



Taking Part: England's survey of Culture, Leisure and Sport

Headline findings from the child survey 2007

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1. Introduction

1.1 Taking Part survey

The Taking Part survey was commissioned by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport working in partnership with several of its Non-Departmental Public Bodies.

The survey collects data about engagement and non-engagement in culture, leisure and sport, helping the Department and its partner bodies to better understand those who do, and do not, engage with its sectors. This information provides vital evidence to support the Department's aim of improving the quality of life for everyone by providing people with the chance to get involved in a variety of these opportunities.

The Department currently has four strategic priorities, and increasing the proportion of children participating in culture and sport contributes to two of those priorities.

Since July 2005, BMRB Social Research has been conducting face-to-face interviews with adults aged 16 or over living in private households in England. A child interview was appended to the main survey from January 2006. In those households containing at least one child aged 11 to 15, an interview was sought with a randomly selected child. In 2007, the second year of the child survey, 2,454 interviews were conducted. These were issued between January and December 2007 and conducted continuously between 22 January 2007 and 13 April 2008.

Similar to adult respondents, children were asked about their engagement and non-engagement in activities during the 12 months prior to the day of interview. They were also asked about patterns of engagement out of school lessons. This includes break time, lunchtime, after school, at the weekend and during school holidays¹. There is no geographical restriction placed on where the activity took place.

1.2 Format of the report and related workbooks

This report provides a brief summary of the data contained in the web-based workbooks (see http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/publications/5481.aspx). The workbooks compare Taking Part child data from the 2006 and 2007 surveys.

The report begins by looking at what children do in their spare time, and cross-sector engagement. It then presents selected findings from each cultural and sporting sector in turn, including the overall engagement rate in and out of school lessons, and the frequency of engagement. Finally, it looks at variations by three population sub-groups.

A series of cross-sector Taking Part reports will be published over the coming months and throughout 2009 looking at a variety of issues, including more detailed analysis of the child data as well as further research on the link between child and adult engagement.

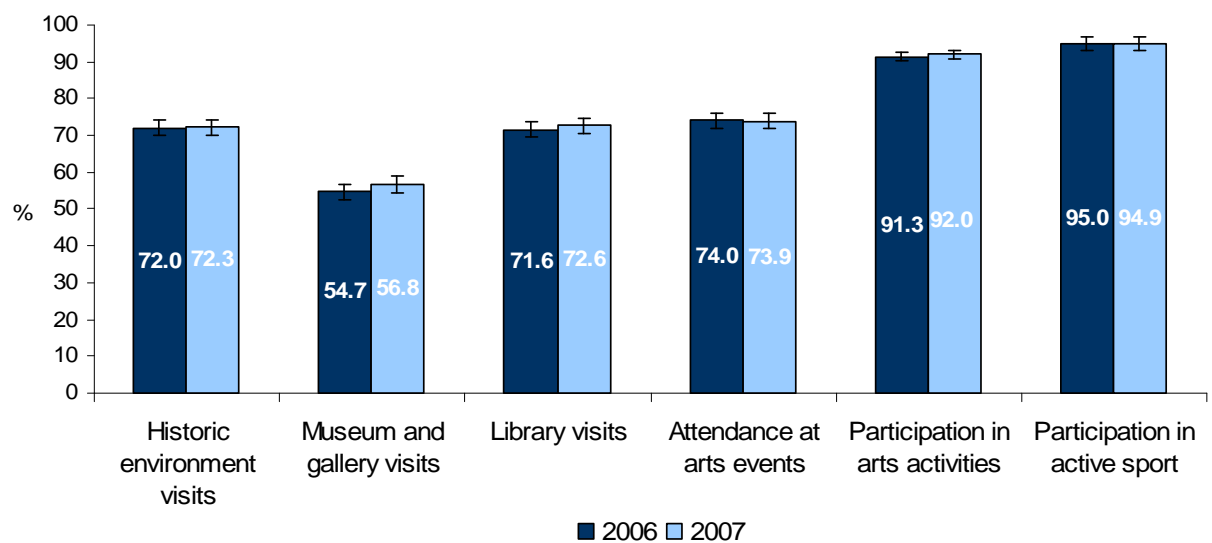
¹ Respondents were not asked to specify exactly when they had engaged in an activity, but rather to identify whether they had participated out of school lessons given the definition described.

