

A black rectangular sign with the words "ON AIR" in red, glowing letters. A black cable hangs from the bottom of the sign.

ON AIR

Report of findings from the DCSF 'Time to Talk' Consultation Activities

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1 Executive summary

This report details the findings from the community consultation activities. This strand of the consultation includes:

- Paper survey (adults and children/young people)
- Online survey (adults and children/young people)
- Online survey via GMTV website (primarily adults)
- Toolkits for people to run their own listening workshops with adults or children/young people
- Video diaries (young people)

The findings in the executive summary below incorporate both adult and young people's responses, broadly grouped under the headings of the questions they were asked and including some thematic analysis.

Positive childhoods

Children and young people were asked to comment generally on what their concerns are about the future and what being happy, healthy and safe means to them. The responses reveal that young people are particularly concerned about their personal safety and their education, but that personal relationships and environmental issues are also issues for some.

- 41 per cent of children and young people are concerned about their personal safety, 21 per cent are concerned about bullying and 4 per cent specifically mention gangs as a key concern.
- 21 per cent are worried about their education and 11 per cent cite exams and tests as their biggest concern.
- 14 per cent mention their personal relationships as concerns for them and 5 per cent say they are very worried about environmental issues.

In the video diary rooms, children and young people were asked what would make life better for them. Reducing inequality, providing more activities, improving family relationships, and making children and young people feel safer are seen as key ways to improve young people's lives. These themes coincide with results to the survey question which asked children and young people what would make them happy, healthy and safe.

- 20 per cent of young people call for more activities and youth clubs and 14 per cent ask for more sports clubs and facilities to make them happier, more healthy and safer.
- 23 per cent of young people say that more police and greater security would make them feel safer.
- 20 per cent believe that healthy eating is the key to good health, and the video diaries reveal that they would like healthy food to be made more appealing and accessible for them, especially at school.
- 10 per cent call for more counsellors and trained people to provide them with support.

The themes that emerged in responses to these questions demonstrate the similarity between the concerns of children and young people and those of adults, revealed in their responses to other questions.

The role of different groups and individuals

Parents, the community and the government are all perceived to have an important role in ensuring that children are happy, healthy and safe. However, the role of each of these groups/individuals is perceived to be different.

Parents

The main parental role is perceived to be to love and care for children, but also to teach them moral values and give them boundaries and discipline. In order to do this, people feel that families need to spend time together, to enable them to build strong relationships. Adults and young people have very similar views about the role of parents, however they prioritise different elements of that role.

- 22 per cent of adults say that parents should love and care for children and 33 per cent of children say that parents should look after, help and support them.
- 19 per cent of adults believe it is the role of parents to set standards and take responsibility for their children and 20 per cent of children believe it is their parents' role to educate them/support them in school.
- Spending time together as a family is highlighted as a priority by 17 per cent of parents and some call for financial support to help them do this
- Listening and encouragement is a key priority for young people: 18 per cent say that parents should encourage them and 13 per cent say they should listen.

Adults responded to a question about how parents should be supported in the consultation questionnaire, and the main emphasis of responses is on giving parents more information about what support is out there for them and making it more readily available. Support is principally seen as needed to help parents build stronger relationships with their children.

- 25 per cent of adults say that parents need to know more and for support to be more readily available.
- 25 per cent of respondents call for more help for parents to build strong relationships with their children.

The children's video diaries reveal that young people believe they have a role in supporting their parents and making it easier for them. They are also aware that their parents need financial support, and financial worries are identified as a key cause of stress in family relationships. Additionally, they suggest that schools could help parents more and also suggest parenting classes be available for those who require them.

The community

The community is perceived to have the potential to play an important role in the lives of children and young people, but at present it is not considered to fulfil this potential. Young people and children, in particular, can feel that the community has a negative and unhelpful approach. There is seen as scope for the communities to offer more support and guidance and activities for young people.

- 30 per cent of young people say that the community does nothing to support them at present and 28 per cent of adults call for the community to unite more.
- However, 18 per cent of young people say the community could support them and 34 per cent of adults say that the community could support and offer guidance to young people.
- 32 per cent of adults and 29 per cent of young people say that the community could provide more activities for young people.
- 12 per cent of young people state that the community needs to understand them better and 22 per cent of adults say it should embrace young people more.

Government

Government is considered to have a dual role. People want to see it devising policies to change for the better and providing funding. However, they feel that it should not interfere too much and bureaucracy should be reduced. Some key policy areas that people think government should concentrate on are supporting parents (especially in giving them the flexibility to work or stay at home and look after their children) and providing more activities for children and young people. Wider issues such as healthcare, child abuse, crime, poverty and public transport are also perceived to be important areas for government to focus on in order to ensure that children and young people are happy, healthy and safe.

- 44 per cent of adults and 31 per cent of young people believe that government should provide more funding for families, children and young people.
- 18 per cent of adults say the government should support parents more and 12 per cent believe it should give parents the flexibility to work or stay at home.
- 16 per cent of young people believe the government currently provides activities for children and young people, but the verbatims reveal that they would like more to be provided, and 11 per cent of adults say that the government should provide more activities for children and young people.

Services for families, children and young people

There is low awareness of services among parents and young people. There is some evidence that many families rely on informal support networks, such as friends and extended family members.

- 5 per cent of adults say they have had no experiences of good support and 16 per cent of young people say they have never had any support.
- 12 per cent of adults claim their best experiences of support come from family members, friends and other parents; and the children's video diaries reveal informal support as being important to families.

Positive experiences of support

The services that people tend to mention as providing the best experiences are education services (including teachers, but also other professionals who work in educational settings), health services and charity and voluntary organisations. Trust and strong relationships with those providing support are thought to be key to a positive experience, as is consistency.

- 32 per cent of adults and 25 per cent of young people say that education/teachers/schools have provided their best experiences of support.
- 21 per cent of adults and 19 per cent of young people say that they have had their best experiences of support from health professionals, with school nurses coming up strongly in the young people's verbatims.
- 19 per cent of adults also mention charity and voluntary organisations providing them with positive experiences.

Improving support

The priorities of adults and young people are somewhat different when it comes to improving services and support. Adults believe that the main priority for improvement is the health service. Children and young people focus on the need to provide more funding and activities for them to

do, however, adults would like to see more support for services that they might use, such as parenting classes. Adults are also concerned that different services are not currently seen to link up sufficiently and they would like to see more interagency working.

- 23 per cent of adults say the health service needs to be improved.
- 15 per cent of children and young people would like more funding and 10 per cent would like more activities.
- 18 per cent of adults say there should be more support for parenting classes and 16 per cent of adults would like to see more interagency working.

Tailoring support to the needs of individuals

Both adults and young people believe that the key to tailoring support to the needs of individuals is in listening to what people want and need. Both adults and young people believe that more funding is key to achieving greater tailoring of support. Children and young people believe there needs to be more services for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN), and this is also a priority for those who responded to the GMTV survey. Adults who responded to the online and paper questionnaires also prioritise better training and a more joined-up approach to providing services.

- 34 per cent of adults and 53 per cent of young people say that services should ask their opinions and listen to them.
- 22 per cent of young people and 28 per cent of adults think that more funding is needed to provide services that are tailored to the needs of young people and families.
- 12 per cent of young people believe there should be more services for children with SEN.
- 21 per cent of adults think that there needs to be more skilled staff and better training for staff to enable them to treat each child as an individual, and 20 per cent of adults believe tailored support will require better interagency working.

Preventing children and young people getting into trouble

The overwhelming feedback from young people and adults on this question is that children and young people need to be given more activities and safe places to go to prevent them getting into trouble. The role of parents is also thought to be crucial, especially by adults. Stronger discipline is acknowledged to be important by children, young people and adults, especially those responding to the GMTV survey. However, most want to ensure that this is tempered with showing respect for children and young people, providing a good education and sense of self-worth, and listening to their needs and concerns.

- 66 per cent of children and young people and 50 per cent of adults believe that providing more activities is key to keeping children and young people out of trouble.
- 22 per cent of children and young people would like to see more police and supervision and 9 per cent endorse curfews, while 11 per cent of adults call for more policing and punishment and 11 per cent also call for stronger discipline in schools.
- 20 per cent of adults say that improving education would stop children and young people getting into trouble.
- 12 per cent of adults believe that encouraging self-worth in children will prevent problems and 4 per cent of young people say that giving young people respect and listening to young people will also prevent problems.

2 Introduction

2.1 Background and objectives

On 28 June 2007 the former DfES was divided into two new departments. Pre-19 education is now handled by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and post-19 education has moved to the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS). DCSF brings together all key aspects of policy affecting children and young people. The Department is led by Ed Balls as the new Secretary of State (SoS).

The new Department is launching with a major consultation – with experts, professionals, children and parents – on the delivery of children’s services. DCSF are also convening three expert working groups looking at issues for 0–7-, 8–13- and 14–19-year-olds. Both these activities will be critical in building towards the writing of a new Children’s Plan.

The consultation on children’s services has two strands. One is a national consultation driven by promotion through the media and stakeholder channels. The other is a deliberative event which was designed to provide an opportunity for a mix of stakeholders, including the general public and members of the expert groups, to engage with each other in small groups and discuss their potentially conflicting issues and needs. The purpose of using this two-fold model is to collect views systematically and achieve a response representing a good balance of views, including those who might not normally take part in consultations.

The objectives for this phase of the consultation are:

- To capture a wide range of feedback about how we can deliver better outcomes for children, young people and their families.
- To engage with as many people as possible to find out what they feel is the best way to make sure every child has the chance to make the most of their talents and fulfil their potential.

Findings from the consultation, as well as reports from the expert groups, will feed directly into a Children’s Plan. The Plan will set out how DCSF will achieve their objectives for children, young people and families in the next few years.

2.2 Methodology

This strand of the consultation used a number of methods to collect people’s views:

- Paper survey;
- Online survey;
- Online survey via GMTV website;
- Toolkits for people to run their own listening workshops with adults or children/young people; and
- Video diaries for young people, which toured a number of different schools across England and allowed children and young people to air their views.

Outlined below is more detail on each method.

2.2.1 Paper survey and online consultation survey

The consultation survey was based on the eight consultation questions developed by DCSF, please see Appendix 6.1. Questions were open ended allowing respondents to give free responses. Respondents could answer all or as few questions as they like and therefore the base sizes for each question response can vary.

Respondents were asked to classify themselves under one or more of the following: 19 or under, parent, working with children and young people, and/or other.

Paper survey

Leaflets were sent out to places in the community where people would be most likely to see them and fill them in such as supermarkets, libraries, doctor's surgeries and community centres. The surveys had a Freepost address to allow respondents to send them back for analysis.

Online survey

The online survey used the same questions as the paper survey with the exception of one extra question. This ninth question asked people if they had any other comments. The young people were routed to a slightly different version of the survey, which tailored the eight consultation questions to make them more appealing to young people.

Because of low response rates from young people, the questions on the young people's version of the survey were changed mid-way through the consultation. The questions were made more child friendly and the order of questions was changed. In the analysis, responses are grouped under

Analysis of surveys

Opinion Leader was responsible for collecting and analysing the data from the paper survey. DCSF were responsible for collecting and analysing the data from the online survey.

DCSF created the 'master code frame' from approximately 100 responses from the online survey. This code frame was then used by Opinion Leader to code the responses from the paper survey. Responses were multi-coded, according to the number of different statements or points that were made for each question.

In the final analysis, results from the paper survey and online survey were combined to give overall total responses for each question. It was not possible to determine the total number of parents/young people/people working with children and young people/other who took part in the survey because of the limitations of the online data collection method. This means that it has not been possible to conduct analysis of the responses by respondent type for the quantitative survey, but where possible, this has been conducted qualitatively.

2.2.2 Toolkits (young people and adults)

Two versions of a toolkit to help people run their own discussions and listening exercises were designed by Opinion Leader and based on the group discussions we conducted with children and the deliberative events for adults.

One version of the toolkit was for young people and children, giving ideas for projective techniques that could enable them to respond to the issues in the consultation. The children and young people's toolkits were structured thematically, under the following themes:

- Family and others;
- Staying safe;
- Enjoying and achieving; and
- Being good/making a positive contribution.

The adult toolkit gave options for listening exercises of different lengths and was structured to adhere more closely to the consultation questions and one was for adults.

DCSF distributed toolkits to key stakeholders, MPs and those who requested them. Because the deadline for responses from MPs is longer, results from MPs have not been included in this report.

Analysis of the toolkits

The adult toolkits fed directly into the online survey responses and so they have been analysed together with the survey data.

Opinion Leader conducted thematic analysis of the responses from the young people's toolkits.

2.2.3 GMTV

GMTV covered the consultation story for three days on national television. They encouraged viewers to go to the GMTV website to answer questions, which were similar to the consultation survey but not identical. Viewers could answer as many or as few questions as they like. Data was analysed under each question and organised thematically by Opinion Leader.

2.2.4 Video diaries

A *Time to Talk* tour bus visited one secondary school in nine different cities. The nine cities were:

- Gateshead
- Leeds
- Liverpool
- Nottingham
- Norwich
- Plymouth
- Birmingham
- Oxford
- London

The tour bus spent one day at each school inviting children to give their views via a 'big brother' style video diary room. Children answered a slightly tailored version of the main eight consultation questions. Opinion Leader analysed the data.

2.2.5 Response rates for each data collection method

Table 1 overleaf details the response rates for each data collection method by adult and children/young people responses.

Table 1: response rates

Method	Number of adult responses	Number of responses from children/young people
Paper survey – adults	633	
Paper survey – young people		27
Online survey – adults (including adult toolkit response)	1960	
Online survey – young people		103
Young people’s toolkits		6
GMTV	48	
Video diary response		404
TOTAL	2,641	540

2.2.6 This report

This report provides feedback on the data collected from both the adult and children/young people strands of the community consultation. This feedback is provided separately for adults and children/young people because the questions they were asked differ and the code frames were developed separately. However, the executive summary and conclusions provide an overview of all responses.

