

What kids think

Issue
4
2011

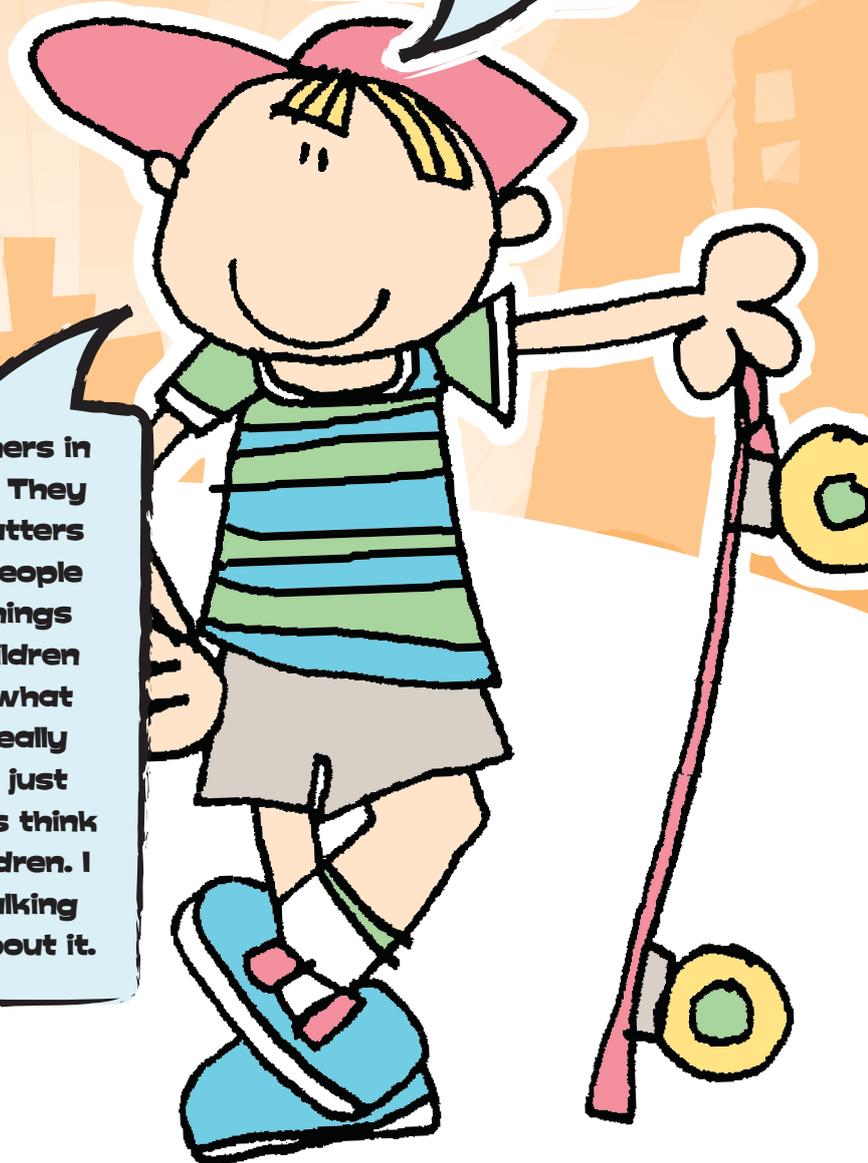
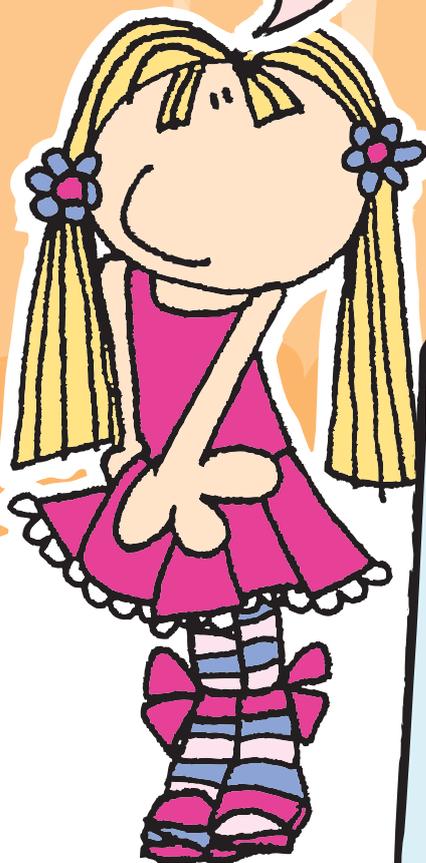
Results of the 2011 Kids' Life and Times Survey

What's this Kids' Life and Times survey then?

