

What kids think

Issue
2
2009

Results of the 2009 Kids' Life and Times Survey

How do you know what kids think? I don't know what I think myself half the time!

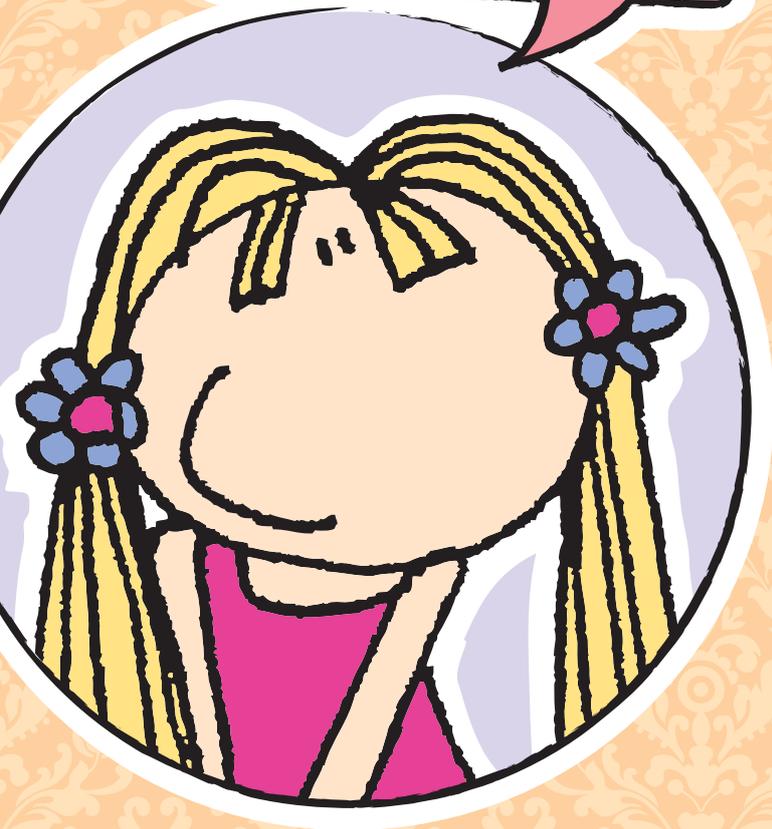
There was a big survey of all P7 children in Northern Ireland in 2009 and they asked loads of kids what they thought about school and other things in their lives.

Who are 'they'?

Just some researchers from Queen's University and the University of Ulster. Can't remember their names!

KLT Survey 2009

Did you do it?
Did everyone do it?
What was it like?



About 3,650 children did it. It was OK. Here are some of the things that the kids said about doing it.

'I really enjoyed it. It was interesting and I think it is good to ask children their opinions.'

'It was cool!!!!!!!!!!!!'

'It helps you say what you want and no-one can see what you said.'

'It was very cool and interesting and it's private.'

'I had time to think about me for once.'

'It gives children a chance to say what they really feel.'

'It got me 30 minutes out of school.'



So what did they find out? Were you surprised about anything?



I wasn't, but I think the adults didn't realise just how much we use technology. 93% of children had their own mobile phone and 98% of their families had at least one computer. 94% of kids had internet access and 28% had access to the internet in their bedroom.



Wow! They won't like that thing about us having the internet in our bedrooms. You know how they're always going on about online safety.



Yeah. The survey asked about that as well and 87% of kids said their parents or their teachers had talked to them about internet safety - so maybe they won't totally freak!



What about Bebo and stuff? Did they ask about that?



Yes, almost half of the children (48%) said that they used sites like Bebo, Facebook or Myspace and boys and girls were equally likely to use these sites.

Figure 1: Are you ever on any social networking sites like Bebo, Facebook or MySpace?