2. Key findings

2.1 Summary

- Spending time with friends, watching television and listening to music were the three main activities children reported doing in their free time. Of all activities, spending time with friends, sports activities and playing computer games were given as the most enjoyable.
- Virtually all children had engaged in at least one form of cultural or sporting opportunity during the past 12 months².
- Overall, child engagement remained consistent between 2006 and 2007.
- There were, however, some statistically significant differences within population sub-groups:
 - Boys were significantly less likely than girls to have attended arts events, participated in arts activities and visited libraries, but more likely to have participated in an active sport.
 - Children from White ethnic backgrounds were more likely than those from Black or minority ethnic backgrounds to have visited historic environment sites, but less likely to have visited libraries.

Figure A: Topline engagement by sector, 2006 – 2007



2.2 Free time

The most frequently mentioned leisure activity among children was spending time with friends, followed by watching television and listening to music (Table A). There was a statistically significant decrease between 2006 and 2007 in those saying they watched television in their free time (down 1 percentage point); meanwhile there was a significant increase in those saying they went on days out or visits (up 5 percentage points).

² Engagement refers to one of the following: attendance at a historic environment site, a museum or gallery, a library, or an arts event; or participation in an arts activity or active sport.

Almost two-fifths (38%) said that the most enjoyable of these activities was spending time with friends, while a fifth (23%) cited sport activities as the most enjoyable (Table B). There were no statistically significant differences between the two years.

Table A: Free time activities, 2007

	Percentage	Range
Spend time with friends	88.9	+/- 1.5
Watch TV	87.0	+/- 1.6
Listen to music	75.6	+/- 2.0
Spend time with family	71.0	+/- 2.1
Homework	70.9	+/- 2.1
Sports activities	68.7	+/- 2.2
Play computer games	64.7	+/- 2.2
Internet/emailing/instant messaging	63.9	+/- 2.2
Shopping	57.6	+/- 2.3
Cinema	56.1	+/- 2.3
Go on days out or visits to places	49.0	+/- 2.3
Read	43.5	+/- 2.3
Arts and craft	26.6	+/- 2.1
Other answers	8.1	+/- 1.3

Table B: Most enjoyable free time activities, 2007

	Percentage	Range
Spend time with friends	37.9	+/- 2.3
Sports activities	22.9	+/- 2.0
Play computer games	7.5	+/- 1.2
Spend time with family	7.0	+/- 1.2
Shopping	4.6	+/- 1.0
Listen to music	3.3	+/- 0.8
Internet/emailing/instant messaging	3.3	+/- 0.8
Watch TV	3.0	+/- 0.8
Read	2.6	+/- 0.7
Arts and craft	2.3	+/- 0.7
Other answers	2.2	+/- 0.7
Cinema	1.5	+/- 0.6
Go on days out or visits to places	1.5	+/- 0.6
Homework	0.3	+/- 0.2

Note: 'Other answers' includes playing musical instruments and participating in drama and dance.

2.3 Cross-sector engagement

Children were asked about their engagement with cultural sectors in the past 12 months, and their engagement in sports activities in the past four weeks.

Levels of engagement in cultural sectors

Looking first at engagement with cultural sectors only, the data show that in 2007 99 per cent of children had engaged in at least one cultural sector in the past 12 months. Four-fifths (80%) had engaged in three or more sectors, more than half (60%) had engaged in four or more, and almost a third (32%) had engaged in five sectors.

Of those who had engaged in at least one cultural sector, 97 per cent had engaged out of school lessons (this equates to 96 per cent of all children)³. The highest proportion of children (60%) said they had engaged in cultural activities at least once a week during the past 12 months, while one in five (19%) said they had engaged at least once a month but less often than once a week⁴.

Levels of engagement in cultural sectors or sports activities

When we combine sport participation with cultural engagement, the data show that virtually all children had engaged in at least one cultural sector in the past 12 months or had engaged in a sports activity in the past four weeks⁵. Nine out of 10 children (92%) had engaged in three or more sectors, four-fifths (80%) had engaged in four or more, and almost two-thirds (59%) had engaged in five sectors or more.