It's a big survey of P7 children that asks our opinions on school and other things in our lives. Over 4,000 children did it on the internet earlier this year.

So who wants to know our opinions?

Some researchers in the university. They said that it matters because the people who decide things that affect children should know what the children really think and not just what the adults think is right for children. I heard them talking so I know all about it.



KLT Survey 2011



There was lots of stuff about school and whether we were happy in school. Most children, like more than 8 out of 10, said that they were mostly happy at their primary school although girls were definitely a bit happier than boys.

Cool! What did they ask and what did children say?

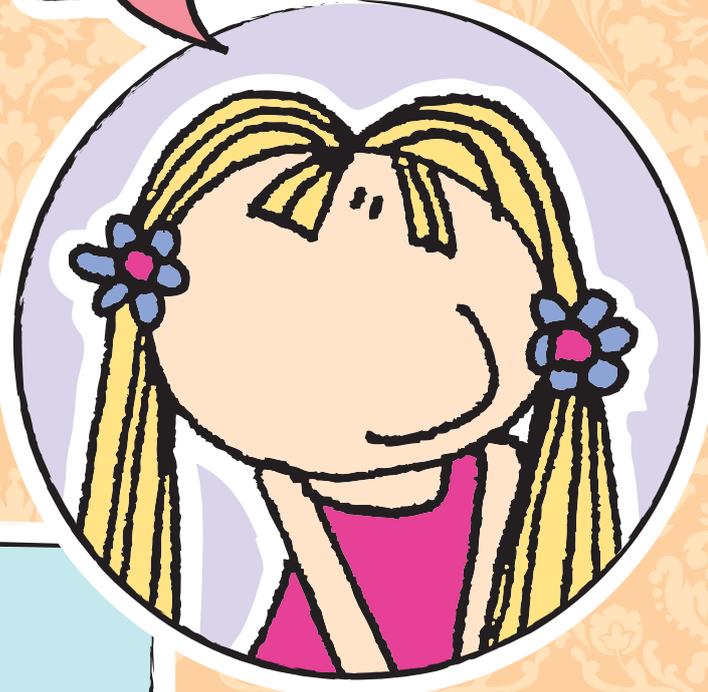


Figure 1: Happiness at school

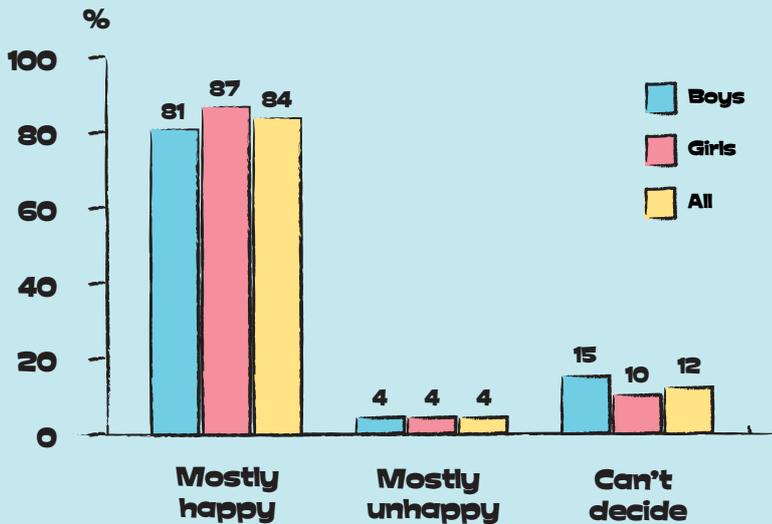
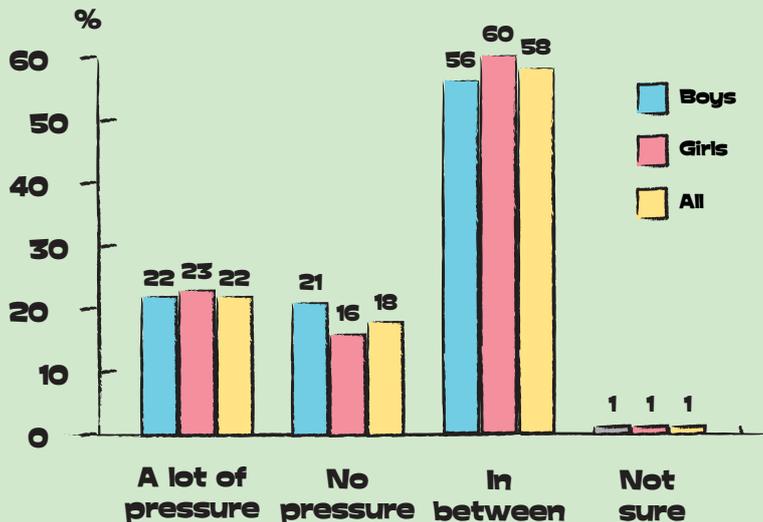


