

What kids think

Issue
3
2010

Results of the 2010 Kids' Life and Times Survey

What do you mean what kids think? Is this about me hating carrots?

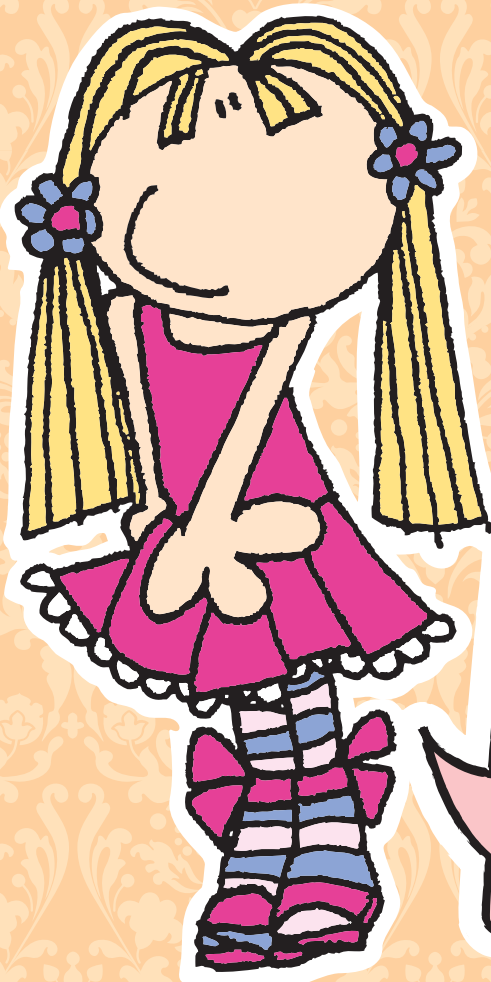
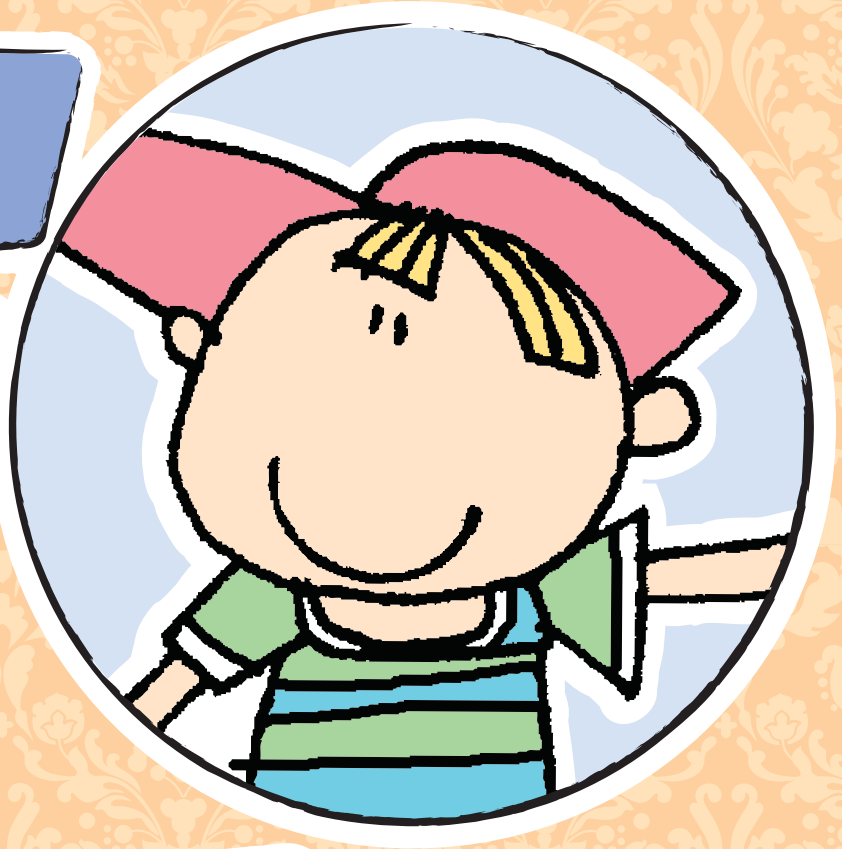
Wise up! Some researchers at the University of Ulster and Queen's University did a survey of P7 children to see what we thought about school and other things in our lives. They said they wanted to let people in P7 say what they thought now they had reached the end of primary school. I don't think they're too worried about what food you like!

Oh ok. How many people did it?

About 5,000 P7 children did it. It was great, we did it on computers and it got us out of class for 20 minutes!

KLT Survey 2010

Did they ask about what we thought of primary school?