Of those who had engaged in at least one cultural sector or sports activity, virtually all had engaged out of school lessons⁶. Therefore, less than one per cent of children had only engaged in a cultural sector or sports activity inside school lessons.

The majority of children (94%) had participated in both cultural sectors and sports activities. A small proportion (5%) had participated in culture and not sport, and a smaller proportion (1%) had participated in sport and not culture. Less than one per cent had not engaged in culture or sport.

There were no statistically significant differences in any of these estimates between 2006 and 2007.

2.4 Historic environment sites

Overall level of engagement

The data show that 72 per cent of all children had visited a historic environment site in the past 12 months.

The most common type of site visited was a city or town with historic character (45%), followed by a monument (39%) and a historic building (33%). Of those that had visited a site, around a third (30%) had been to one type of site and a further third (32%) had been to four or more.

Engagement outside school lessons and frequency

Although respondents were not specifically asked whether they visited these sites out of school lessons, they were asked who they had made their last visit with. Seventy-three per cent of respondents had cited going with someone other than their school⁷.

³ Respondents were not asked whether they had made visits to historic environment sites out of school lessons. For the purposes of this analysis, we have allocated all visits to these sites as being out of school lessons. See page 5 for more details.

⁴ Note that if a respondent engaged at different frequency rates in different sectors, it was their highest frequency rate that was selected for this analysis.

⁵ A total of 99.6 per cent of children had engaged in at least one cultural sector or sport activity. The related confidence interval is +/- 0.3.

⁶ A total of 99.5 per cent of children who had engaged in at least one cultural sector or sport activity had done so out of school lessons (this equates to 99.1 per cent of all children). The related confidence interval is +/- 0.3.

⁷ This was a statistically significant increase from 2006 (up by 4 percentage points). Note that the 2006 figure was 73% (previously reported as 81%).

Two-fifths (42%) of child visitors had visited one or two times during the past 12 months, and a similar number (41%) had been three or four times.

There were no statistically significant differences in any of these estimates between 2006 and 2007.

Enjoyment

When asked to say how much they enjoyed visiting historic environment sites (on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being awful and 10 being brilliant), the mean rating was 7⁸.

2.5 Museums and galleries

Overall level of engagement

The data show that 57 per cent of all children had visited a museum or gallery in the past 12 months.

Engagement outside school lessons and frequency

Of those children that had visited a museum or gallery, 81% had visited out of school lessons (this equates to 46% of all children). The highest proportion (60%) had visited once or twice during the past 12 months, while a third (33%) said they had visited at least three or four times but less than once a month.

There were no statistically significant differences in any of these estimates between 2006 and 2007.

Enjoyment

When asked to say how much they enjoyed visiting museums and galleries (on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being awful and 10 being brilliant), the mean rating was 7⁹.

2.6 Libraries

Overall level of engagement

The data show that 73 per cent of all children had visited a library in the past 12 months.

Engagement outside school lessons and frequency

Of those children that had visited a library, 78% had visited out of school lessons – this showed a statistically significant decrease from the previous year (down by 3 percentage points). This equates to 57% of all children, which is not significantly different from 2006.

The highest proportion of children (35%) had visited at least once a month but less than once a week, while nearly a fifth (20%) said they had visited at least once a week. These frequency levels remained consistent with the previous year.

There were no other statistically significant differences in the estimates between 2006 and 2007.

⁸ To one decimal place, the mean enjoyment rating was 7.1.

⁹ To one decimal place, the mean enjoyment rating was 7.2.

Enjoyment

When asked to say how much they enjoyed visiting libraries (on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being awful and 10 being brilliant), the mean rating was 6¹⁰.

2.7 Arts opportunities

2.7.1 Arts attendance

Overall level of engagement

The data show that 74 per cent of all children had attended an arts event in the past 12 months.

The most common type of arts event attended was theatre performances (42%), followed by carnivals or culturally specific festivals (21%).

Engagement outside school lessons and frequency

Of those children that had attended an arts event, 93 per cent had attended out of school lessons (this equates to 69 per cent of all children). The most commonly attended events for those who attended arts events out of school lessons were again theatre performances and carnivals or culturally specific festivals (35% and 19% respectively).