Figure 2: Did you feel any pressure because of the transfer tests?



What about the transfer test - was that not a big worry for a lot of kids?



Yes it was, but most of them still seem to have enjoyed their time at primary school overall. Nearly two thirds of children did the transfer tests in 2010 and about 1 in 5 of them said they had felt a lot of pressure. Another 1 in 5 said they did not feel under any pressure at all and the rest said they felt somewhere in between the two.



Well, I didn't even do the transfer test and I still hated primary school!



Most children were happy enough – why did you hate it?



Hmm, maybe I didn't hate it all the time, but when I was bullied in P7 I was miserable.



You're not alone. In the survey about 1 in 5 children said that they had been physically bullied in the last two months and about 1 in 3 said they had been bullied in other ways like getting called names, getting left out of games, or having nasty stories spread about them on purpose.

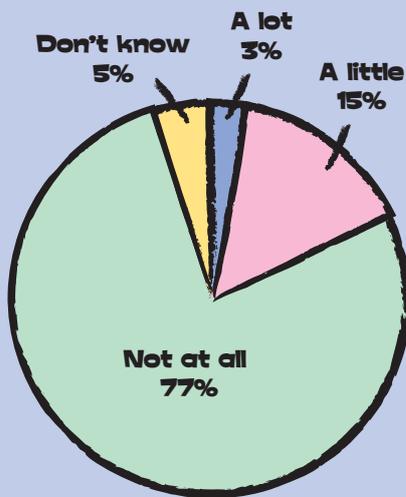


Figure 3: In the last two months, how often did you get physically bullied at school?

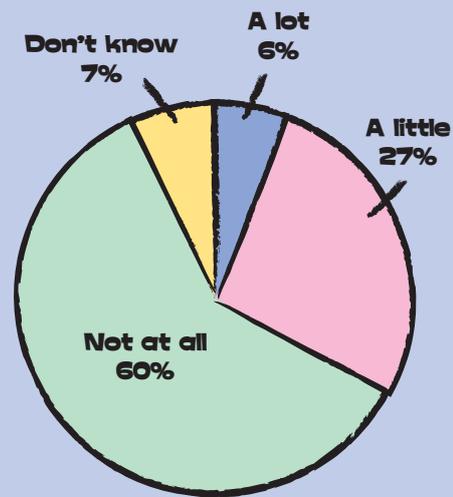


Figure 4: In the last two months, how often did you get bullied in other ways at school?



That's a lot of bullying! Do you think everybody gets picked on sometimes?



I don't know, but in the survey a lot of people said that children got bullied because of what they looked like or where they came from and that they were 'different'. I heard the researchers say that the word different was used by over 200 children. Although sometimes kids said it was just because bullies wanted to show off in front of their friends and look cool. Here are some of the things that people said about why they thought children got bullied:

'Because they are a different size than everyone else.'

'They look different.'

'Because they are small and helpless.'

'Maybe because they are different, sometimes because of religion and sometimes silly things that make them jealous.'

'Because they are different.'

'Because they are different races.'

'Because of where they live or their appearance.'

'The bullies are angry or sad inside so they take it out on people.'

'Because the bully might just want to impress their friends.'





Did you get bullied because you are different?



Yes – I don't have a mobile phone and apparently that makes me a freak.



Look on the bright side, it's harder to cyberbully you then! About 12% of children had been bullied by text or on the internet.



Well, I've only got another five years of school and then I'm free!



So you're not going to go on to university then?