Yes, and nearly all the children said that they were mostly happy at their primary school, although girls were more likely to be happy than boys. 85% of girls were mostly happy at their school compared with 80% of boys.



Well, I was happy enough at school to start with, but what about during the P7 year? Were they happy then? We had loads and loads of work!



Still happy! 83% of children were still mostly happy in P7.



But if 83% of kids were happy that still means that... um... 17% were unhappy and of the 5,000 children who did the survey that means that... um... some big number that I can't work out were unhappy, doesn't it?



You didn't pay much attention in maths did you? Well, in the survey they did ask why people were unhappy in P7 and girls and boys gave different reasons. For girls it was because they thought that other kids did not like them, because they were worried about what school they were going to go to next and because they were being bullied. For boys it was because they thought there was too much work, because they did not like their teacher and because they felt that their teacher did not like them.

Boys	Girls
Too much work	Other kids do not like me
Do not like my teacher	Worry about what school going to next
Teacher does not like me	Being bullied



But what about boys who are being bullied and what about the transfer test? Were they not sometimes reasons why children were unhappy?



Yes, children said those things too, just less often than the top three reasons. The university people put the full set of reasons in this table.

Reason	Boys %	Girls %
Worry about what school going to next	35	52
Too much work	51	32
Other kids do not like me	27	56
Being bullied	29	46
Do not like my teacher	40	30
Get into trouble	39	24
Teacher does not like me	40	20
Doing the transfer test	29	33
Things that have happened in my family	19	28
Can't do the work	14	16
Not doing the transfer test	12	14
Don't want to say	10	16

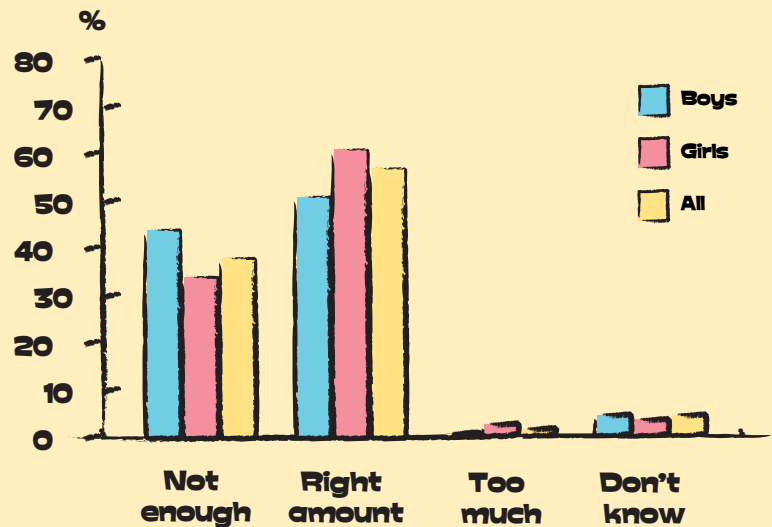


What else did the children say about school?



Lots of the P7 children who did the survey last year said that they should be asking us questions about PE and sports, so this is what they did. It turns out that quite a lot of kids don't think that there is enough PE at primary school. 44% of boys and 34% of girls think that they don't get enough of it.

Figure 1: Do you get enough sport or PE at your school?



Yeah - me too! I hope the adults listen to that opinion. What about the kinds of things we do in PE?



Well hardly anybody said they did not enjoy PE at all, but some children said that they would rather do different kinds of sport or exercise in PE. Boys would prefer more football or rugby, and girls would prefer netball or gymnastics.

Boys	Girls
Football	Netball
Rugby	Gymnastics
Tennis	Football
Basketball	Tennis



I bet they asked about the transfer test since there's all that fuss about it. I didn't do it, did you?



Yeah - I did it, but when they asked us which kind of test we did I couldn't remember whether it was AQG or QL or AGA or GAGA or whatever! Apparently nearly a fifth (18%) of kids who took the test didn't know which one they took.

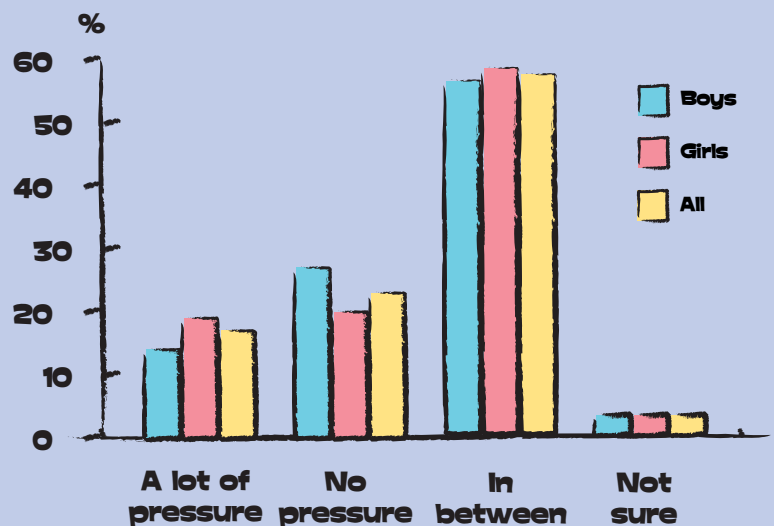


So what did the children think about the new tests?