Adult responses

The responses for this section come from the following data collection streams:

- The online and paper consultation surveys completed by adults; and
- The GMTV survey.

Responses to the online and paper consultation surveys completed by adults consist of two elements:

- Quantitative data from the code frames for each question; and
- Verbatim responses for each question organised under the same categories as the quantitative data where possible.

Because the GMTV survey did not ask exactly the same questions as the online and paper surveys, there is a separate section for GMTV responses where possible. These are organised thematically and supported with verbatim responses.

Responses from children/young people

The responses for this section come from the following data collection streams:

- The online and paper consultation surveys completed by children and young people;
- The video diaries; and
- The children’s toolkit responses.

Responses to the online and paper consultation surveys completed by children and young people consist of two elements:

- Quantitative data from the code frames for each question; and
- Verbatim responses for each question organised under the same categories as the quantitative data where possible.

The video diary responses are included under each question heading, where children and young people were asked to respond to those questions. They are organised thematically under each question heading and supported with verbatim responses.

The children's toolkit responses are included in a separate section at the end of the report (see 4.9) and are organised thematically under the following section headings:

- Families and others;
- Staying safe;
- Enjoying and achieving; and
- Being good/making a positive contribution.

3 Main findings: Adult responses

3.1 Responses to question 1: What have been your best experiences of support for children, young people and their families?

- Participants have received support from a wide variety of sources.
- Those most frequently mentioned include support from charity and voluntary organisations, health professionals and educational support.
- As well as practical help, participants highly value the trust and relationships they build up with those they receive support from.
- Respondents also value support from family, friends and other parents to the extent that some participants comment that they do not feel they need any external support.

3.1.1 Responses from online and paper surveys

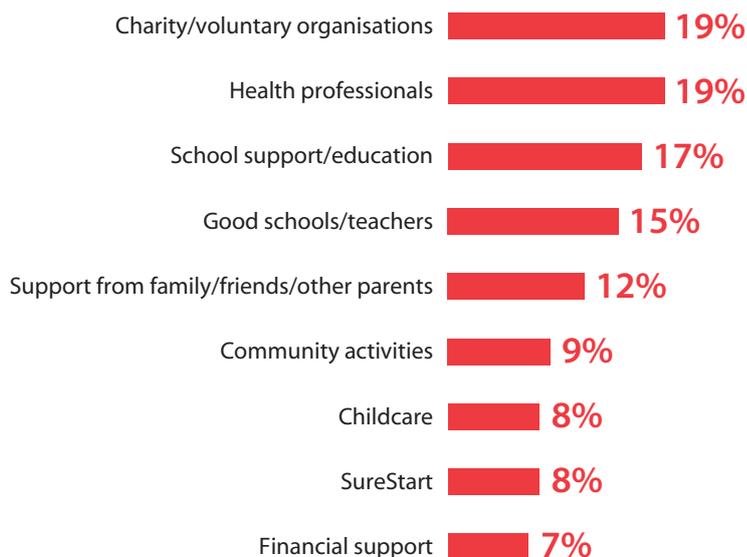
Frequently mentioned

The most frequently mentioned topics for this question are:

- Charity/voluntary organisations;
- Health professionals;
- School support and education;
- Good schools and teachers; and
- Support from family, friends and other parents.

Chart 1: Best experiences of support – frequently mentioned

Q1. What have been your best experiences of support for children, young people and their families?



Base: 2,069 responses

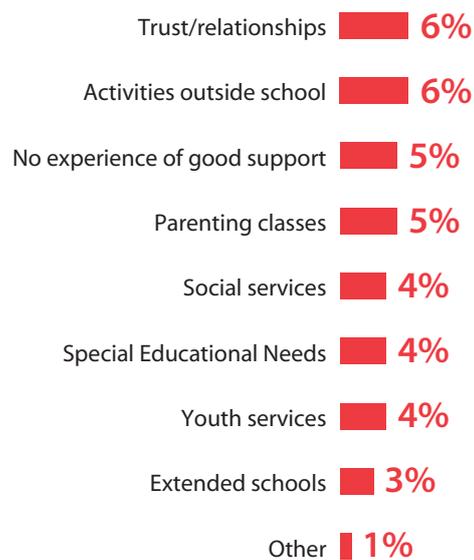
Less frequently mentioned

Some of the less frequently mentioned topics include:

- Trust and relationships;
- Activities outside school;
- No experience of good support; and
- Parenting classes.

Chart 2: Best experiences of support – less frequently mentioned

Q1. What have been your best experiences of support for children, young people and their families?



Base: 2,069 responses

Detailed findings from verbatims

- This section explores some of the themes behind the quantitative results for this question using the verbatims from the paper and online surveys.
- These verbatims have been analysed thematically by the following categories to help explain the quantitative results:
 - Charity/voluntary organisations
 - Health professionals
 - Education (school support/education and good schools/teachers)
 - Community activities
 - SureStart
 - Financial support
 - Trust and relationships
 - Activities outside school
 - No experience of good support.
- There is also a sub-section at the end that details some of the verbatims that do not fit neatly into the code frame, to unravel the 1 per cent of responses categorised as 'other'.

Charity/voluntary organisations

19 per cent of respondents mention charity and voluntary organisations as a source of good support making it, along with health professionals, the most highly reported. Both parents and those who work with children and young people report very positive experiences of voluntary organisations.

The qualities they mention include:

- Provision of a personalised service;
- Consistency; and
- Not target driven – being taken at the pace that those using them need.

“Best support for our families and children this year has been from FIP (Family Intervention Project), a voluntary organisation who has worked very closely with us and our families in times of family crisis – they have very much provided support and consistency where social services have failed to deliver.”

(Work with children and young people, Online Survey)

“A small organisation called Lifeforce in Leeds, they really listen to young people. They understand what the issues are and have incredible skills in working with some of the hardest to reach.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Women’s Aid children’s outreach workers do a great job in working with child survivors of domestic violence and general teaching of positive appropriate relationships.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Health professionals

Health professionals are equally highly mentioned as 19 per cent of respondents report having received good support from them. There are several verbatim comments from parents about positive experiences of support from health visitors. These are mainly relating to support before and after the birth of a child, which for some is the first and only time they receive individual support.

“I knew my doctor then, and health visitor. I was also visited by a midwife every day for 10 days after the birth of both my children (my youngest is 17) – I don’t think this happens any longer.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“After the birth of my daughter I suffered from post-natal depression and was helped and supported by my brilliant health visitor. It has also been helpful when my daughter has had good, enthusiastic teachers who are willing to communicate with parents.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“Baby clinic, immunisation programme, health visitors during early years, developmental check-ups.”

(Parent, Paper survey)

Education (school support/education/good schools/teachers)

Education, including school support/education (17%) and good schools/teachers (15%) is the next most highly mentioned area of support. There are many verbatims relating to education and positive experiences of support for parents and children. Parents give good reports of schools which encourage them to get involved with their child’s education and develop a good relationship with parents.

“Superb support at primary school, with parents encouraged to drop in and see what their children are doing; all teachers and the Head offered opportunities to discuss child’s progress regularly.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“Home/school liaison services such as Home School Support which work with the family to resolve difficulties and build a rapport which then supports the child and family in the school.”

(Parent, Online survey)

People who work with children and young people, and teachers themselves, also report the involvement of parents as a key factor in providing good educational support for children. Other factors mentioned in positive experiences include being involved in the local community and teachers having enough time to co-ordinate support for children.

“Parents, children, governors, teachers, cleaners, etc, all working alongside each other to consider the contribution of each individual and all ‘signing up’ to a shared vision that all then work towards.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“The positive involvement of parents has been commented upon in Ofsted reports, where the contribution of parents to their children’s education is consistently rated highly and much higher than in most other schools.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Parents, teachers and the child meet to talk about a strategy to stop decline of behaviour with the child being given the opportunity to suggest solutions and rewards for sticking to targets.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Not only did the best schools pursue academic achievement and progress, they focused on providing a range of opportunities within and beyond the curriculum and took the opportunity to become an integral part of the local community they served by really open and effective communication with parents and carers and by delivering extended services to meet family needs and delivering family events to ‘bring’ the school community together.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“The best experiences have been in my current post as a secondary teacher where the Heads of Year are not teachers. The Heads of Year have the time and space to properly integrate services for the students and act as the hub of care in line with the expectations of the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Community activities

9 per cent of respondents mention community activities among their best experience of support. Respondents mention good experiences of community activities which can be effective in building good relationships within a local area.

“The local community centres, play leaders and holiday clubs.”

(Parent, Paper survey)

“Projects established in local communities where those communities determine their own priorities.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Community events, school fetes, children’s fun days, particularly where children are involved in the organisation and delivery of these events. These are great to get local families to get to know each other. Anything that increases a sense of community and makes children feel that they are of value to their community seems to be effective where we live.”

(Other, Online survey)

SureStart

SureStart is mentioned by 8 per cent of respondents as a good source of support. Some respondents have had very positive experiences of SureStart, including one parent who found it gave them new confidence.

“I have had lots of support from SureStart, they visited me once a month and told me about all the groups in the area, I didn’t have much confidence but after being involved with SureStart my confidence grew due to this I felt able to start taking my children to the local groups which they have all really enjoyed, it gives me a break and time to socialise and gives the children more friends to play with.”

(Parent, Online survey)

Financial support

7 per cent of respondents mention financial support as among their best experiences of support for children, young people and their families. This includes state-provided financial support and support from voluntary organisations. Some respondents (mainly parents) have found financial support very helpful, particularly when they are new to being a parent.

“Income Support. When I found myself a single parent it made it possible for me to be a full-time mother when my children were young.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Financial support: Child Benefit (including lone parent) which has been there the whole time I’ve been a parent. Working Families’ Tax Credit formerly and now Child Tax Credit, I only wish they had started earlier.”

(Parent/other, Online survey)

“The Family Fund has enabled us to have a family holiday where we can all be together despite my son’s difficulties. We would not be able to afford this if it were not for their contribution.”

(Other, Online survey)

Trust and relationships

6 per cent of respondents identify trust and relationships as important parts of their best experiences of support. Consistency is a factor that comes up clearly in the verbatims. Continued support from an individual over a long period of time is seen to be necessary to build up positive relationships between service providers and service users.

“My best support has come from my Independent Midwife. She attended the birth of my three children over a period of five years and remained a friend in between.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“Consistent positive support by a person they know and trust. Someone who is regularly there who can show and give examples of how to live life positively as an individual, whilst also treating those around them in a positive manner.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Fighting for a family’s rights about their housing repairs so the managing director of the housing association went out in person to assess the problem.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Where individuals can build real relationships with people, admit to difficulties, and ask for help in a climate of trust.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Where a consistent group of people have been assigned to the support of a child so that strong relationships and deeper understanding is built rather than having an ever-changing disparate group who never really know the child and keep making the same suggestions as the last person.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Activities outside school

Activities outside school are specified by 6 per cent of respondents as one of their best experiences of support for children, young people and their families. Activities being free and open to all is identified as an important factor in the verbatims.

“Opportunities for all children to take part in music, swimming, school trips to museums or other places of interest free of charge.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

No experience of good support

5 per cent of respondents report having no experience of good support. Lack of information is identified in the verbatims as a barrier to receiving good support.

“I have had no good experiences of government support of my family.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“I have not had any real support. No one gives you any information about what help there is out there, what benefits you are entitled to, and what organisations can help you both financially and otherwise.”

(Other, Online survey)

However, some respondents also say that they do not feel they actually need any support and that the government should take a step back and let families deal with problems themselves.

“The most appropriate support would be recognition that the majority of families are perfectly able to function independently and do not in fact need ‘supporting’ most of the time. More than anything else I would value respect for the family, respect for their autonomy, privacy and dignity, and recognition that the majority of parents know what is best for their children.”

(Other, Online survey)

Other topics discussed

Some of the comments that people wrote in response to this question did not fit into any of the previous categories (1 per cent of respondents).

By looking at the verbatim quotes, it seems that one topic that comes up here is interagency working. Several respondents indicate that their best experience of support has occurred when different services work together to provide support.

Focusing on the child or family in a holistic way rather than separating support from different agencies is also identified as important.

“When it has been possible for all professionals to work together, to meet regularly, to co-operate in completing forms, etc, and to provide practical help for parent/carer.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“My best experiences have been where a number of agencies have come together to support a family and in doing so have been able to pinpoint the needs of the child/family and work together to put in place a package of interventions that fully support the family.”

(Other, Online survey)

“Support for children, young people and their families has been best when it has been child and family centred rather than service centred.”

(Other, Online survey)

Equally, some respondents criticise inconsistent support which is hampered by poor communication between different services.

“Families need a stable, consistent foundation to build on. Too many changes in their lifestyle or habits undermine this. If the services around them change too much our support fails to be consistent.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“...such as social services, school health and various counselling agencies still tend to work in isolation, be poorly paid, subject to constant staff turnover and lack of stability, and be hide-bound by political correctness which is still an obstacle to the rapid sharing of vital information.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

3.1.2 Responses from GMTV

The main areas of support mentioned in response to this question are:

- SureStart and early years support;
- Health professionals;
- People who work with children and families; and
- Family and friends.

SureStart and early years support

There were several good reports of support for parents of very young children. Some parents had used the SureStart programme and other nursery facilities which they were very satisfied with.

“SureStart is excellent for young children.”

(Female, Parent, Durham)

"I think the UK have planned education for nursery children very well. Government grants are available for parents to have up to five sessions free a week; this enables parents to go back part time to work or restart studies to kick start a career."