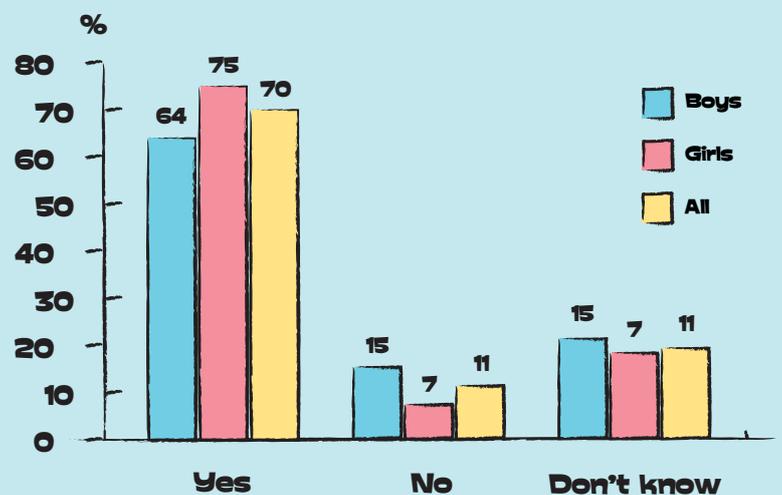


No, I'm going to work in a mobile phone shop.



Seriously, 75% of girls and 64% of boys in the survey said that they would like to go on to university when they left school.

Figure 5: Would like to go to university



So that looks like a lot of boys think they will be fed up with education by then!



Well some people did say that, but the most common reasons for not wanting to go to university were because children thought that you could get just as good a job without going to university, because it costs too much to go to university and because of maybe not getting the exams to get in.

Table 1: Why do you not want to go to university?

Reason	All (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
You can get just as good a job without going to university	28	28	27
It costs too much money	27	30	21
I don't think I would get the exams you need to get in	26	25	28
You have to study for too many years at university	21	22	20
I've never thought about it	20	18	24
No-one in my family went to university	20	20	20
It's a waste of time	15	17	11
Other reason	15	14	18



Do you think all those children are really going to go to university?



No idea, but when people were asked what job they would like to do when they grew up they said lots of things that didn't look like they needed university degrees to me! Boys were most likely to want to be footballers or rugby players or doctors while girls were most likely to want to be teachers or hairdressers or beauticians.

Boys	Girls
Footballer/ Rugby Player	Teacher
Doctor	Hairdresser/ Beautician
Policeman	Vet
Teacher	Doctor



My mum says it doesn't matter what you end up doing in life so long as you are happy.



Yes, I heard the researchers getting a bit excited about happiness! Apparently everyone was asked if they were happy with their life at the minute and 90% said that they were. That's really high I think.



Yes, though I feel a bit sad about the children who aren't happy. What makes people so happy?



Well the main things children said that made them happy were their family and friends. Here are some of the things they said:

'Being able to talk to my granda and spend time with him.'

'Being loved and having good friends and people who I can talk to if a problem is there.'

'Being with friends and family.'

'Being with great friends and a wonderful family.'

'Chocolate and sunny days.'

'Being with friends and family and playing sports.'

'Friends, family, sweets, chocolate, sunshine, holidays, pet dog and laughing.'

'Having a family, an education and a house to live in.'

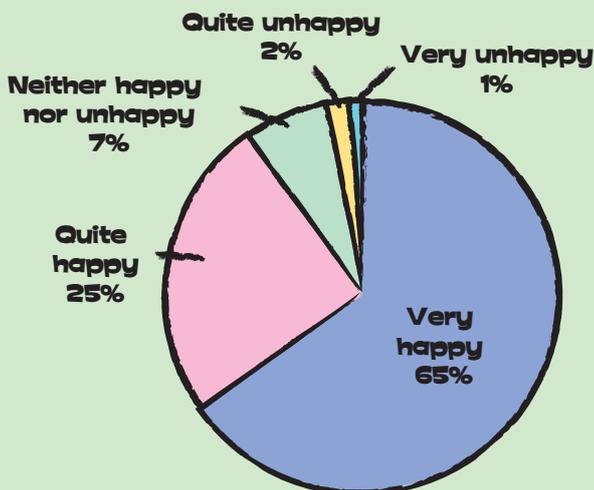
'Playing sport.'

'Playing outside with my family on a sunny day.'

'Playing with friends and having a good family.'

'Dancing, being with my friends and spending time with my family.'

Figure 6: How happy are you with your life?





What else did the survey ask about?



There was loads and loads of stuff but the university researchers seemed to be interested in what we thought about older people and especially about how grandparents and grandchildren get on. In the survey we were asked about when we started to think of someone as an old person and apparently children reckon it's about age 54.



Were they surprised at that?