Well, 17% of them said they felt under a lot of pressure, 23% said they felt no pressure at all and 57% felt somewhere in between. The university people think that this is about the same as with the old transfer test. In this year's survey, 45% of kids who took the new test said they had a tutor. Nearly everyone (96%) had done practice papers, and 89% of all the kids doing the test thought that they were well prepared when the time came for them to do it. The kids had loads of things to say about the tests themselves but there isn't space to tell you that here!

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



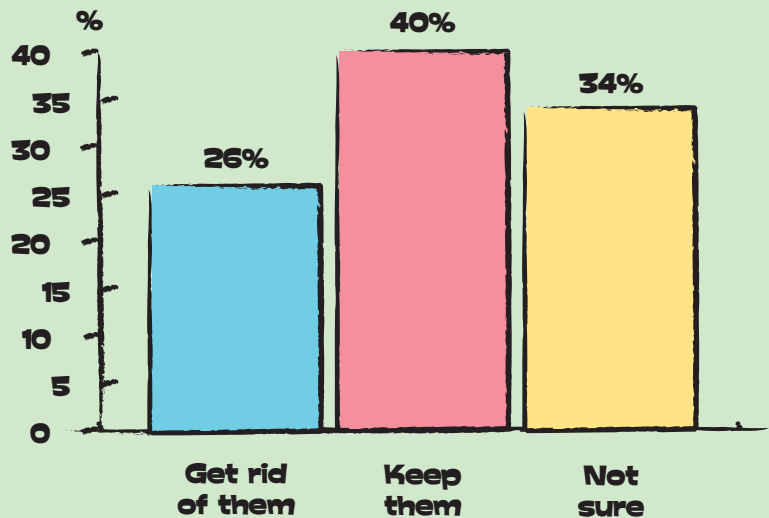


So do the P7s think the tests are a good thing?



Well, just over a quarter (26%) wanted to get rid of the tests, 40% wanted to keep them and 34% said they weren't sure what should happen to them.

Figure 3: What do you think should happen to the transfer tests?



Here are some of the reasons children gave for wanting to get rid of the tests:

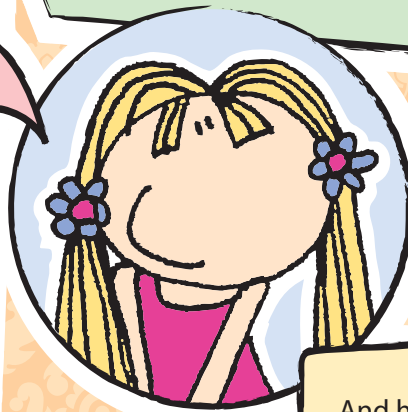
'Because it makes children worry and puts them under pressure.'

'Because every child deserves to go to the school of their choice.'

'Because if you fail you could be really sad.'

'Because that's like saying "no, you can't go to our school, you're not smart enough".'

'Because they should mark you on the work you do all year.'



And here are some of the reasons why children wanted to keep the tests:

'I think they should be kept because they help you to get into a good school so that you can get a good job when you are older.'

'I think they should be kept because then people can learn how to study and be prepared for things which you'll need to do in secondary school.'

'I think they should be kept so that children my age can be placed in a school that's the right ability for them as I don't think it is fair for children to struggle.'

'So if you work hard you can go to a good school and you have a good grade to prove that you have worked hard.'



Do you really think that the adults actually listen to what we say about the tests and other stuff?



No idea. But they did ask questions about children's rights in the survey, and kids mostly do know that they have them. About half of the children in the survey knew for sure that they had rights, and only 4% said that they didn't have any rights.



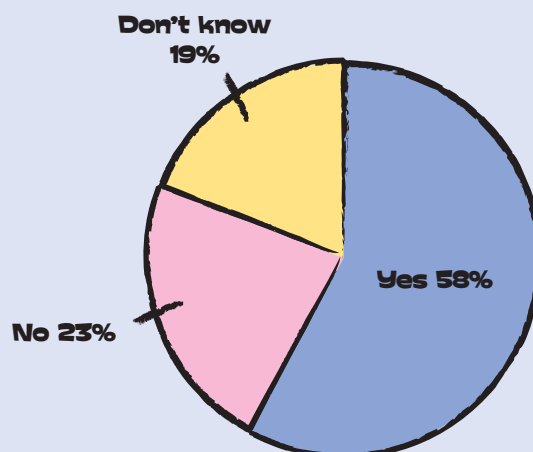


Yes, but having the right to say what you think does not mean that the adults listen to it.... if you see what I mean?