(Female, Parent, Hertfordshire)

Health professionals

Some respondents had also experienced good support from other professionals, such as NHS staff.

"I have a daughter with a disability and the greatest support has been my occupational therapist who has been very helpful by telling clear precise information of what I need to do next."

(Female, Parent, Kent)

3.2 Responses to question 2: What would you stop or improve about support for children, young people and families?

- Participants feel strongly that certain things need to be 'stopped', particularly testing children at a young age and the problem of bureaucracy.
- The health service, parenting classes and interagency working are the most frequently mentioned as areas that need improvement.
- Parents in particular are very concerned about the benefits system and working families being penalised.
- Practitioners also highlight the need to lengthen funding arrangements to protect services from having to close when money runs out.

3.2.1 Responses from online and paper surveys

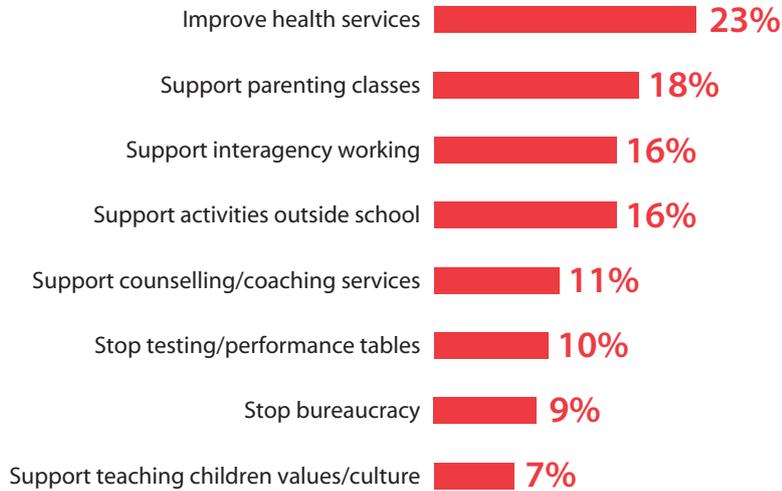
Frequently mentioned

The most frequently mentioned topics for this question are:

- Improve health services;
- Support parenting classes;
- Support interagency working; and
- Support activities outside school.

Chart 3: What would you stop or improve about support – frequently mentioned

Q2. What would you stop or improve about support for children, young people and families?



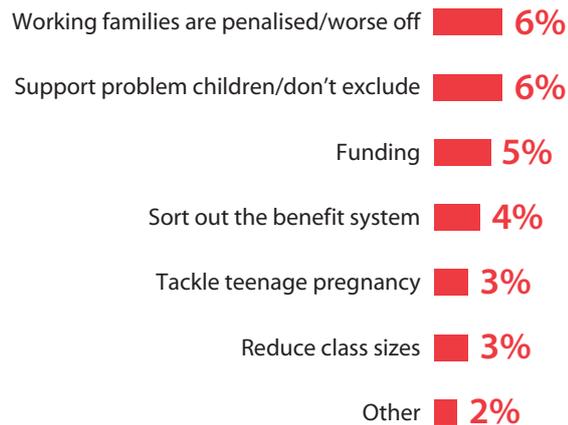
Less frequently mentioned

Some of the less frequently mentioned topics include:

- Working families are penalised/worse off;
- Support problem children/don't exclude;
- Funding; and
- Sort out the benefit system.

Chart 4: What would you stop or improve about support – less frequently mentioned

Q2. What would you stop or improve about support for children, young people and families?



Detailed findings from verbatims

- This section explores some of the themes behind the quantitative results for this question using the verbatims from the paper and online surveys.
- These verbatims have been analysed thematically by the following categories to help explain the quantitative results:
 - Improve health services
 - Support parenting classes
 - Support interagency working
 - Support activities outside school
 - Support counselling/coaching services
 - Stop testing/performance tables
 - Stop bureaucracy
 - Support teaching children values/culture
 - Working families are penalised/worse off and sort out benefit system
 - Support problem children/don't exclude
 - Funding
 - Tackle teenage pregnancy
 - Reduce class sizes.
- There is also a sub-section at the end that details some of the verbatims that do not fit neatly into the code frame, to unravel the 2 per cent of responses categorised as 'other'.

Improve health services

This topic was mentioned by 23 per cent of respondents, making it the most frequently mentioned issue. Health services are criticised by some respondents as being inadequate and not easy to access.

"Health visitors are not supporting all families – no help for first time mums if you are not 'desperately' in need."

(Parent, Online survey)

"More hours in school for nurses so they can build a relationship with children and parents. More speech and language therapists."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

"I would improve access to mental health support for children and young people."

(Parent, Paper survey)

"Access to specialist assessments and services needs to be improved so they are faster and more accessible with shorter waiting lists."

(Parent, Paper survey)

Support parenting classes

This topic was the second most mentioned by respondents (18%). Empowering parents is highlighted in the verbatims as an important issue – some respondents mention it in response to a feeling that the government is too interfering and parents need to be given back more responsibility.

Others feel it is important that all parents receive guidance, especially at the beginning of parenthood, with equal access and lack of stigmatisation being a priority.

“Support for new parents needs to be improved, parenting classes for all so social stigma is removed.”
(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“There needs to be more parenting classes available for parents of children of all ages. We need to make it the norm to attend these classes. Everybody should do them and be seen to be partaking. Every level of society needs to recognise that being a parent and being a partner in bringing up children is hard and to give you a chance of doing the best you can you need to study it.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Less governmental interference (perceived or actual) – ergo less ‘Nanny State’. Stop telling parents how to look after their children – provide good, clear, concise facts and figures and guidance.”

(Parent, Online survey)

Support interagency working

16 per cent of respondents referred to interagency working when answering question 2. Poor interagency communication is seen as a definite barrier to the provision of good support in the verbatim responses and something that needs improving urgently.

“Cut the bureaucratic nonsense between departments – even those in the same directorate. If Education and Children’s Social Services do not start working together in a more honest, open and efficient manner we have little chance of giving support that is so desperately needed.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Too many professionals involved in their own little specialist area of a family’s life but no one taking charge and being the main point of contact. Everyone assuming someone else has provided the information or support the family need.”

(Parent, Online survey)

Several respondents suggest that a solution to this would be to provide one point of contact for families who can co-ordinate support from different organisations.

“Need one stop shop for help. Going from GP to social services to speech and language therapist to psychologist is time consuming and difficult for well-motivated parents. If you earn little you cannot afford to go to all these separate appointments.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“There should be one case worker per family who could and should point the way to all available help in the area where you live and to financial support and help in the home if needed.”

(Other, Online survey)

Support activities outside school

16 per cent of respondents feel that activities outside school could be better supported. Some respondents feel that children are overloaded with school work and that activities outside of school do not get recognised for the value they can provide.

“Encourage reading and basic skills practice but also value Brownies, family walks, conversation. Remove the additional stress on time that homework creates.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Greater support to non-council youth clubs such as church run clubs, encourage expansion of boys/girls scouts movement.”

(Parent, Paper survey)

Support counselling/coaching services

11 per cent of respondents identified this as a key issue for improving support for families, young people and children. The verbatims highlight areas of concern around children who are particularly vulnerable and may need extra support or counselling.

“One area I am concerned with is help for children with parents who have mental health problems, there seems to be no counselling involved for these children in a time when they could be very confused by parent’s behaviour.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“More teenage cancer support. We live miles away from the nearest support group, my son waited three years to get a counsellor, that’s appalling.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“Provide better training for speech and language therapists and teachers who work with the youngest children.”

(Other, Online survey)

Coaching is also mentioned as a way of empowering young people to help themselves.

“Some of the young people have very low expectations and are reluctant to try things in case they fail. Possibly some self-esteem support?”

(Other, Online survey)

“I feel we give too much support and instead of enabling we disable and make parents, children and young people more dependable on the service. We need to look at giving life skills to enable people to support themselves.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

Stop testing/performance tables

This was a concern for 10 per cent of respondents. The verbatims reveal a concern that children are focused on exams at too young an age, which pressurises them and puts too much emphasis on academic learning.

“I would stop league tables for schools. I would ensure each school has a counsellor and is more holistic in approach to pupils.”

(Parent, Paper survey)

“Stop early testing and an emphasis on academic learning during the first seven years.”

(Other, Online survey)

“Would stop the amount of testing and the reporting of SATs test results so children are not ‘categorised’ from an early age.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Move from testing all children to testing a sample at age 11 to see how we are doing nationally.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

Stop bureaucracy

Bureaucracy is a concern for 9 per cent of respondents who feel that it is a major barrier to children and families receiving the support they need. This is a concern expressed by parents and practitioners alike.

“Long waiting lists and referral processes hinder support for children, young people and families.”
(Parent, Online survey)

“I have tried to get carers in my own home – the red tape is excessive and virtually impossible.”
(Parent, Online survey)

“I work in the NHS and am paid a lot of money to simply sit at a computer all day organising paperwork instead of treating patients and it is endlessly frustrating as we cannot keep up with the demand for our service from children and families.”
(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“I’d seriously reduce the number of meetings and administrative processes families are put through. Families need practical personalised help, not lots of forms that have to be completed.”
(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Support teaching children values/culture

This is a topic mentioned by 7 per cent of respondents. This is a concern particularly highlighted by parents in the verbatims who feel that more space in the curriculum should be devoted to teaching about culture and values.

“Children and young people should have more time being taught about values, they should be made aware of cultural and other equality issues so that a more well-rounded society develops.”
(Parent, Online survey)

“Children need to learn from a young age about right and wrong and need to know about family values. I feel strongly that these values should be taught at home but if they are not I feel schools should include topics in the curriculum.”
(Parent, Online survey)

Working families are penalised/worse off and sort out benefit system

Concern over working families being penalised is mentioned by 6 per cent of respondents, which is closely linked to sorting out the benefits system, highlighted by 4 per cent of respondents. The verbatim quotes reveal strong feelings amongst respondents who are working parents, which include the following issues:

- Tax credits for working parents are inadequate;
- Number of children should be taken into account;
- Income assessed Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is unfair; and
- Employers need to be more parent-friendly.

“I would improve tax credits for working parents, £40 per month is nothing and you get the same whether you have one or more children.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“EMA allowance for children staying on at school is so unfair. My children received nothing because I was £20 over the allowed salary, yet as a single parent have always struggled financially even though working full time.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“I think all children in full time college should receive EMA regardless of the parental income, it should be used as an incentive to the child. My husband’s salary and my bursary barely meet our outgoings, to the point where I may have to leave my course and get a job to help make mortgage, bills and every day costs.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“Employers to be flexible about working conditions and working hours and childcare to be more affordable.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“Gradually replace various tax credits and child allowance with a flat-rate allowance for all families regardless of size.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

There are also some respondents who feel that they are forced back to work after having children as benefit provision is not enough to survive on, when they would rather choose to be at home to care for their children.

“There needs to be more support for parents to stay at home and look after children not put them in childcare.”

(Parent, Paper survey)

“My spouse and I want one of us to be at home full time to care for our children. At the moment tax incentives and other benefits are skewed wholly towards any childcare other than that which is done for a non wage-earning parent. Perhaps simply replace all childcare subsidy with increased Child Benefit, parents would then have a real choice as to childcare.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“I would find a way of making it affordable for a parent to stay at home to bring up their children. It seems as though people are just valued for their tax paying abilities and are pressured back to work. Homemakers make up 20 per cent of the GDP but see precious little of it back.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

Support problem children/don’t exclude

This is a concern for 6 per cent of respondents. Some respondents feel that excluding children does not help them and that they actually need extra support to be provided for them in school.

“Stop excluding disruptive children and fine schools that do this and provide extra support to those children in schools.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

Funding

5 per cent of respondents highlight funding as something that needs improving. The verbatims show that this is mainly a concern for practitioners who experience the effects of funding decisions.

One of the main concerns mentioned in the verbatims is that funding needs to be long-term as short-term funding is inadequate and brings an end to valuable projects and services.

"Funding for projects needs to be long term, not pots here and there. This would encourage consistency of high quality workers and commitment of local communities who have seen too many projects come and go."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

"Ensure agencies (like Home Start) already working with children and their families receive secure funding to continue the already proven benefits of early intervention."

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

"Stop the short-term funding cycle for projects which have been proven to work, if the evidence is good why lose this?"

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Respondents also suggest that funding should be provided on a local basis so that the money goes directly to the places that need it.

"Holiday provisions in the local area have been severely under-funded this year. This needs to change."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

"Provide funding for the extended schools agenda at a neighbourhood level."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Tackle teenage pregnancy

This is mentioned by 3 per cent of respondents. Poor education and low aspirations are mentioned as causes that need to be tackled.

"We need to take a hard look at the causes of our appalling teenage pregnancy rates. We should be encouraging high aspirations at the same time as instilling greater personal responsibility."

(Other, Online survey)

"Ensure that teachers who teach sex education in schools have adequate training to deliver young people's entitlement to SRE. We believe that there needs to be a greater emphasis on the number of teachers and school nurses who receive the specialist training."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Reduce class sizes

This is a concern for 3 per cent of respondents who feel that class sizes need to be reduced in order for children to get the level of educational support that they need.

"Education – more teachers and less students per class."

(Practitioner, Paper survey)

"Reduce class sizes in primary schools."

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

Other topics discussed

Other issues mentioned in the verbatims include the following:

- Support for children with SEN;
- Support for children with behavioural problems;
- Relationship between parents and schools; and
- Greater parental responsibility.

There is concern expressed in verbatims over services for children with SEN. The suggestions for improving support include:

- Better identification of SEN at a young age;
- Better support for children with SEN in mainstream schools; and
- More flexible working arrangements for parents of children with SEN.