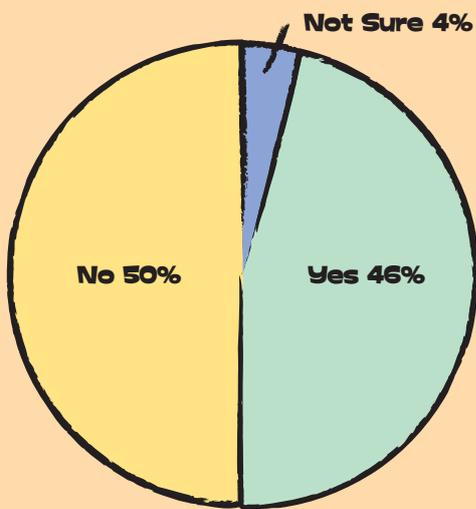
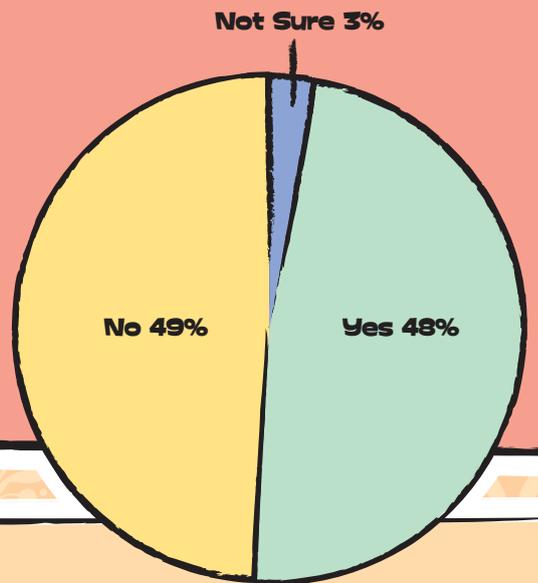


Figure 2: Do you ever play any multi-player on-line games?



You know, I would have thought that girls were more likely to use social networking sites and boys were more likely to play online games.



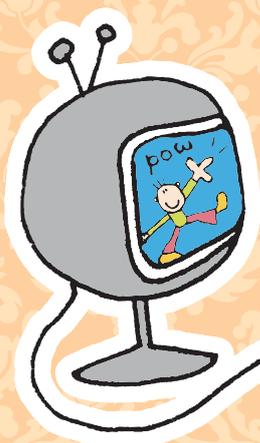
It's not quite like that. Boys and girls **both** use the social networking sites, but yeah - boys are more likely to play multi-player online games. 60% of boys compared with 34% of girls said they play online games. Boys also spent much more time on this - 40% said that they played these games 'a lot' but only 17% of girls played as much.



How much is 'a lot'?



Let's not go there!





OK. Tell me about school then, what did the kids think of school?



Girls are way happier at school than boys.



Tell me something I don't know.



OK. I'll give you the figures. More girls than boys said they were 'mostly happy' at their primary school (84% compared with 73%). When the researchers asked children to think about the last week, more girls (37%) than boys (27%) said they had been extremely happy at school. Girls were also more likely than boys to say they

had got on extremely well at school in the past 7 days (40% compared with 35%), more girls were always able to pay attention (47% and 36%) and girls were more likely than boys to say they had 'always' got on well with their teachers (57% and 39%).

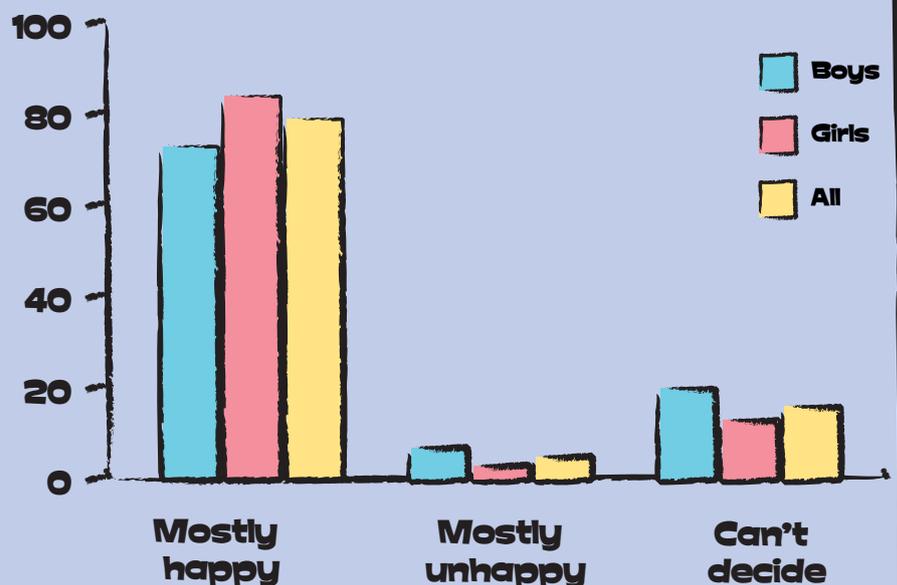


Figure 3: How happy or unhappy have you been at this school?