Yes I know, but over half of the children (58%) said that they had been asked by their teacher for an opinion about the way that something was run in their school.

Figure 4: Has your teacher asked for your opinion on things at school?

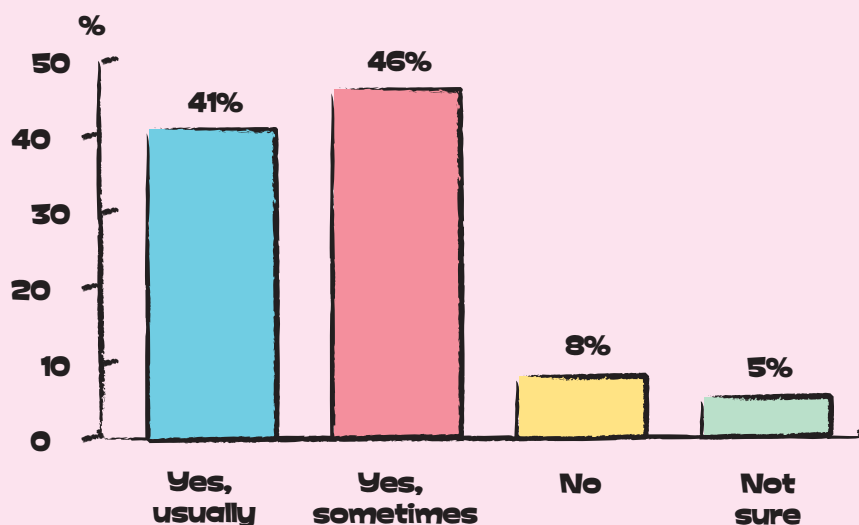


I suppose that's something. What about at home?



Most children also said their parents or guardians asked them for their opinion when they were making big decisions about things that happen at home that would affect them. 41% said their parents or guardians usually did this, and 46% said they sometimes asked for their opinion.

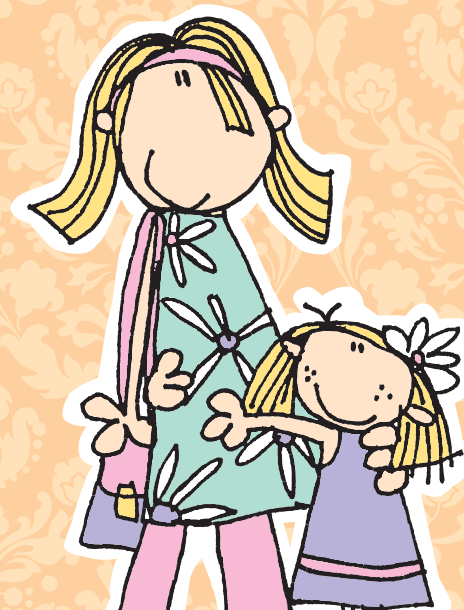
Figure 5: Do your parents ask for your opinion on things that affect you?



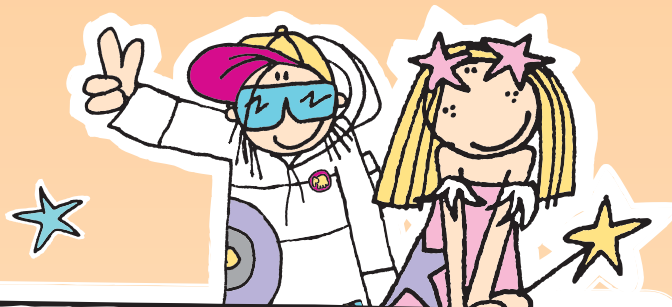
Is it one of my human rights to never eat carrots?



You can be incredibly annoying sometimes!



KLT Survey 2010



Kids' Life and Times is an annual online survey of P7 children in Northern Ireland carried out in school. In 2010, 5,192 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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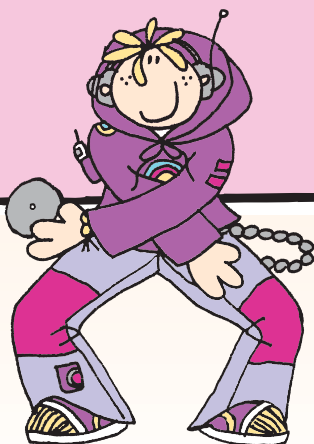
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