"I would make sure SEN are picked up and dealt with earlier."

(Other, Online survey)

"Make support for children with special needs more accessible. More provision should be made to make assessments in schools, monitoring children during different types of activity and at playtimes."

(Other, Online survey)

"Stop penalising mainstream schools that welcome children with SEN – by statistics implying that the school is performing poorly because it takes so many children that cannot attain high scores in SATs."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

"The need to target support more accurately is so important. SEN identification is frankly a joke with schools upping the percentage of pupils on the register in order to up their value added and consequently the money is spread more thinly."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

"For us single parents of disabled children we find it difficult to find employment in a company that will work round our children's hospital schedules and very few are prepared to employ us believing we would require too much time off work. Employers need to be encouraged to employ us under a flexible contract as they do with employed disabled members of staff."

(Parent, Online survey)

There is also concern over children who develop behaviour problems and may go on to develop other problems later on in life. Some suggest that the way to tackle this is by improving preventative services and also taking the emphasis away from targets.

"NCH believes that significant investment is needed in preventative services to promote the well-being of children, young people and families with multiple problems and to prevent re-occurring cycles that contribute to reinforcing these problems. Despite the rhetoric about prevention in national plans of action, efforts to translate this into practice and shift the emphasis away from crisis-led services to preventative services are being hampered by tightening eligibility criteria and funding shortages."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

"The way government and local authority (LA) targets are such a high focus and distract from delivering child/family centred support."

(Parent/school governor, Online survey)

Some respondents also raise concern over the relationship between schools and parents which is seen as crucial in developing good support for children and families.

“Parents are marginalised in secondary schools, and only able to speak to teachers at annual parent’s evening, unless there is a serious issue to resolve.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“I would change the relationship that schools have with parents – I sometimes feel very isolated, that I can’t talk to the school, that they don’t really understand my child, and they don’t really want to spend time trying to.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

Finally, giving parents greater responsibility over their children is also mentioned as a way of improving the lives of families and children.

“I would make great strides to shift back the responsibility of acceptable behaviour, early learning skills/social skills, etc, to the parents. It is great that there is so much help and support, my role being one of them, and I take a great pride in that, but ultimately that must be a support not a replacement for the parent’s role. Too much help is encouraging parents to opt out and then blame others when things go wrong.”

(Other, Online survey)

3.2.2 Responses from GMTV

The main areas of support mentioned in response to this question echo those identified in the paper and online surveys:

- Counselling and coaching available for children and young people;
- More practical education support;
- Support for activities outside school; and
- Funding issues.

Counselling and coaching

The main concern raised in response to this question is that there could be better support for children to access themselves. This focuses on making it easier for children to find help when they really need it, and to ensure that those who are particularly vulnerable are fully supported. But also more general services, such as a life coach, should be offered to all.

“I would invest in young people’s centres like children’s centres, where young people can access extra support, attend training from youth workers and other support from other workers such as personal advisers and substance misuse workers, all under one roof.”

(Female, Practitioner, London)

“What about psychotherapy within schools so that children can visit them confidentially without teachers knowing.”

(Female, Parent, Hertfordshire)

More practical education support

Some respondents also feel that education could be improved to better prepare children and young people for adult life. This includes teaching them more vocational skills as well as social skills and health education.

“Secondary schools should teach all children ‘life skills’ which will help them to obtain worthwhile jobs when they leave.... Social skills, such as personal hygiene, good manners, respect for other people, etc. also need to be included in their education.”

(Female, Reading)

“Cooking classes to be geared at healthy eating not as my daughter was taught how to cook a packet Pizza.”

(Female, Parent, Kent)

Support for activities outside school

Respondents are also aware of a lack of provision of leisure facilities for young people and feel that this could be improved. This is seen to be an important priority as it also makes young people feel valued and included by the community as funding is spent on it.

“Children need parks and areas to congregate, they need to socialise and be a part of their community... All you need to assist with children is to show them love and respect that is all!”

(Female, Practitioner, Bristol)

Funding

Some respondents also highlighted funding as a big barrier to full support for families and children. There was criticism that target-based funding reduces people to mere numbers. Also that short-term funding for projects is risky and can lead to services being suddenly cut which can be damaging to the people they support. There is also a feeling that family allowance payments are inadequate and do not go far enough to help families that are really struggling.

“Family allowance is not very much, as this does not buy the nappies for one week!!”

(Female, Parent, Northampton)

“...my funding will end at the end of September, my clients are distraught, they have nowhere to go, they will have no ongoing support, all this could be prevented if we had secured funding for positions such as mine.”

(Female, Practitioner, Tamworth)

3.3 Responses to question 3: What needs to happen so that support is tailored to meet the needs of individual children and young people?

- Taking time to listen to exactly what children and young people need is identified by participants as the main way to ensure that they receive individually tailored support.
- Participants recognise that increased funding and resources will be needed to ensure that each individual gets the help they need.
- There is a concern that increasing amounts of government targets can lead to children becoming numbers in a system, rather than being addressed as individuals.
- Services need to work together to provide a family or child-centred approach.

3.3.1 Responses from online and paper surveys

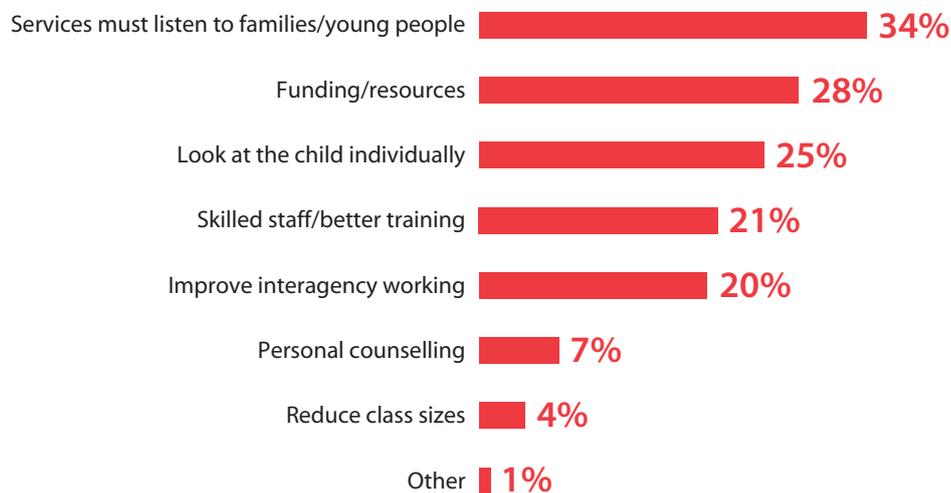
Frequently mentioned

The most frequently mentioned topics for this question are:

- Services must listen to families/young people;
- Funding/resources;
- Look at child individually;
- Skilled staff/better training; and
- Improve interagency working.

Chart 5: What needs to happen so support is tailored – frequently mentioned

Q3. What needs to happen so that support is tailored to meet the needs of individual children and young people?



Less frequently mentioned

Some of the less frequently mentioned topics include:

- Personal counselling; and
- Reduce class sizes.

Detailed findings from verbatims

- This section explores some of the themes behind the quantitative results for this question using the verbatims from the paper and online surveys.
- These verbatims have been analysed thematically by the following categories to help explain the quantitative results:
 - Services must listen to families/young people
 - Funding/resources
 - Look at the child individually
 - Skilled staff/better training
 - Improve interagency working
 - Personal counselling
 - Reduce class sizes.
- There is also a sub-section at the end that details some of the verbatims that do not fit neatly into the code frame, to unravel the 1 per cent of responses categorised as 'other'.

Services must listen to families/young people

Listening to families and young people is mentioned by the most number of people (34%) in response to this question. This is most often highlighted as a problem by people who work with children and young people. Key issues that come across in the verbatims include:

- Investing time in listening to what people's needs are;
- Not 'pigeonholing' people by what problems services can deal with;
- Making sure children that are hard to reach have their views heard; and
- Giving service users the chance to evaluate their support as they receive it.

"A service that will give time to listen to what children are saying and explore their difficulties rather than trying to find solutions to problems that may not be the real issue."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

"Talk to children, especially teenagers. Lots of them have important things to say."

(Parent, Paper survey)

"More consultation with children and young people, more guidance and support if they don't know what they want/need."

(Parent, Paper survey)

"Should find out what the real needs are rather than assume that what is offered is what people want."

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

"Ask children at risk what they find most helpful when they are sad, angry, frustrated – many of these children never get a say in what they need."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

"Young person given the opportunity to evaluate the service they are receiving while they are receiving it, not just afterwards."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Funding/resources

This is the second most frequently mentioned topic by respondents to this question with 28 per cent identifying it as an issue. The verbatim quotes on this issue reveal a strong feeling that lack of funding can prevent services from providing individual support.

“Better and more thorough youth support provision in every community, and accountability for it.”
(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Increase Social Services budget so they can treat everyone individually. They claim that they see each case on its individual merit, but it is a case of ‘one cure fits all’. What suits one family may not suit another.”

(Other, Online survey)

“Funding needs to be delegated to small community representative groups so that local solutions are worked out for local communities.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“More social workers and carers, social workers are overworked and too busy thus not always efficient.”

(Practitioner, Paper survey)

Look at the child individually

This topic is also a major concern for respondents with 25 per cent of them bringing it up as an issue. The verbatims reveal a concern that an increasing amount of government targets mean that individual children just become a number and their particular needs can be overlooked.

“Children need to be treated as individuals. They are not a number in the system. Strategies should be flexible enough to allow tailoring to individual needs – more staffing and funding would help this.”
(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“More reflection on a child as an individual with a home life rather than a 2a who should be moving to 3b by next term.”

(Parent, Online survey)

Some respondents suggest that in order to provide each child with the support they need, services need to become more flexible in their approach and to think outside the limits of legislation.

“It’s not enough to have legislation that says the best interests of a child will be taken into account if the services that provide the support are not flexible enough to accept that children are different. More could be done to explain the choices available to a child and offer them a real choice instead of, ‘this is what will happen to you’.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“If two or three teachers and a bunch of outside specialists need to spend a few hours every couple of months planning the education of a slightly unusual child (or even a perfectly typical one) those staff need to be there, with the time to do that.”

(Other, Online survey)

Skilled staff/better training

Having more skilled staff and better training is specified as important by 21 per cent of people in response to this question. Training is identified in the verbatims as an essential way to empower practitioners to help their clients better.

"Training, and more training. Look at systems that work, not only abroad but in some of our better private schools."

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

"We need workers involved with children and families who are both linked into communities but who are also well trained and skilled. Workers with little training can feel frightened to tackle problems in families such as domestic violence."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Improve interagency working

20 per cent of respondents say that interagency working needs to be improved to ensure that individual's needs are met. Better communication between agencies is highlighted as a way forward in the verbatims.

"Integrated communication between authority services, e.g. hospital-schools-education welfare officers. I often felt that I was doing battle with one due to lack of support from another."

(Parent, Online survey)

Some respondents also suggest that a way to improve interagency working and provide better care for children and families would be to have a single point of contact to co-ordinate support.

"Each school should have a parent support officer on a permanent basis. A member of staff whose role was specifically to act as a conduit between families and child support agencies would be invaluable and would ultimately save both time for school staff and money for local authorities."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

"Partnership working/key worker schemes where all agree that one of the people most involved with that individual child or young person be designated the co-ordinator of information and input from all the others: preventing unnecessary duplication and contradiction and maintaining a clear focus on and response to developments as they occur."

(Other, Online survey)

Personal counselling

This is suggested as a way of improving support by 7 per cent of respondents. The verbatim quotes focus on the need for parents to receive advice about how to support their children. Providing a time for a family to meet as a whole to discuss a child's progress is also suggested.

"Start 'training' incompetent parents to be better support and advisers to their children."

(Parent, Online survey)

"An adviser should be appointed to each family, even if they only meet once a year to discuss progress."

(Parent, Online survey)

“Schools need to timetable in time for one-to-one discussions with pupils, and with parents. Parents should receive more regular feedback about their child’s progress, and be given the opportunity to provide information to teachers about family circumstances, issues affecting the child’s behaviour or progress.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“Perhaps an obligation on families to attend a ‘what’s best for our child’ meeting at their child’s school at least once per term. It should be the whole family if possible including grandparents if they wish to attend.”

(Other, Online survey)

Reduce class sizes

4 per cent of respondents bring up reducing class size as a way of improving support to meet the needs of individual children and young people. In the verbatim quotes, people display a feeling that large classes can make it difficult to track the progress of individual children making it easy for problems to go unnoticed.

“Smaller classes in school, more special needs support teachers.”

(Practitioner, Paper survey)

“Schools should not be growing in size. Many secondary schools are too big and pupils become numbers instead of individual children.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“More money to primary schools to employ additional staff to provide early intervention to boost basic literacy and numeracy skills and to support children with behavioural difficulties so the rest of the class don’t suffer.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Other topics discussed

Some of the comments that people wrote in response to this question did not fit into any of the previous categories (1 per cent of respondents). Several respondents highlight the issue that children and young people who do not have specific problems may be overlooked and not get the attention that they need.

The comments on this topic particularly focus on the problem of disruptive children getting the most attention in school and the obedient children are not rewarded for their behaviour.

“Children and young people should always be treated as individuals. Most are good people and a minority are troublemakers. The government should start ensuring the majority of children and young people get the care, attention and education they deserve instead of constantly making sure the disruptive minority is included.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Teachers need to learn how to teach all children so that their time is not spent on the most disruptive or most needy children. Bright and gifted and obedient children in our schools get a very raw deal- and bright children underachieve through not being challenged. My own child told me he thought he should start being naughty at school to get the teacher’s attention!”

(Parent, Online survey)

"Stop giving support to kids who don't want to learn, give it to the ones that do."