Do you think anybody will do anything to try and make boys as happy at primary school as girls?



No idea - but I hope they've got the message!

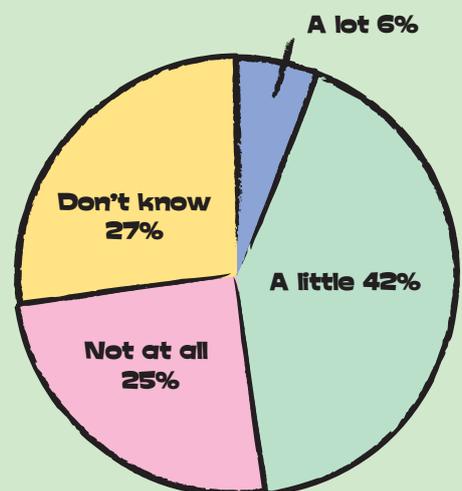


What about bullying at school?



Very few kids thought that there was a lot of bullying at their schools, but most of them thought there was at least a little bullying.

Figure 4: Do pupils at your school get bullied?





Had the kids been bullied themselves?



About a fifth said they had been physically bullied in the last two months. Physical bullying means things like getting pushed around or threatened or having their belongings stolen. Nearly four out of ten kids said that they had been bullied in some other way. That means things like getting called names, being left out of games, or having nasty stories spread about them on purpose.

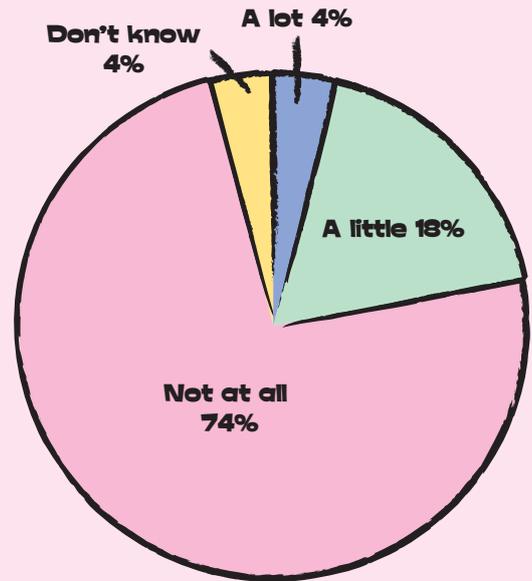


Figure 5: In the last two months, how often did you get physically bullied at school?



Is bullying the reason why some children were unhappy at their primary schools?



You can't really be sure but it might be one of the reasons. The children who said that they were 'mostly unhappy' at their primary schools were 7 times more likely than the happier kids to say that they had been physically bullied in the last two months. They were also 7 times more likely to have been bullied in other ways than children who were happier at their primary school.

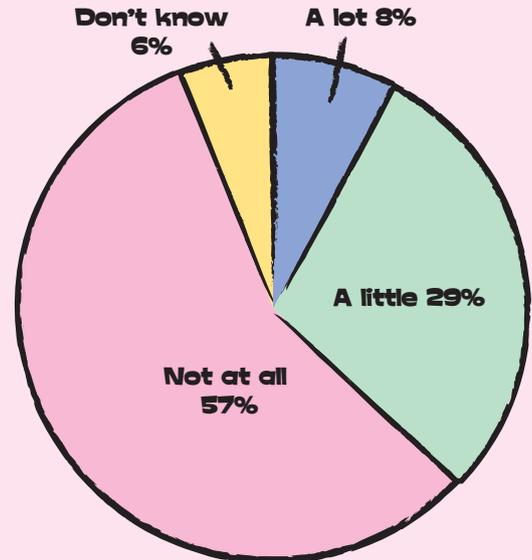


Figure 6: In the last two months, how often did you get bullied in other ways at school?



