

# Feeling Happy, Healthy and Safe

## Findings from the Children in Scotland Consultation with Children and Young People on wellbeing

### Why did we speak to you?

Children in Scotland spoke to you to find out what helps you to feel happy, healthy and safe; we call this your **wellbeing**.

At Children in Scotland we believe that it's important to gather your thoughts on different issues and to share these with the adults who make decisions that impact on your lives. We also think it's important to let you know what we are doing with the ideas you shared.

Last October, the Scottish Government asked Children in Scotland to consult with children and young people to help inform the development of their new 10-year mental health strategy.

This report is a summary of what you told us, how we shared the information, and what happens next.



**Children in Scotland**  
every child - every childhood

### Who did we speak to?

We spoke to 49 children, from P3 – P7 in two primary schools in Glasgow and Dunoon. We also considered the views of children and young people from the Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) and other youth-led organisations.

We listened to what you told us and shared your views with the Scottish Government.

### What did we do?

You might remember we played some games and did group work too. We created a character (Joe) by drawing around someone in the group and filling the outline with the things we might like support with in our lives. We shared ideas about our circles of support and voted on the things that were most important to us.

## Here's what you told us

### Things that help you feel happy, healthy and safe

#### The importance of people and networks

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All of you said that having friends and being able to play with friends was important. Family and teachers also helped you to feel happy. Being close to loved ones helped you to feel happy, healthy and safe.

Helping and giving to others also helped you to feel happy. Many of you thought that being nice to one another and being included was very important for your wellbeing.

#### Hobbies and interests

We heard that having the opportunity to play and take part in enjoyable activities helped you feel good. You talked about going to clubs, playing sports, cooking, 'messaging about', going on holiday, playing with pets and learning new things as activities that made you feel happy.

"Giving my mum a hug"

"Having kind friends"

### Things that you would like help with

Everyone is different and we learned that you have many different kinds of worries. You told us that you sometimes worry about:

health and illness

education and school

home life

friendship and bullying

growing up

#### Health and illness

Many of you told us you were worried about your health. Some of you were concerned about allergies or physical disabilities and others about becoming ill in the future. Some of you were also worried about the health of people in your family.

#### Education and school

You told us that sometimes you worry about school work and homework and that it can be stressful when you're being tested at school.

"I can't cope with work"

## Home life

We heard that it's not always easy at home and that sometimes people have worries in their family or don't have a home that they feel comfortable in.

## Friendship and bullying

Friendships breaking down and bullying were also very important for affecting how you were feeling. You also talked about not feeling included, people calling you names, feeling lonely and online bullying.

## Growing up

We learned that as your body changes, you've got lots of questions and things you'd like to talk about with someone you trust.



## Things that can help

We heard that family, teachers and community groups helped support you when you were finding it difficult to cope with problems. Some of you talked about 'special teachers' in schools who you felt you could trust and who would listen to you. Outside your families, we heard that it's the emergency services, nurses, people who look after mental health and people who run clubs and afterschool activities that you would go to for support.

## Body & Mind

You told us that food, exercise and sleep were all really important to keep healthy. We also found that you talked more about a healthy body than a healthy mind.

## Understanding your rights

We asked you to tell us what you thought your rights were. You talked about lots of things, these included: playing, safety, being healthy, environment & home, learning, friendship, how you feel about others, extra help, privacy and choice. However, you did not talk about having the right to good mental health and wellbeing.

Not all of you knew about your rights or understood them well.

**Based on what you told us we made a number of suggestions to help the Scottish Government make plans to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people living in Scotland. We suggested they should focus on:**

**Helping everyone to understand the things that can make things better for children and young people within their families, schools and community groups**

**Designing different ways to help all children feel able to talk about their concerns and understand where to go if they need extra help**

**Making sure that all children understand that they have the right to feel happy, healthy and safe**

## What happens next ?

We have shared your views with the Scottish Government and will share what you told us with lots of other organisations who impact the lives of children and young people. We are still working to find out how the Scottish Government are using your voices to shape their work on improving mental health and wellbeing for young people.

# Thank you for sharing your views with us

The report will be published and available to view on the Children in Scotland website - [www.childreninscotland.org.uk](http://www.childreninscotland.org.uk)