(Parent, Paper survey)

There is also a feeling expressed by other respondents that services in general are aimed at people who have particular problems or who are disadvantaged and this means that others miss out. One respondent suggests that this also attracts stigma to those who use services.

"If you are a working family with no perceived problems there is no help or guidance at all. It is all aimed at the lower working classes."

(Parent, Online survey)

"Every child matters not just those in SureStart areas. Often those not in areas like that miss out on fantastic services that just are not available in non-SureStart places."

(Parent, Online survey)

"Universal services would remove the stigma of families who are struggling."

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

3.3.2 Responses from GMTV

The main areas of concern mentioned in response to this question are:

- Educational support for children with SEN; and
- Extra-curricular activities for children with SEN.

Educational support for children with SEN

Children with SEN are highlighted as having inadequate support by several of the respondents. This is a concern raised for a whole spectrum of SEN including children with hearing impairments and learning difficulties and those who suffer from school phobia. Education is the main area where improvement is felt to be needed, but there are differing views expressed as to whether children with SEN would benefit most from learning in a mainstream school or in a more tailored environment. However, all felt that parents had to struggle with authorities to get any kind of support at all.

"I think more needs to be done for children with special needs. I have a daughter who is 5 and she has been diagnosed on the Autistic Spectrum. Now although she is classed as 'mild' I am currently fighting to get her help at school."

(Female, Parent, Dunstable)

"I have a son with Asperger's Syndrome and the educational and emotional support for these children are minimal. We've had a terrific struggle to get him appropriate education but he needn't have gone into a special needs school if there had been sufficient training of teaching staff in mainstream schools."

(Female, Parent, New Milton)

Extra-curricular activities for children with SEN

A lack of extra-curricular activities tailored for children with SEN is also highlighted as an issue of concern. One respondent complained about funding being cut for an activity programme for children with SEN which she felt was a rare service and something widely provided to non-disabled children.

"I would like to see more drama clubs for children with disabilities to give them some kind of social aspect in life and learn to develop."

(Female, Parent, Kent)

3.4 Responses to question 4: What do you think your role is and what more could you do for children to be happy, healthy and safe?

- Parents believe their primary role is to love and care for their children, provide a safe and secure environment for children to grow up in, and to teach children values.
- People who work with children and young people believe their key role is to provide support, education and encouragement to ensure children reach their full potential.
- All participants believe they have a role to play in offering children support, including emotional, practical and funding support. Some of the responsibility is also seen to belong to government and the wider community. Providing such support is seen as essential to ensure children are happy, healthy and safe.

3.4.1 Responses from online and paper surveys

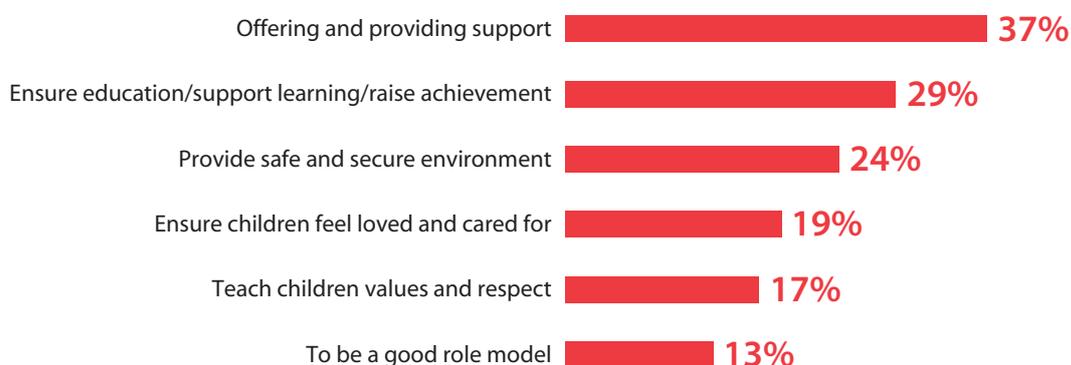
Frequently mentioned

The most frequently mentioned topics for this question are:

- Offering and providing support;
- Ensure education/support learning/raise achievement;
- Provide safe and secure environment;
- Ensure children feel love and cared for;
- Teach children values and respect; and
- To be a good role model.

Chart 6: Individual's role and what more they could do to ensure children are happy, healthy and safe – frequently mentioned

Q4. What do you think your role is and what more could you do for children to be happy, healthy and safe?



Base: 1,818

Less frequently mentioned

Some of the less frequently mentioned topics include:

- Keep healthy;
- Offer encouragement;
- Entertain/stimulate;
- Be socially/politically aware;
- Volunteer within community; and
- Help improve behaviour.

Chart 7: Individual's role and what more they could do to ensure children are happy, healthy and safe – less frequently mentioned

Q4. What do you think your role is and what more could you do for children to be happy, healthy and safe?



Detailed findings from verbatims

- This section explores some of the themes behind the quantitative results for this question using the verbatims from the paper and online surveys.
- These verbatims have been analysed thematically by the following categories to help explain the quantitative results:
 - Offer support
 - Educate/support learning/raise achievement
 - Provide safe/secure environment and love and care for
 - Teach children values/respect
 - Keep healthy
 - Offer encouragement
- There is also a sub-section at the end that details some of the verbatims that do not fit neatly into the code frame, to explain the 3 per cent of responses categorised as 'other'.

Offer support (37%)

Making children feel supported is seen as a key role of parents, people who work with children and young people, the wider community and government. Over a third of respondents reported this response.

“As a parent to look out for my own children, know who they are mixing with, how they are spending their time and what they are doing. Supporting them in their decision making and preparing them for adult life.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

Support is defined as emotional support (e.g. listening to problems, talking to children, loving and caring for them), practical support (e.g. feeding, clothing and providing a happy and secure home environment), and external resources (e.g. funding to ensure services are maximised).

“To make the resources my school receives go as far as possible for the greatest number of young people... to draw attention to areas of need which are not being resourced adequately.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“I am a therapist and nurse in CAMHS. The way I can help children is to see them quickly when they have problems and listen to them. Children often prefer to be seen away from schools, and want their problems to be kept private from their friends. To run more groups for children who are struggling with their life to share their experiences and seek solutions with parent groups alongside.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

Some people who work with children also believe it is part of their role to provide support to parents (e.g. good childcare) to ultimately benefit children.

“My role in Home-Start is to recruit, train and support volunteers to provide emotional support and practical help to parents for the ultimate benefit of their children. I also home visit families and offer support – I signpost to relevant agencies when appropriate and ensure funding is available to continue Home-Start in this area. I could try to secure funding to cover any geographical gaps in this area.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“My role is to promote my service as a childminder offering a safe environment for any parent to leave their child so that they can recharge their batteries, go shopping, spend time with another one of their children, etc.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Educate/support learning/raise achievement (29%)

Nearly one in three thought providing good education and supporting all children to discover their full potential is key to ensuring children are happy, healthy and safe. Emphasis is placed on supporting the child in the round – the ‘whole child’ rather than in a purely academic sense. Ensuring those with SENs and learning disabilities are fully supported is considered important. People that work with children and young people believe educating and supporting learning is a key part of their role.

“[Name of charity]’s role is to maintain our high standards of education, nursing, care and therapy in order to provide the very best services for profoundly disabled children. We also have a responsibility to explore ways of reaching more children around the country.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Provide safe/secure environment (24%) and love and care for (19%)

Providing a safe and secure environment for children is seen as key to ensuring children are happy, healthy and safe. Parents, and to a lesser extent people who work with children and young people see it as their responsibility to provide a secure environment for children at home and school.

"To provide an emotionally stable and stimulating home life."

(Parent, Paper survey)

"To provide a safe, stimulating and loving environment for my children and make their friends welcome at all times, explore all types of activities that will develop them."

(Parent, Paper survey)

"My role as a teacher is to inspire in them a desire to learn and progress and an understanding of the world as a place in which they have something valuable to contribute. I feel I already do a lot to help the children I teach feel happy, be healthy and stay safe – happiness and security are the priorities in my classroom."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Bullying at school is perceived as a barrier to providing a safe and secure environment at school and is a big cause for concern.

"My role is to strive to assist my children to achieve the aims and desires that they have in life. I am fighting a losing battle to help them be happy and safe. To be happy, school needs to be much better so they can learn what they most want to learn and not be bullied."

(Parent/other, Online survey)

As well as providing a safe and secure environment, parents also see their role as ensuring children feel love and cared for. This is felt to be crucial for children's overall wellbeing.

"Be there for my children when they come home from school – listen to how their day went – help them with homework LET THEM FEEL LOVED."

(Parent, Paper survey)

Keep healthy (12%)

Parents, and to a lesser extent people who work with children and young people, believe it is part of their responsibility to keep children healthy.

"Liaise with my children's school, listen to my children, promote healthy lifestyles, be a good role model."

(Parent, Paper survey)

"Ban unhealthy food and create more safer play areas for local children."

(Parent/work with children and young people, Paper survey)

Offer encouragement (12%)

Parents believe part of their role is to encourage and motivate children to achieve their potential.

"Provide good diet, ensure adequate step/help and encouragement with homework/education/future play!"

(Parent, Paper survey)

"To encourage children in club activities and provide a good grounding at home, generally provide support and guidance."

(Parent, Paper survey)

Other (2%)

2 per cent of respondents gave answers that did not fit into the code frame. Other responses included improving services to make them more flexible and collaborative in nature.

“As the chief executive of a regional children’s charity we are developing more flexible services to support families so that we can respond quickly to requests from purchasers for services.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“As a mental health professional, to continue to encourage collaborative work and focus on the so-called risk factors that impinge on children’s happiness, i.e. social inclusion for them and their family.”

(Parent, Online survey)

Other verbatims focused around concerns from people who work with children and young people about the bureaucracy and ‘red tape’ in education and services that is perceived to hinder their work in helping children achieve their aims.

“As a teacher, I think that I need to be able to take controlled risks with children, to be more adventurous, to allow them to discover their abilities and boundaries without fear of red tape, endless form-filling and the spectre of legal action always hanging over our heads.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Children live in a world that is so sanitised for them, that they cannot assess and handle risks later on. They have no experience and thus find it hard. We need freedom to develop the whole person. A happy healthy child is one who knows himself/herself intimately in all areas of activity not just academically.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

3.4.2 Responses from GMTV

There were no GMTV responses to this question.

3.5 Responses to question 5: What is the role of parents – mums, dads, carers – and what more support do they need?

- Parents are seen as having a central role in ensuring children are happy, healthy and safe.
- Parents believe their role is to ensure children feel loved and cared for and generally supported. Being able to spend quality time with their children is key for parents.
- However, people feel that, in times of need, support (practical and emotional) should be available for parents. Support should be easily accessible and joined up. Most importantly, parents should not be patronised or be made to feel inadequate for seeking help. There is a particularly strong desire for more financial support to allow parents to stay at home and bring up their children themselves.
- There is strong agreement that parents should take ultimate responsibility for their children and while good support services are important, they do not and should not take the place of good parenting.

3.5.1 Responses from online and paper surveys

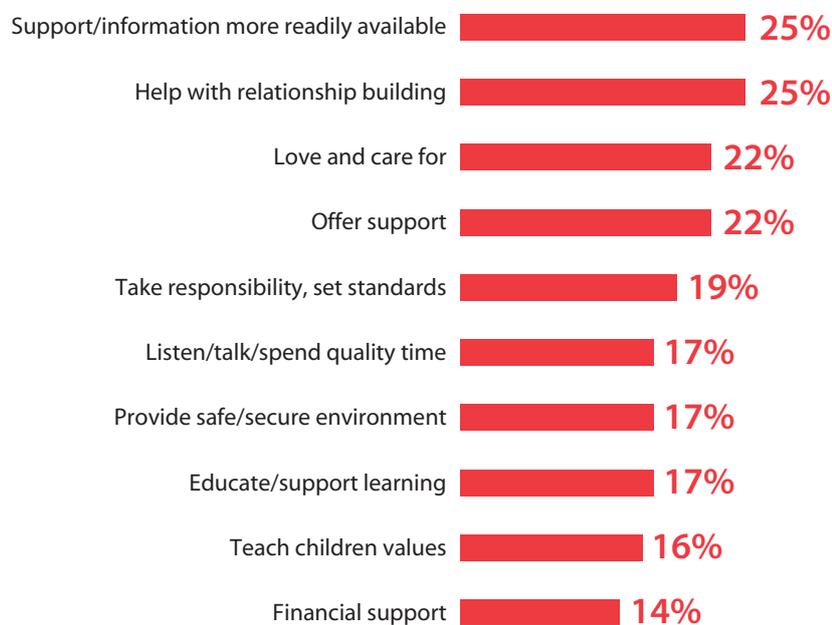
Frequently mentioned

The most frequently mentioned topics for this question are:

- Making support and information more readily available;
- Helping children build relationships;
- Ensuring children feel loved and cared for and generally supported by spending quality time;
- Setting high standards and teaching children values;
- Providing a safe and secure environment; and
- Financial support.

Chart 8: Role of parents and what support they need – frequently mentioned

Q5. What is the role of parents – mums, dads, carers – and what more support do they need?



Base: 2,209

Less frequently mentioned

Some of the less frequently mentioned topics include:

- Value parents;
- Keeping children healthy;
- Offering encouragement;
- Entertain/stimulate;
- Help improve behaviour and making children more socially/politically aware; and
- Support from agencies (who should have less focus on targets) and community.

Chart 9: Role of parents and what support they need – less frequently mentioned

Q5. What is the role of parents – mums, dads, carers – and what more support do they need?