The majority of children (55%) who had attended out of school lessons said they had done so once or twice during the past 12 months, while more than one in 10 (13%) said they had attended at least once a month but less than once a week¹¹.

There were no statistically significant differences in any of these estimates between 2006 and 2007.

Enjoyment

When asked to say how much they enjoyed attending arts events (on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being awful and 10 being brilliant), the mean rating was 8¹².

2.7.2 Arts participation

Overall level of engagement

The data show that 92 per cent of all children had participated in an arts activity in the past 12 months.

The most common type of arts activity participated in was painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture or model-making (63%). This was followed by using a computer to create original artworks (44%) and rehearsing or performing in a play (36%).

¹⁰ To one decimal place, the mean enjoyment rating was 6.1.

¹¹ Note that if a respondent engaged at different frequency rates for different events, it is their highest frequency rate that is selected for this analysis. This also applies to arts participation.

¹² To one decimal place, the mean enjoyment rating was 7.9. Respondents were asked to rate every arts event they attended and we can therefore only present a mean rating. This also applies to arts participation.

Engagement outside school lessons and frequency

Of those children that had participated in an arts activity, 84 per cent had done so out of school lessons (this equates to 77 per cent of all children). Among those who participated in arts activities out of school lessons, the most common activity was again painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture or model-making (39%).

The highest proportion of children (68%) had participated at least once a week during the past 12 months, while almost two in five (18%) said they had participated at least once a month but less than once a week.

There were no statistically significant differences in any of these estimates between 2006 and 2007.

Enjoyment

When asked to say how much they enjoyed participating in arts activities (on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being awful and 10 being brilliant), the mean rating was 8¹³.

2.8 Active sport

Overall level of engagement

The data show that 95 per cent of all children had participated in an active sport during the past four weeks.

The most common type of active sport participated in was football (59%), followed by swimming or diving (39%) and basketball (30%).

Engagement outside school lessons and frequency

Of those children that had participated in an active sport, 94 per cent had done so out of school lessons (this equates to 89 per cent of all children). The most common type of sport participated in outside school lessons was again football (47%), followed by swimming or diving (34%) and cycling or bike riding (21%). These data were consistent with the 2006 estimates.

Three-quarters (75%) of all children had participated in an active sport outside school lessons in the past week. Of those, 23 per cent had participated for at least an hour on one day, and 19 per cent had participated for at least an hour on two days. Around a quarter (27%) had participated for at least an hour on five or more days. The mean number of days was 3¹⁴.

Converting these figures into a proportion of the total sample, 17 per cent had participated for at least an hour on one day, and 14 per cent had participated for at least an hour on two days. A fifth (20%) had participated for at least an hour on five or more days – this is a statistically significant increase from the previous year (up by 3 percentage points). The mean number of days on which children had participated for at least an hour in the past week was 2¹⁵.

There were no other statistically significant differences in the estimates between 2006 and 2007.

¹³ To one decimal place, the mean enjoyment rating was 7.8.

¹⁴ To one decimal place, the mean number of days was 3.1.

¹⁵ To one decimal place, the mean number of days was 2.3.

2.9 Demographics

Engagement rates by demographic sub-groups of the child population have remained broadly consistent between 2006 and 2007. The only statistically significant difference was an increase in attendance at museums and galleries by boys (up by 5 percentage points).

There were, however, a number of statistically significant differences between different sub-groups across all sectors (estimates in brackets are from 2007):

- Boys were significantly less likely than girls to have attended arts events (67% of boys compared to 81% of girls), participated in arts activities (94% and 90% respectively) and visited libraries (70% and 76% respectively) in the past 12 months.
- However, boys were more likely than girls to have participated in an active sport during the past four weeks (98% and 92% respectively).
- Children from White ethnic backgrounds had higher rates than children from Black or minority ethnic backgrounds of visiting historic environment sites (74% and 62% respectively), but lower rates of visiting libraries (71% and 83% respectively).

These findings were consistent with 2006. In addition, there were three further findings in 2006 that were no longer statistically significant in 2007 (estimates in brackets are from 2006):

- Children with a limiting disability had lower rates of visits to libraries than those without a limiting disability (64% and 72% respectively).
- Boys were significantly less likely than girls to have visited museums (52% and 58% respectively).
- Also, children from Black or minority ethnic backgrounds were significantly less likely than children from White ethnic backgrounds to have visited museums (50% and 56% respectively).