Yes, but are they unhappy at school because of the bullying or is it because they are seen as sad and unhappy that they get bullied?



Give my head peace!



But seriously, what happens if somebody is having a really hard time with bullying?



Well, 71% of children knew there was someone in their school whose job it was to deal with bullying, and 89% knew that their school had a set of rules on bullying. But the survey didn't ask any more questions about kids' own problems in case they got upset.

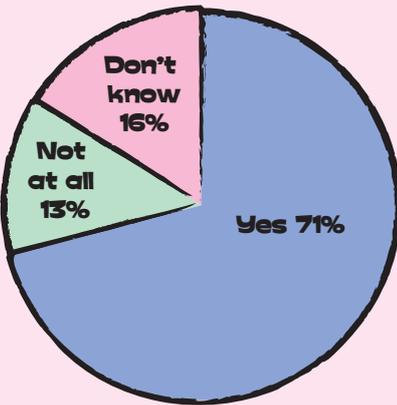


Figure 7: Is there someone at your school whose job is to deal with bullying?

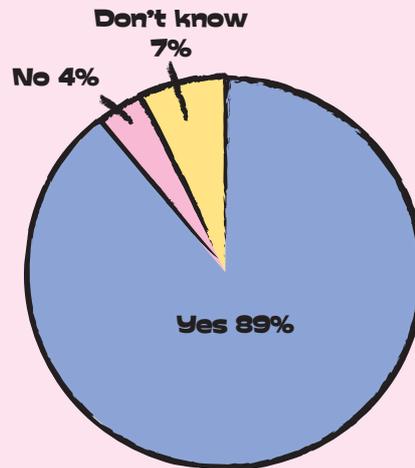


Figure 8: Does your school have a set of rules on bullying?

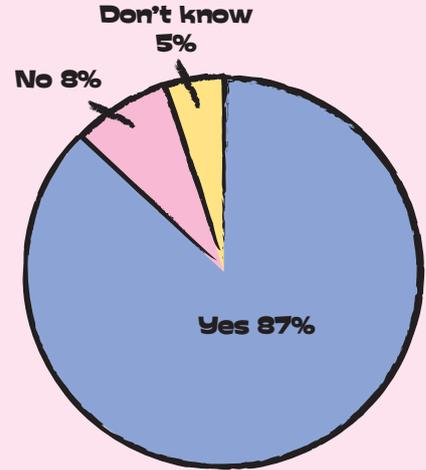
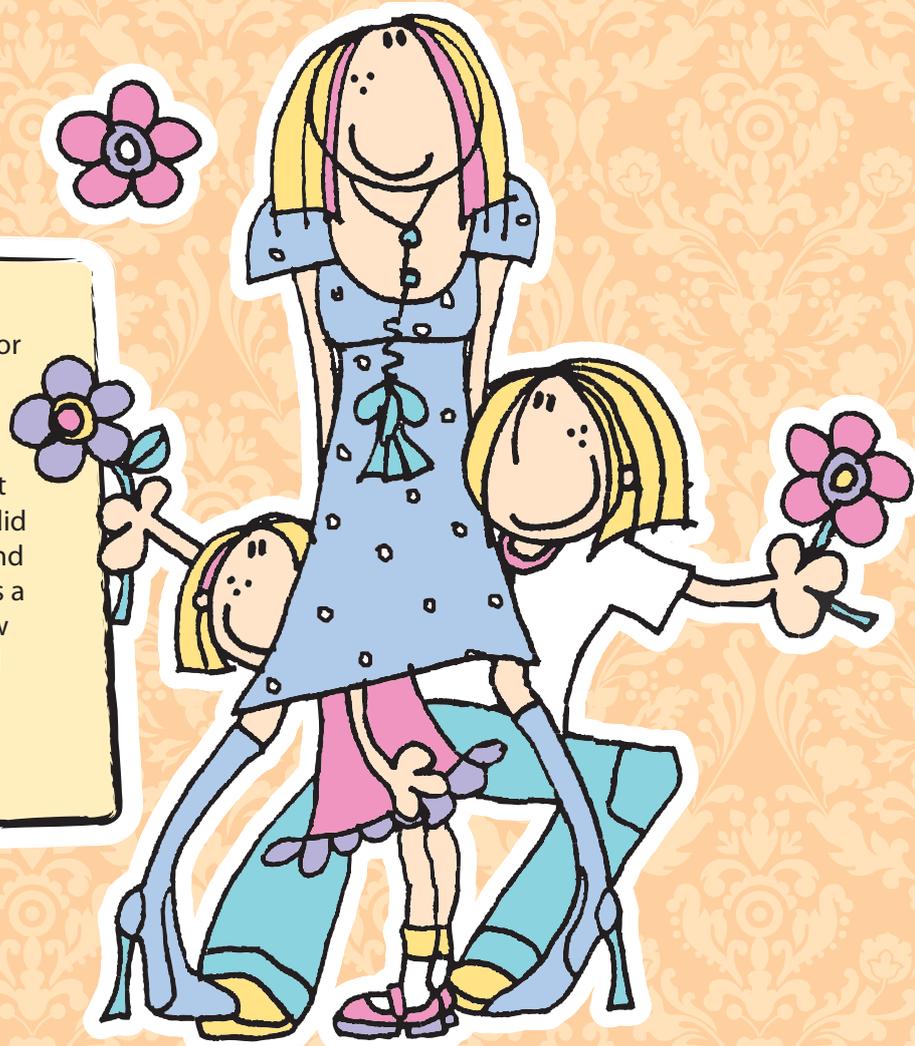