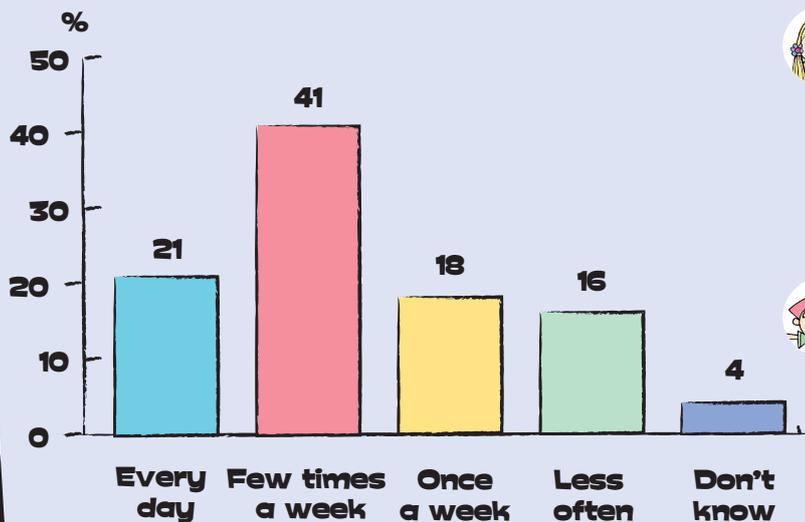


Well they went a bit quiet. But then they went on to talk about what age groups we thought got treated with the most respect. Children think that adults and especially old people are treated with the most respect and teenagers definitely the least!

Table 2: Who do you think gets treated with most respect?

Treated with most respect	%
Old people	40
Children	20
Other adults	19
Teenagers	4
Don't know	17

Figure 7: How often do you see your grandparents?



Great, in another two years we're going to be even less respected than we are now! So what's the story with grandparents?



Grandparents are a big deal. Of the children who had grandparents, 97% of them said that they were important in their lives and 4% actually had a grandparent living with them. Of the rest, 62% saw their grandparents at least a few times a week.



My granda's a legend, he minds us after school.



Yes, almost half of the children who did the survey said their grandparents looked after them while their parents were at work and 40% said they minded them while their parents went out. Grandparents and grandchildren did lots of things together except play computer games!

Table 3: What kinds of things do your grandparents do with you?*

	%
Look after me while my parents or guardians are at work	49
Babysit when my parents or guardians go out	40
Watch TV or play card or board games with me	32
Take me shopping, to the cinema, theatre, sports or other events	31
Help me with my homework	31
Play computer games with me	7

*Children could choose more than one answer





My granda does a lot more than that though.

Yes, two thirds of the kids also said that they had learned something useful from their grandparents and many said their grandparents had taught them things about the past and the history of their family and area. They also taught the children cooking, baking and other crafts, to believe in themselves and to show respect to others. Here are some of the things that children said that they learned from their grandparents:

'About history and when he was a boy.'

'About history of where I live.'

'How to bake apple pie.'

'How to cook bread, pancakes, fairy cakes and other useful thing that come in handy if you're ever slightly bored.'

'How to knit.'

'How to whistle.'

'How to do maths by adding and subtracting fractions.'

'I've learnt a lot about general knowledge stuff. I've also learnt a lot about my family.'

'It was to always believe in yourself.'

'Just to be yourself and to try hard and enjoy life!'



Did they ask about the things that WE can teach our grandparents?



Yes, and over a third of children said that they had taught their grandparents something that was useful to them. Often this was about using technology, including how to use their mobile phones, DVD players and SKY boxes. They also taught them metric measurement and new ways to do maths that the children had learned in school. Here are some of the things that kids said:

'About how to text and ring people on their phones.'

'What new measurements were such as: Grams and Kilograms, Metres, Centimetres, Kilometres and Millimetres, Litres and Millilitres.'

'How to use the laptop, and their phones.'

'How to use the TV and DVD player.'

'How to use the Internet.'

'New words.'

'How to do gymnastics (although they never quite got the hang of it).'

'The more chocolate you eat, the longer you live.'

'The way timetables are taught now-a-days.'



Did you help your granda learn how to use a mobile phone?

No, that would be difficult because I DON'T HAVE A MOBILE PHONE.

Oops.





KLT Survey 2011



Kids' Life and Times is an annual online survey of P7 children in Northern Ireland carried out in school. In 2011, 4192 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 the Kids' Life and Times team on 028 9097 3034 with any queries.

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