Base: 2,209

Detailed findings from verbatims

- This section explores some of the themes behind the quantitative results for this question using the verbatims from the paper and online surveys.
- These verbatims have been analysed thematically by the following categories to help explain the quantitative results:
 - Ensure support and information and more readily available
 - Love and care for, offer support and provide safe/secure environment
 - Take responsibility and set standards
 - Educate/support learning and teach children values
 - Listen/talk/spend quality time and financial support.
- There is also a sub-section at the end that details some of the verbatims that do not fit neatly into the code frame, to explain the 3 per cent of responses categorised as 'other'.

Ensure support and information are more readily available (25%)

Parents find it difficult accessing the help they need. They call for more easily accessible, immediate support and a more joined-up approach from services. One point of contact, acting as a triage, is suggested as an improvement on the way things currently work.

"Parents need more readily available guidance and advice."

(Parent, Online survey)

"Our lives would be a lot easier with the occasional break, a little support and without having to constantly battle to the point of despair to try and get our children the help that they need. Our efforts should be concentrated towards the child and not exhausted by unnecessary battles."

(Parent, Online survey)

“The role is to bring up the children, more support needed so parents can stay at home and look after their own children.”

(Parent, Paper survey)

Parents also call for greater signposting to information and generally better quality information.

“I could do more if I had more information – there have been lots of times when I haven’t really known how best to help my children, particularly at difficult times such as choosing their A levels and university courses.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“To know where to get help and advice and access it promptly, be aware of health issues, ensure children are aware of healthy lifestyle issues.”

(Parent, Paper survey)

Parents particularly want more support from the government with childcare. Childcare should be reliable, affordable and tailored to meet different needs and demands.

“Good reliable childcare facilities where there are professionals who can offer advice and support. Professionals are not tick box and superficial target-based.”

(Parent, Online survey)

Respondents widely acknowledge the difficulties associated with being a parent and feel that parents should not feel ashamed seeking support when needed. It is essential that support and advice is delivered in a friendly manner to avoid patronising parents or making them feel inadequate.

“Parents who are less well-informed and lack confidence should be offered support themselves delivered in a way which does not patronise them, or make them feel inadequate as parents.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“To provide a consistent, nurturing and positive environment for their children to grow up in. They need to be educated on how to do this. They need to recognise that it is not easy, often does not come naturally and that they need to admit this, ask for help, recognise their strengths and weaknesses and make an effort to study the subject of how to run a house, be a loving family and create a positive environment for their children to grow up in.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Mums and dads have a rough deal often left to manage on their own or too afraid to ask for help in case they are seen as not coping or a poor parent.”

(Parent, Online survey)

Parents particularly value advice from other parents/parents in similar situations.

“As a parent I feel my role is to raise happy, confident children. I would love further support from parent’s groups led by parents rather than people who parrot current thinking.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

Parents of children with disabilities feel especially unsupported and call for extra emotional and practical support. They believe the lack of support is a barrier to providing a loving and stable home environment for their children.

“The parents have a hard time with disabled children, they have to learn how to be a parent and a nurse all at the same time and at the beginning it’s a very scary time and highly frustrating because all you wanted was to be a parent. There were many times I wanted to hand him back to the hospital and walk away. Parents need TLC, someone to talk to, someone to lean on, someone that understands.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“We need extra support, I am up four nights a week 3–4 hours at a time due to my son’s condition. I am up at 6am to get ready for work, I do a full day making sure regularly through other parties that my son is ok. I am on call for him throughout the day, so life is extremely stressful. I feel at times in my life that we are forgotten by the government.”

(Parent, Online survey)

Love and care for (22%), offer support (22%) and provide safe/secure environment (17%)

Parents believe their primary role is to love and care for their children and offer support. Offering support should include providing a safe and secure environment for children to grow up in. These are perceived as essential in ensuring children are happy, healthy and safe. Consistency in offering love and support is also thought of as important.

“To provide happy, safe, loving homes for children to grow and be nurtured. Need confirmation and positive feedback that they are doing great and recognition that it is a tough job. Lots of parents who are not desperately in need fall through the net of professionals.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“The family is the basic unit of society. Children thrive best when they grow up in a home with two parents. Actively support the institution of marriage and life-long commitment.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“A constant person who gives them support for example social workers are changed too many times and as a child I didn’t feel comfortable speaking to so many different people, one constant person in my life would have done nicely.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

People acknowledge that providing love and care is more important than material things such as being entertained and having the latest goods.

“Children need love, respect, boundaries, teaching how to deal with life/how to behave, etc. They may want trips to the cinema, CDs, the latest brands and PlayStations but they won’t make them into the people they have the potential to be. Young people need someone to believe they are worth something.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

Take responsibility and set standards (19%)

People feel strongly that parents should take responsibility for their own children’s actions and establish standards of behaviour.

"It is fundamental that we put the responsibility for their children back on the shoulders of the parents, but not by way of some sort of punitive measure where support is removed, but by resetting the default that has been slowly and insidiously removed by successive steps of well-intentioned intervention that has served unintentionally to almost absolve the parents of their role of responsibility. What is absolutely paramount though is that these parents and carers are empowered to achieve these goals, and not simply expected to."

(Parent, Online survey)

"Parents should be responsible for the actions of their children, they should be encouraged to know where their children are."

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

"To be responsible for setting and monitoring standards and taking action when they are not adhered to."

(Parent, Online survey)

While having good support structures is considered important, people feel this should not take the place of parenting and parental responsibility.

"It could be argued that the government has created a state of mind in which parents feel absolved from responsibility as it is 'the government's job'. Parents must be made to take responsibility. Teachers are there to educate children not enforce discipline and parents should be reminded of this. Parents will need support to allow them to do this but they should be clear that it is their ultimate responsibility."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

"The role of all carers should be seen as a pyramid – parents/main carers at the top, leading down to the support offered by schools, organisations, etc, in the way of education, financial and practical help, clearly showing that this is a support not an alternative to someone else being responsible for their children."

(Parent, Online survey)

Educate/support learning (17%) and teach children values (16%)

Taking responsibility for educating your child and supporting their learning at school is considered important. Parents are seen to have a valuable role in encouraging and motivating children to learn and do well at school. Education is seen in the widest sense: i.e. not just academic education but educating children on values and acceptable standards of behaviour.

"Mums, dads and carers should be the main people to guide children in their social and emotional development as well as education."

(Parent, Paper survey)

"Their role is to nurture, educate and contain their children in an age-appropriate way, through to adulthood."

(Parent, Online survey)

"Mums' and dads' roles is to educate, advise children as to what's right and wrong and generally encourage."

(Parent, Online survey)

People believe a core part of being a parent is to teach children values. Parents consider morals, respect, manners and teaching children right from wrong are important values for children to have.

"To be responsible for setting and monitoring standards and taking action when they are not adhered to."

(Parent, Online survey)

"To bring their kids up to be good people – people who contribute to society and respect others. I don't myself feel a lack of support – I have a comfortable lifestyle; perhaps my biggest problem is the message of greed, selfishness and acquisitiveness which TV seems to push at kids all day long – I try to teach my kids to see beyond that and appreciate proper values of respect and care for others, and the benefits of learning and enjoying life for the good things (not material things) it offers."

(Parent, Online survey)

Listen/talk/spend quality time (17%) and financial support (14%)

Spending quality time with children is considered crucial to ensure children are happy, healthy and safe. Parents believe that listening and talking to children is essential for children's emotional well-being.

"Parents need time to be with their children and have conversations and good interactions. Pressures on them to work all hours make it very difficult for them to get involved in schools."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

"Parents to use precious time with their children actually communicating with them. This in itself might ward off some of the emotional problems which cause difficulties."

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

"They need opportunities to do things with their children at affordable rates, e.g. heavily subsidised entry to swimming pools facilities when children are accompanied by adults. They need to spend time with their children, not park them."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

"Financial, tax breaks and incentives for families, help in achieving a work-life balance."

(Parent, Paper survey)

However, to spend more time with children parents call for greater financial support to enable them to stay at home and bring up their children themselves. Both parents working is viewed as a barrier to providing the best for your children and there is a strong desire for a reasonable work life balance for both parents.

"Provide financial support for mothers to stay at home and look after their children for the first five years of life."

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Mothers, especially, should be in a position to stay at home during their children’s first three years to bring them up, should they wish to do so. I am a civil servant on a career break and am able to take up to five years career break in order to bring up my children. I don’t know of this career break benefit being available to employees outside of the civil service so perhaps the government could consider the viabilities of this being made more widespread across the workplace generally in the UK. Flexible working patterns should also be encouraged – for mothers and fathers, so that family life does not become secondary to work.”

(Parent, Online survey)

3.5.2 Responses from GMTV

The main areas of concern mentioned in response to this question are:

- Giving responsibility back to parents;
- Ensuring parents have easy access to support; and
- Support for working parents.

Giving responsibility back to parents

One of the most frequent issues raised by respondents is that parents should take more responsibility for their children. The government is seen to have taken responsibility for raising children away from parents and families which some attribute as a cause of poor behaviour in children and a breakdown in social values.

“The government needs to recognise one major consideration and that is to put the responsibility firmly back on the shoulders of parents.”

(Female, Walsall)

Ensuring parents have easy access to support

Respondents report that parents need more support and advice in bringing up their children, particularly in better access to help when they need it.

“...if they are having problems managing their children’s behaviour, be able to access support without the fear of social services taking their children into care, but providing advice, support and resources.”

(Female, Practitioner, London)

Support for working parents

Working parents are highlighted as a group needing particular support. Although respondents are aware of the government drive to get parents back to work, some feel that the financial support provided for them is inadequate.

“More help is needed for mothers who work. Large organisations should provide a crèche or some other kind of help... My daughter pays more for her children in a nursery than she earns.”

(Female, Parent, Paignton)

“...the government say that they want mothers and fathers to go back to work and say that the tax credits are the way forward – rubbish, we were receiving £76 per week help towards our £115 per week childcare cost, this year our income has increased by only £2k but our tax credits have gone to nil.”

(Female, Parent, Tyne and Wear)

3.6 Responses to question 6: What is the role of the local community and what more can they do?

- The community is seen as playing an important role in ensuring children are happy, healthy and safe. While parents should take ultimate responsibility for their children, people think the community can offer vital support and guidance outside the home.
- However, people believe that there needs to be a greater sense of community before it can offer the necessary support and guidance to children and young people.
- They call for more community activities to encourage greater interaction amongst people which, in turn, will foster a greater spirit of togetherness and community culture.
- There is also a strong desire for more activities and things for young people to do to 'keep them off the streets and out of trouble'.

3.6.1 Responses from online and paper surveys

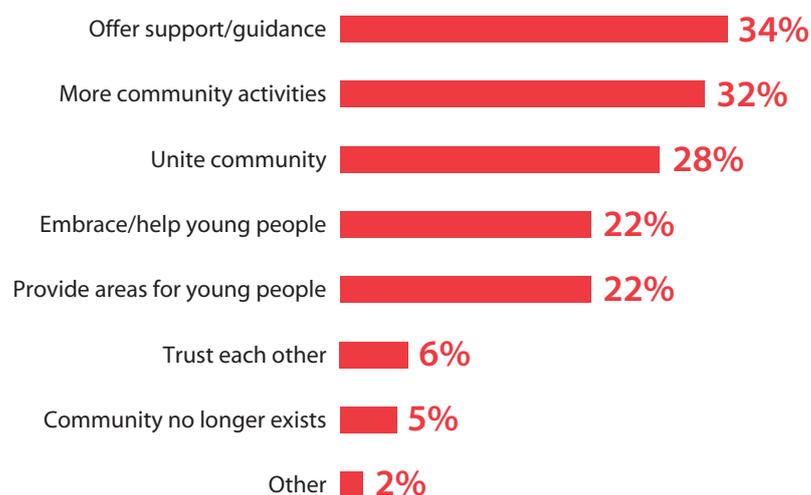
Frequently mentioned

The most frequently mentioned topics for this question are:

- Offer support/guidance;
- More community activities;
- Unite community;
- Embrace/help young people; and
- Provide areas for young people.

Chart 10: Role of local community and what more they could do – frequently mentioned

Q6. What is the role of the local community and what more can they do?



Base: 1,792

Less frequently mentioned

Some of the less frequently mentioned topics include:

- Trust each other; and
- Community no longer exists.

Detailed findings from verbatims

- This section explores some of the themes behind the quantitative results for this question using the verbatims from the paper and online surveys.
- These verbatims have been analysed thematically by the following categories to help explain the quantitative results:
 - Offer support/guidance
 - More community activities, Unite community, Trust each other and Communities no longer exist
 - Embrace/help young people
 - Provide areas for young people.
- There is also a sub-section at the end that details some of the verbatims that do not fit neatly into the code frame, to explain the 5 per cent of responses categorised as 'other'.

Offer support/guidance (34%)

Over a third of people believe the community should play a key role in providing support and guidance to children and young people. The local community is viewed as a 'surrogate parent' and has an important role to play in disciplining, protecting, encouraging and teaching children. While parents should take ultimate responsibility for their children's well-being, people think the wider community is important in ensuring children feel happy, healthy and safe.

"To act as surrogate parents in the absence of real ones. To look out for youngsters on their own around the place and to view youthful high jinks generously. Have broad shoulders but intervene patiently where people's rights are at risk."

(Parent, Online survey)

"Communities need to feel that they have a collective responsibility for nurturing and protecting children. Or at times, disciplining them. The old saying 'it takes a village to bring up a child' is very true. Children's centres and extended schools will foster community life and this in turn will foster a sense that children are a concern for us all."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

"Communities could be more engaged in the protection of children, particularly regarding bullying. In some parts of the country there have been schemes such as 'Community Safe Houses' set up, where local residents have had training from social care and the police regarding an appropriate response when they see bullying or forms of abuse within their community. These residents have then been identified within the community as part of the safe house scheme where children and young people can go if they are worried about their own safety."