Figure 9: Have you ever talked about bullying in class?



There was another question that asked kids who they would turn to for help if something went wrong in their life. The children mostly said they would turn to their parents, other family members or friends. But it was kind of sad that 11% of boys did not know who they would turn to and 5% even said 'no-one'. For girls it was a bit better, 8% said they did not know who they would turn to and 3% said 'no-one'. I still think that's a lot of children though.





OK. Give me some good news, what do kids like?



TV?



Yes, but what exactly?



Well, over 100 programmes were mentioned as favourites but the one that was mentioned most often overall was **The Simpsons**. Boys were most likely to mention **The Simpsons**, sport and then adult-type cartoons such as **Family Guy** and **South Park**. Girls were more likely to mention **Hannah Montana** followed by Soaps (their favourite soap was **Eastenders**), then teen drama programmes such as **Just Jordan**, **Saddle Club** and **Britannia High**, and then **The Simpsons**.

Most mentioned favourite TV programmes

Boys	Girls
The Simpsons	Hanna Montana
Sport	Soaps (Eastenders , Hollyoaks)



So nobody mentioned the News then?



Well sort of. When kids were asked what they were fed up hearing about on television, 23% of children said they were fed up with adverts, 15% said they were fed up hearing about swine flu, 11% said the News and 10% the recession. Other things they were fed up hearing about included murders, deaths, war and politics.

What are you fed up hearing about?

War **Adverts**
 The news Recession
Swine flu
 Politics Murder/deaths



Did the survey ask about other things?



Yes - there were loads of other questions. If you want to find out more about the survey go to www.ark.ac.uk/kit.



Is there going to be a survey of next year's P7 and the next and the next?



I don't know. I hope so - if the adults don't get fed up hearing what we think!

KLT Survey 2009



Kids' Life and Times is an online survey of P7 children in Northern Ireland carried out in school. In 2009, 3,657 children participated.

The Kids' Life and Times survey is a joint initiative between Queen's University Belfast and the University of Ulster and aims to provide an independent source of information on what children think about the social issues of the day. Check the web site for more information on the survey findings (www.ark.ac.uk/klt) or call Katrina Lloyd on 028 9097 3585 with any queries.

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School of Sociology,
Social Policy and Social Work
Queen's University Belfast
Belfast
BT7 1NN

Magee Campus
University of Ulster
Northland Road
Londonderry
BT48 7JA

Tel: 028 9097 3585
Fax: 028 90 9097 3943
E-mail: info@ark.ac.uk

Tel: 028 7137 5513
Fax: 028 7137 5510
E-mail: info@ark.ac.uk

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