 to 14 year olds (76%).

What makes me feel good?

Watching TV (79%), connecting with friends (71%), playing or being creative (69%) and sisters/brothers (59%) are all things that help children feel good. Exercise makes 62% of children feel good.

When it comes to learning then 32% of children say that learning at home makes them feel good and 25% say doing school work makes them feel good.

1% of the 8 to 11 year olds said that nothing makes them feel good at the moment. 3% of the 12 to 14 year olds said the same.

There is not a lot of difference between the sexes in relation to what makes children feel good at the moment. The biggest difference can be seen in relation to playing computer games, where 90% of boys compared to 56% of girls say this makes them feel good.

Girls are slightly more likely to mention brothers/sisters, friends or pets as well as doing school work or being creative as things that make them feel good at the moment.