

# Summer Activities - A Snapshot Survey of Children and Young People in Wales



**Children's Commissioner for Wales**

**July and August 2024**



## **Introduction**

During July and August 2024 we asked children and young people for their thoughts on summer activities in their local area.

The survey was part of an ongoing series of topical questions we ask children and young people monthly to hear their views on a variety of issues, called Monthly Matters. It was shared directly with all schools signed up to our children's rights schemes<sup>1</sup> for primary and secondary schools, as well as community groups.

As part of the survey pack, children and young people were shown a video introducing the topic, and they were asked to consider some questions, like what they enjoyed doing in their local area over the summer, whether they think there's enough to do, and if there's anything that stops them doing what they enjoy. We suggested in our session outline that following this video, children and young people should have a few minutes to discuss their views with each other before answering the survey. Schools and groups had two options for completing the survey; children and young people could either do it independently, or a teacher or group leader could complete the survey on behalf of the group by answering a different set of questions to give an overview of the discussion.

434 children and young people answered the survey individually. A further 885 children took part in groups, with teachers and youth workers submitting a summary of their views. A broad range of ages took part, from children under the age of 7, to 17-year-olds. We received responses from 19 local authority areas.

Questions were developed by the Commissioner's experienced staff team based on themes that had emerged from previous engagement exercises with children, young people, and professionals.

## **Questions for children and young people**

**What do you like to do when you're not in school?**

**Pick as many as you want**

- Spending time with my family (276) - 66%
- Going outside with my friends (260) - 63%
- Sports and swimming (257) - 62%
- Going to a friend's house (256) - 62%
- Playing or spending time at home (252) - 61%
- Going to the park (251) - 60%
- Day trips with family/friends (237) - 57%
- Going to the beach (227) - 55%
- Cinema/bowling (195) - 47%
- Something else (142) - 34%
- Summer clubs and activities (121) - 29%
- Youth club (55) - 13%
- Playscheme (45) - 11%

Children who chose 'something else' were asked an additional question:

**What else do you like to do?**

The most common answers fell under the following themes:

- Playing online games
- Sports
- Other physical activities

**Is there anything that stops you from being able to do the things you enjoy?**

- Yes (167) - 41%
- No (161) - 39%
- I don't know (84) - 20%

Children who answered 'yes' were asked an additional question:

### **What stops you? Choose as many as you like**

The weather (82) - 50%

It's expensive (72) - 44%

Not allowed by parents/carers (58) - 35%

Not being able to get there/too far away (55) - 33%

Something else (48) - 29%

Too old/not old enough (38) - 23%

I don't live by my friends (30) - 18%

Children who answered 'something else' were asked an additional question:

### **What else stops you?**

The most common answers fell under the following themes:

- Other young people
- Parents or other family members
- Other family plans

### **Are there enough things to do in your local area?**

Yes (254) - 62%

No (112) - 28%

I don't know (41) - 10%

Children who answered 'No' or 'I don't know' were asked an additional question:

### **What do you want more of in your local area?**

The most common answers fell under the following themes:

- Play parks/play areas
- Sport facilities
- Leisure centres/swimming pools

### **Is it easy to find out about things to do in your local area?**

Yes (204) - 51%

I don't know (109) - 27%

No (88) - 22%

### **How do you find out about things to do in your local area?**

The most common answers fell under the following themes:

- From parents/family friends
- Online
- Social media

### **Do you know what you'll be doing over the summer?**

Yes (280) - 69%

No (128) - 31%

Children who answered 'yes' were asked an additional question:

### **What will you be doing?**

The most common answers fell under the following themes:

- Going on holiday
- Sports activities
- Spending time with friends

Where teachers or group leaders responded on behalf of a group, their answers echoed the answers given by children directly.

## **Conclusion**

- The cost of living is a consistent concern for families in Wales, including children and young people, as our previous report [Ambitions for Wales](#) highlights. This is echoed within these survey findings with children and young people reporting that activities being “too expensive” as one of the most significant barriers for them doing the things that they enjoy.
- Children have the Right to Play and Relax (article 31 of UNCRC) however, increased cost of living and funding cuts can impact on children’s access to play and leisure facilities. Whilst the majority of children and young people who responded felt there was enough to do in their local area, respondents highlighted that they would like to see more play parks/play areas, sport facilities, leisure centres/ swimming pools. It is important that play and leisure facilities are safeguarded and that inclusive and accessible opportunities for play and leisure are a priority for funding.