(Other, Online survey)

There is a desire for local business communities to get involved with children and young people by offering work placements and mentoring schemes to build confidence. Offering money incentives is suggested as one way of getting businesses on board.

"Local business communities could do more to support young people in care in providing them with both volunteer and paid work experience placements. By providing mentors, businesses can also help develop young people's skills and thus their entry into the workforce and a firmer sense of belonging in the local community."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“There should be incentives for businesses to get involved with the colleges within the community. It is very hard to find businesses who are prepared to give up their time to help students.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

More community activities (32%), Unite community (28%), Trust each other (6%) and Communities no longer exist (5%)

There is a strong belief that before the community can offer support and advice to children and young people, communities need to be re-built. People are sceptical as to whether ‘communities’ exist anymore. Being able to trust each other more and reducing the long-working hours culture is seen as crucial in fostering a sense of community spirit.

“Ensure that communities are really communities. Everyone should be able to walk to their doctors, dentists, shops, gyms, etc. Libraries should be at the centre of communities.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“I don’t believe ‘community’ has the same meaning that it did years ago. People mind their own business and pass by. Years ago, neighbours, etc, would tell your parents if you were in trouble. I’m not convinced this happens now.”

(Parent, Paper survey)

“Communities should be encouraged to take responsibility for all who live there especially the vulnerable. All should work together for the betterment of the community.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

People believe there needs to be more community activities to ‘unite’ the community. There is a call for more ‘hubs’ for the community, such as leisure centres and libraries, where people of all ages and races can meet. People also want more community and volunteering schemes that encourage people to get together. Local government and councils have a role to play in creating these opportunities.

“Local agencies can support the development of communities by helping to bring folk together to share understanding and issues. This needs to be led by local councillors, who are held to account and closely in touch with local people’s issues. Regular, well publicised ward meetings attended by members and officers and with petitioning available to progress local concerns would enable local communities to begin to cohere and do things.”

(Parent/other, Online survey)

“The local community needs to feel more empowered to care about all local children. This will probably only happen where neighbourliness is fostered as it is militated against by long and 24/7 working hours. Perhaps government can draw local people into leisure time pursuits for children and young people by encouraging involvement with the youth and leisure services – perhaps providing some financial reward for taking this on. Schemes like Home-Start could be useful too.”

(Parent/other, Online survey)

“Local community is extensively dead. To resurrect it build leisure pools and other family friendly activity centres. Make much stronger demands of this kind in planning law. Far too many retail developments and barren housing developments. We need parks with park-keepers, leisure and adventure sports facilities, places where young, old, teenagers and families can all mingle and have fun.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“Work together to build a strong community, get involved in voluntary work together to set up more groups.”

(Parent, Paper survey)

Embrace/help young people (22%)

There is strong agreement that local communities need to have a more positive view of young people and children. Pigeonholing young people is seen as creating a negative circle: young people are stereotyped as behaving in a certain way so lack motivation and feel they cannot change those perceptions. Ultimately people think that fostering a negative attitude to young people acts as a barrier to establishing a community.

“The local community must embrace young people not exclude them. Young people must not be segregated and ignored. They must have a voice and they must feel part of the community. Communities need to stop seeing young people as the problem, and include them.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Have a more positive view of the children. Get involved with the pupils and the local school.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Instead, people feel communities should try to help young people, especially where children experience a poor home life. Communities are seen as especially vital in providing a safety net where children do not have anything else.

“The community have a role to play in after school support. What are we offering our children and young people if they have nothing at home and no social guidance? A telling off? An ASBO? Or someone who believes they have actually got feelings inside them. I think the community needs to put more effort into breaking down barriers instead of erecting new ones.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“It is the role of the local community to be a community – not to blame a particular group but also to take action if something isn’t right.”

(Parent, Online survey)

Provide areas for young people (22%)

Boredom is seen to contribute towards anti-social behaviour and parents feel strongly that communities need to provide more areas and activities for children to keep them occupied. More parks, playgrounds and youth clubs are called for. Areas should be safe and, ideally, free.

“More youth clubs for older children, more playgrounds and parks.”

(Parent, Paper survey)

“Ask for more facilities on behalf of young people as opposed to hoping the problem of bored kids will go away.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“Local community should have more facilities for children, i.e. clubs for all ages.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Local communities are losing their togetherness, more people are working, we have to meet demands for bills, but this means kids being pushed here and there and losing the caring part of communities. Stop shutting clubs, parks, etc, more people need to care to run voluntary projects, especially for kids who are disadvantaged in a big way.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

Other (2%)

There were also verbatim responses that did not fit into the code frame. These 2 per cent of other responses focused around feeling safer in the community. People call for more police presence in the community and punishment for anti-social behaviour. Feeling threatened and intimidated is seen as preventing people feeling part of a community.

“There should be zero tolerance from communities to bad behaviour and people should be encouraged to speak out against anti-social behaviour without fear of reprisal. Police should be back on the beat and they should be taken away from all the form filling and box ticking to bring targets down. More community police should work within the community, making themselves known to all...”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Local beat officers that you see daily on estates, communities coming together to tackle anti-social behaviour without the fear of being a target.”

(Parent, Paper survey)

“Many local communities are too terrified to do anything and view young people as threatening. A friend recently felt frightened by a boy of about 9! The local community will be hard to engage until some power is restored to them and they feel properly protected from harm.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

3.6.2 Responses from GMTV

The main areas of concern mentioned in response to this question are:

- Making young people feel involved in the local community;
- Better leisure facilities; and
- Work experience schemes.

Making young people feel involved in the local community

Respondents are concerned that children and young people are often alienated from their local communities and do not feel valued by them. This in turn can lead to young people becoming disaffected and uncaring towards the area they live in which is detrimental to the community. Some suggest community-run projects to involve young people are a way to tackle this.

“Many young people I work with do not feel part of the local community and feel like outcasts.”

(Female, Practitioner, London)

“Stop alienating children, allow for more community-run projects that could include the children being involved in maintaining their local areas... This would add a sense of worth in the child and could also result in that child being less keen to destroy that area that they work hard at maintaining!”

(Female, Practitioner, Bristol)

Better leisure facilities

Providing better leisure facilities for young people is also suggested as a way of meeting the needs of young people and making them feel valued in the community.

"..more skateboard parks, places to ride their BMX bikes, football pitches, supervised youth clubs, adventure playgrounds. At the moment councils are closing facilities like this down to build houses."

(Female, no town)

"I think town halls should make available facilities for teenagers, maybe a Friday night disco from 7–10pm without alcohol but with everything an adult club might have – dancers, great music, karaoke. There is not enough for children to do these days in the evenings at weekends."

(Female, Parent, Hertfordshire)

Work experience schemes

Work experience schemes are also mentioned as a good way of engaging local businesses with young people and could also increase job opportunities for them.

"There should be more done to encourage local businesses to take on young people on work experience and more work integrating young people and the local community."

(Female, Practitioner, London)

"Government could also offer schemes with companies to offer work experience. The companies could benefit from lower corporation tax appropriate to the number of students they offer the scheme to each year."

(Female, Parent, Hertfordshire)

3.7 Responses to question 7: What is the role of government and what more could they do?

The role of government is perceived to be multi-stranded:

- It should devise policies and give funding to change for the better; this includes
 - Supporting parents (e.g. giving them the flexibility to work or stay at home)
 - Listening to people (presumably to develop better policies);
- One key area for policy and funding is providing more activities for children and young people; and
- But it should also make sure that it does not interfere or dictate to families and that it reduces bureaucracy and sorts out the benefit system.

3.7.1 Responses from online and paper surveys

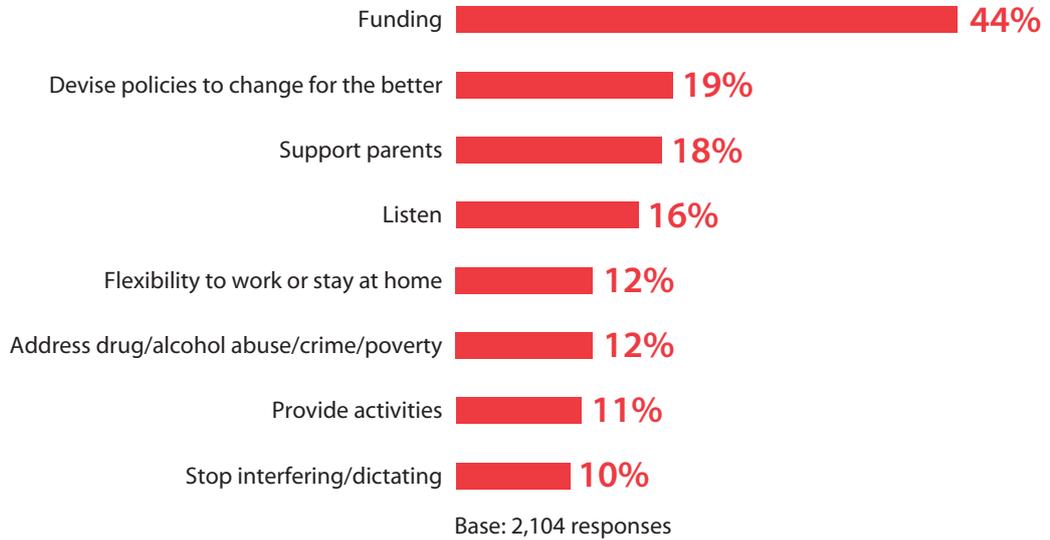
Frequently mentioned

The most frequently mentioned topics for this question are:

- Funding;
- Supporting parents;
- Devising policies to change for the better; and
- Listening to people.

Chart 11: Role of government and what more they could do – frequently mentioned

Q7. What is the role of government and what more could they do?



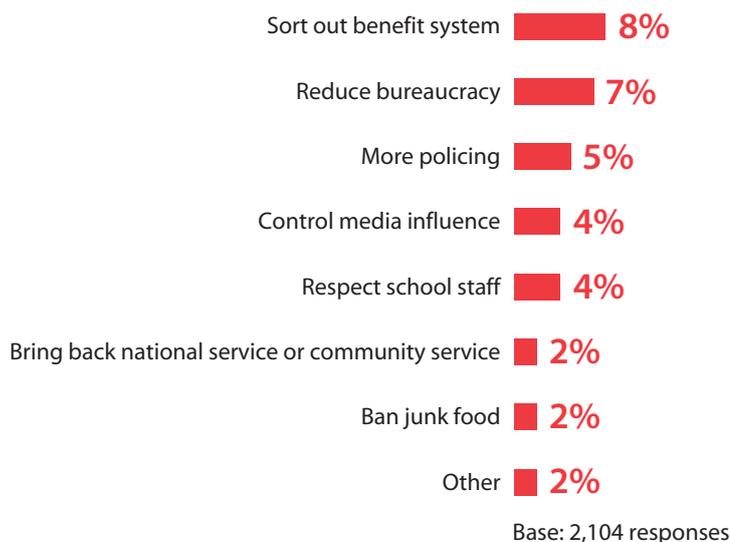
Less frequently mentioned

Some of the less frequently mentioned topics include:

- Sorting out the benefit system and reducing bureaucracy;
- Controlling media influence;
- More policing; and
- Respecting school staff.

Chart 12: Role of government and what more they could do – less frequently mentioned

Q7. What is the role of government and what more could they do?



Detailed findings from verbatims

- This section explores some of the themes behind the quantitative results for this question using the verbatims from the paper and online surveys.
- These verbatims have been analysed thematically by the following categories to help explain the quantitative results:
 - Funding
 - Devising policies to change for the better
 - Supporting parents
 - Listening to people
 - Provide activities
 - Stop interfering/dictating
 - Sort out the benefit system
 - Reduce bureaucracy
 - Bring back national service/community service.
- There is also a sub-section at the end that details some of the verbatims that do not fit neatly into the code frame, to unravel the 2 per cent of responses categorised as ‘other’.

Funding

Funding is seen as key to the government’s role in supporting children and families.

Parents’ concerns regarding funding tend to centre on supporting parents and giving them the flexibility to work or stay at home with their children:

- Funding for parents to stay at home when children are young;
- Funding for childcare if parents work;
- More support for families to stay together; and
- More support for families with disabled children.

“Pay mothers who have children under 7 years old so they can decide to stay at home or pay for childcare if they wish to work.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Improve help for women who want to work part-time. Tax credits would have only given me an extra £5 per day if I’d gone back part-time, so I couldn’t afford to go back.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“The government should provide more funding for disabled children and their parents... Direct payments should be encouraged and should be allowed to be paid to one of the parents should they choose to give up work and help the other parent take care of the child full time.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“Review financial arrangements for supporting families. It is appalling that working tax credit disadvantages couples compared to lone parents.”

(Parent, Online survey)

Parents are also concerned about funding for children and young people, including funding for education (especially further education) and funding for youth services.

“Government should supply financial resources so that all young people can succeed in education and should not have to borrow money to go to university.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“More grants towards children counselling centres and support services.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Paper survey)

People who work with children and young people mention the need to provide funding to support the needs that are highlighted in consultation, such as the need to support communities.

They also feel that the effectiveness of funding should be assessed and where it is not providing results it should not be renewed.

On the other hand, they also believe that effective services should be given more long term funding so that they can really make a difference.

“Money to train and pay youth workers in the community, provision of ‘safe space for youth’ in every community away from drugs.”

(Work with children and young people, Paper survey)

“Stop pumping money into the under-5s as it is not working. All initiatives are not working. Look at the whole picture not just the younger ones.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Stop offering organisations and workers 3/2 year funding streams and extend services so that organisations can have a real impact long term on families and children.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Devising policies to change for the better

There are many verbatims relating to the need for government to develop policies for change for the better.