3. Definitions

Historic environment sites

1. A city or town with historic character
2. A historic building open to the public (non religious)
3. A historic park, garden or landscape open to the public
4. A place connected with industrial history (eg an old factory, dockyard or mine) or historic transport system (eg old ship or railway)
5. A historic place of worship attended as a visitor (not to worship)
6. A monument such as a castle, fort or ruin
7. A site of archaeological interest (ie roman villa, ancient burial site)
8. A site connected with sports heritage (eg Wimbledon) (not visited for the purpose of watching sport)

Arts attendance events

1. Exhibition or collection of art, photography or sculpture
2. Craft exhibition
3. Street arts (arts in everyday surroundings like parks, streets or shopping centres)
4. Circus (not animals)
5. Carnival or culturally specific festival (for example Mela, Baisakhi, Navratri)
6. Theatre performances (eg plays, pantomime or opera)
7. Classical music performance
8. Jazz performance
9. Pop/rock music event
10. Other live music event
11. Dance event (excluding disco)

Arts participation activities

1. Dance (not for fitness)
2. Sang to an audience or rehearse for a performance (not karaoke)
3. Played a musical instrument to an audience or rehearsed for a performance
4. Played a musical instrument for your own pleasure
5. Written any music
6. Rehearsed or performed in play/drama
7. Painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture or model-making
8. Photography as an artistic activity (not family or holiday 'snaps')
9. Made films or videos as an artistic activity (not family or holidays)
10. Used a computer to create original artworks or animation
11. Knitting, embroidery, crocheting or dress-making
12. Wood work or metal work
13. Other crafts such as pottery or jewellery making
14. Written any stories or plays
15. Written any poetry

Active sports

1. Swimming or diving
2. BMX or mountain biking
3. Other cycling or bike riding
4. Tenpin bowling
5. Health, fitness, gym or conditioning activities

6. Keepfit, aerobics, dance exercise (include exercise bike)
7. Martial Arts – Judo, Karate, Taekwando and other Martial Arts
8. Weight training (include body building)
9. Gymnastics
10. Snooker, pool, billiards (exclude bar billiards)
11. Darts
12. Rugby League
13. Rugby Union
14. American football
15. Football
16. Cricket
17. Hockey (but not ice, roller and street hockey)
18. Baseball/softball
19. Netball
20. Tennis
21. Badminton
22. Squash
23. Basketball
24. Table tennis
25. Track and field athletics
26. Jogging, cross-country, road running
27. Fishing
28. Canoeing
29. Windsurfing or boardsailing
30. Ice skating
31. Golf, pitch and putt, putting
32. Skiing (on snow or on artificial surface; on slopes or grass)
33. Horse riding
34. Climbing/mountaineering (include indoor climbing)
35. Karting
36. Volleyball
37. Orienteering
38. Rounders
39. Rowing
40. Boxing
41. Waterskiing
42. Yoga
43. Fencing
44. Sailing
45. Lacrosse
46. Skateboarding
47. Other type of sport, for example, roller-blading, street hockey, skateboarding, water polo, surfing, scuba diving, gliding, hang/paragliding, parachuting or parascending

4. Background note

1. The Taking Part survey has been commissioned by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and its partner Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs): Arts Council England, English Heritage, Sport England, and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council.
2. Taking Part is a National Statistic and as such has been produced to the high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. National Statistics undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure they meet customer needs and are produced free from any political interference. See http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/national_statistics/cop for more information.
3. The ranges have been calculated using a 95% confidence interval. This means there is a 95% probability that the true percentage lies in the range given. All estimates have been rounded to one decimal place in tables and charts and to whole numbers in the text. The design factor used was 1.2.
4. The standard error was calculated for the mean enjoyment rating in each section. For all mean ratings, the standard error was less than 0.1. Standard error is defined as an estimate of the standard deviation of a sample mean.
5. In all sections, 'children' refers to 11 to 15 year olds.
6. For more information about the Taking Part survey, including previous publications, see: http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/research_and_statistics/4828.aspx
7. The fieldwork for the survey is being conducted by BMRB: Social research. See <http://www.bmr.co.uk/> for more information.

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