Many verbatims relate to the need for government to show strong leadership and set the tone for family relationships and the behaviour of children and young people, including:

- Giving children and families hope that they can achieve a better standard of living;
- Encouraging people into work and positive activities, especially young people; and
- Setting the agenda rather than following media stories.

“The government’s role is to take the strategic lead, balanced against an ability to step back and allow local innovation and flexibility.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Give families like mine some hope that our standard of living will improve.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“Setting the agenda and not just responding to media.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“The government needs to set the tone and lead the country to provide a good future for our children and young people... People should be encouraged to lead constructive and worthwhile lives.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

The specific policies that are mentioned by parents include:

- Helping parents and employers manage the need to balance home and work life;
- Providing more affordable housing, to improve the standard of living for families;
- Addressing taxation and the cost of living, so that parents have more choices about how they manage their family life.

“Provide more help and advice to employers to enable flexible working for parents. In my experience, most employers are scared stiff of offering job share/part-time working as it’s so new to them.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“Do something drastic about cost of housing. Most parents need two incomes to pay a mortgage this is going to cause a huge problem in future in terms of children having to be cared for outside the home to a much greater degree.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“The government has to look into the issue of tax and the high cost of living in the country.”

(Parent, Online survey)

People who work with children and young people also mention the need for government to ensure that policies are effectively carried out and to make sure that all initiatives are linked up.

“Government could ensure that the policies and guidelines given are actually carried out more effectively.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Consolidate all the numerous initiatives which are not joined up.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

Supporting parents

Although many of the verbatims about supporting parents focus on financial support, parents also call for government policies to reinforce the bond between parents and children.

“Fund workers to help families in need address their parenting, more parenting courses/coaching, improve access to children’s mental health services.”

(Parent, Paper survey)

“Many of the decisions that have been made by recent governments have effectively driven a wedge between parents and children, leading to social disaster. Children need parents.”

(Parent, Online survey)

Listening to people

The verbatims particularly relate to the need to listen to parents, families, communities, young people and those who work with young people and children so that policies meet their needs and are effective in practice.

“Involve young people more in decision making that affects them and listen and take on board their views.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Government needs to listen to workers in the field and to be particularly wary of the idea of 'quick fixes'. Working with families and making a difference to communities will take generations not election terms.

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Provide activities

Comments about funding mention the need to provide activities for children and young people and more detailed verbatims give a rationale for this:

- The importance of being able to play outside; and
- Young people needing somewhere to go.

They also mention the need to make sure that community facilities are included in any plans for new developments.

"Encourage organisers in individual community areas to run support groups for children and their families. Activities for children and support and advice for family members."

(Parent, Paper survey)

"To make child-friendly facilities accessible to all children and young people regardless of their parents income."

(Parent, Paper survey)

"Recognise the importance of children being able to play out with their friends in the local natural and built environment. It has positive health and community social capital building benefits which far outweigh any actual risk and danger to children."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

"Ensure, that amongst all the new houses being built, more than adequate provision is made for educational, medical and community facilities... Make sure that families, whatever their age, can easily access these facilities by providing plentiful and cheap public transport."

(Parent, Online survey)

Stop interfering/dictating

The verbatims suggest that while people believe that government has a role in setting the agenda and policy direction, it should refrain from getting too involved in the detail of delivery.

Some also believe that government should avoid putting too many new policies in place before reviewing whether current policies are working.

"Stop inundating schools with initiatives and failing to provide time for them to bed down."

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

"Provide the right framework for the education and care of children but resist the temptation to interfere in the detail."

(Parent, Online survey)

"We suggest there may be value in refraining from immediate and ill-considered action in favour of allowing the lapse of sufficient time to undertake a full evaluation of the impact of ECM, which would indicate, more than a hurried consultation, what changed lines of government action were required."

(Other, Online survey)

Sort out the benefit system

Many of the comments about the benefit system can be found under 'funding'; however, there were some verbatims that specifically relate to the need to overhaul the benefits system:

- To incentivise paid work;
- To prevent a culture of dependency; and
- To promote social cohesion through communities supporting themselves and each other.

"Stop Social Security because it is being abused and not promoting the work ethic."

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

"Make people work for benefits if they are physically able, there is no incentive to work for low pay."

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

"If the state pulls back to some degree in its support role then families/communities have to support each other which should lead to greater social cohesion."

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

Reduce bureaucracy

Bureaucracy in teaching and medical services is an issue particularly highlighted by people working in those fields.

"Please stop changing the systems, Head Teachers will find a style that suits their children and their staff. More teachers are disaffected by more paperwork, than by being allowed to teach."

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

"Remove the stifling bureaucratic constraints on clinical work which are rendering the NHS service provision so inefficient at the moment."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Bring back national service/community service

A number of parents mention the desirability of community or national service to instil discipline and community values in young people, particularly those who leave school without qualifications.

"If a child leaves mainstream education with no qualifications or prospects of a job, they should be made to do a minimum of two years' National Service, this will also instil discipline in them and respect."

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

"Bring back National Service – not necessarily military but compulsory community service to rediscover the concept of service at every level: family, community, national and international."

(Parent, Online survey)

Other topics

Some of the comments in the questionnaire did not fit into the code frame developed, these cover a variety of topics.

One key topic is the government's role in providing information to families and young people, this includes:

- The services that are available to them; and
- The rights of young people.

“The government needs to inform young people of their rights, the information about politics and how it affects them.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“The government could make some sort of factsheet of everything that is available to parents/carers or put something online or maybe a telephone helpline that parents could phone and be given all the information that they need.”

(Other, Online survey)

Some people are particularly concerned about the amount of time children spend being cared for by someone other than their parents and they would like the government to take the lead in minimising external care, particularly for those under 4 years old.

“The government needs to look at how children are affected by being stuck in nurseries etc...from three months of age. We need to bring back proper parenting.”

(Parent, Paper survey)

“You are rewarded for going back to work and sending your child to a nursery at a very young age for a large proportion of the day. This may be good for Britain’s economy but is it good for children, especially the under 4-year-olds?”

(Other, Online survey)

Give children their own EU-style directive limiting the hours they can spend in external care. 8–6, five days a week is not uncommon.

(Parent, Online survey)

Education is a key topic, and people raise a number of issues with regard to education:

- The need to look at raising school entry ages;
- Adapting the education system so that it meets individual needs;
- Misgivings about faith schools; and
- Abolishing private schools and academically selective education.

“Raise the school entry age to 6, as it is in much of the rest of the world, so that children can spend their preschool years actually being children.”

(Other, Online survey)

“The Government needs to match the education system to the needs of the young people in this country. For example more vocational courses, run by specialist providers, available to young people over 13.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Abolish private education – otherwise the state system will always be the poor relation.”

(Parent, Online survey)

There are also calls for an overhaul of the family courts and for legal sanctions against hitting children to be strengthened.

“It is the responsibility of government to ensure that the law sends the clear message that hitting children is as unacceptable and unlawful as hitting anyone else.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“When marriages do break down provide a fair hearing for both parents. An overhaul of the family courts is essential. It is biased towards the mother and this is destroying family and community life.”
(Parent, Online survey)

3.7.2 Responses from GMTV

The main areas of concern mentioned in the GMTV survey in response to this question are similar to those in the paper and online surveys and they include:

- Longer-term funding for projects;
- Financial support for families; and
- Increased powers for parents and teachers to discipline.

Longer-term funding for projects

The main action that respondents feel the government can take is to improve the funding provided for services for children and young people. There are several respondents who complain of funding being cut at short notice so that services can no longer be provided, therefore longer-term funding is suggested as a solution to this.

“Long-term funding and strategies, not 1–2-year pilots, we need to invest time and funding into children.”

(Female, Practitioner, London)

“I work for a small charity which is community centre-based. Our equipment is old and we struggle to maintain it but seem unable to obtain any financial help from any government department.”

(Female, Practitioner, Worthing)

Financial support for families

Financial support for families is also a key issue with several respondents complaining that family allowance is too low and also that working parents are penalised as they have to cover huge childcare costs.

“Being a working family and having to put our child into nursery means we are unable to have any more children because of financial reasons. However, if I decided not to work and live off benefits this would not be a problem, and this is very unfair!”

(Female, Parent, Northampton)

Increased powers for parents and teachers to discipline

Some respondents also feel that the government has taken away the responsibility of parents to raise their children themselves by imposing ‘nanny-state’ legislation. Others feel that teachers are unable to discipline children properly because of fear of being prosecuted under over-protective laws.

“Give parents and teachers the power to discipline the children.”

(Female, Practitioner, Halesowen)

“Teachers also need to be able to discipline children without fear of reprisal.”

(Female, Parent, New Milton)

3.8 Responses to question 8: What more needs to happen to keep children and young people out of trouble?

- Ideas for keeping children out of trouble focus on supporting, educating and occupying children and young people, rather than deterring them through greater punishment.
- Both parents and people working with children and young people emphasise the importance of involving parents in keeping children and young people out of trouble.
- It is also thought to be important to encourage children and young people to have a sense of self-worth and to detect problems at an early stage so that they can be dealt with before they get worse.

3.8.1 Responses from online and paper surveys

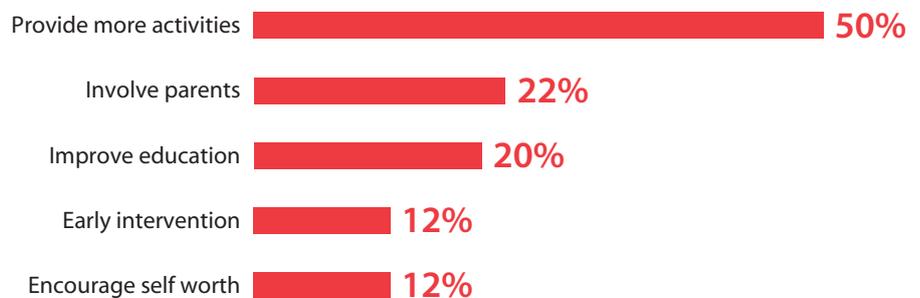
Frequently mentioned

The most frequently mentioned topics for this question are:

- Providing more activities;
- Involving parents;
- Improving education;
- Early intervention; and
- Encouraging self-worth.

Chart 13: What more needs to happen to keep children and young people out of trouble – frequently mentioned

Q8. What more needs to happen to keep children and young people out of trouble?



Base: 1,994 responses

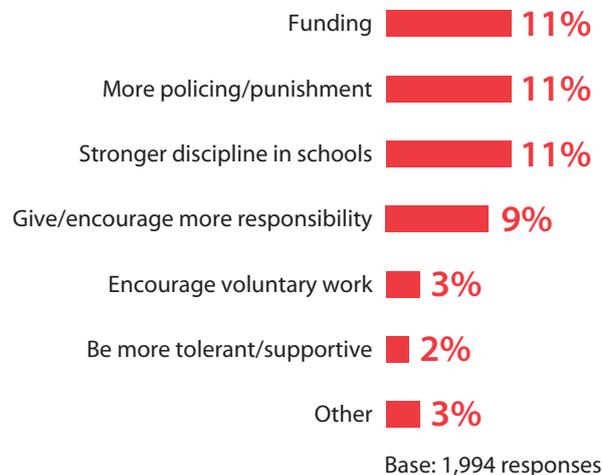
Less frequently mentioned

Some of the less frequently mentioned topics include:

- Funding;
- More policing and punishment and stronger discipline in schools;
- Encouraging responsibility and voluntary work; and
- Being more tolerant and supportive of children and young people.

Chart 14: What more needs to happen to keep children and young people out of trouble – less frequently mentioned

Q8. What more needs to happen to keep children and young people out of trouble?



Detailed findings from verbatims

- This section explores some of the themes behind the quantitative results for this question using the verbatims from the paper and online surveys.
- These verbatims have been analysed thematically by the following categories to help explain the quantitative results:
 - Providing more activities
 - Involving parents
 - Improving education
 - Early intervention
 - Encouraging self-worth
 - More policing and punishment and stronger discipline in schools
 - Encouraging responsibility and voluntary work
 - Being more tolerant and supportive of children and young people.
- There is also a sub-section at the end that details some of the verbatims that do not fit neatly into the code frame, to unravel the 2 per cent of responses categorised as 'other'.

Providing more activities

Providing more activities is thought to be key to preventing problems and people identify two types of activities:

- Youth centres, recreation grounds and 'somewhere to go'; and
- Organised activities such as football clubs, scouts, etc.

People believe that those who currently provide activities for children should be supported and given funding to enable them to carry on.

"Volunteer holiday clubs and youth sports clubs, especially by churches and community organisations."

(Other, Paper survey)

"Youth clubs, sports halls, computer centres at a reduced cost."

(Parent, Paper survey)

"More clubs, societies, more transport in rural areas, more support for families."

(Parent, Paper survey)

"Develop urban sport facilities – skateboard parks, BMX tracks."

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

"Well-run, local cost-effective facilities that they can get to, afford and that meets their needs, desires and aspirations."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

"It is fact that young boys who are involved in an organised activity (football club etc) are much less likely to go on to commit crimes. Yet the running of such clubs has been made more difficult and there is virtually no funding."

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

Involving parents

Parents are seen to be crucial in preventing problems, people make several points about involving parents:

- The need to teach some parents how to parent their children well;
- The need for children to have a father as well as a mother to provide a male role model; and
- The role of society in ensuring that parents have time to spend with their children.

"Get children into the family – not out of it. Help parents care for their children in the home not send to out of school care."

(Parent/work with children and young people, Paper survey)

"Positive parenting, active parenting, give children back their self-esteem and their place in society – and more role models – especially for young men who have no father figure."

(Other, Online survey)

"Give parents back the time to spend with their children. Value family life again."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

"Families need to be supported to learn how to parent and understand how crucial their example and love and support are... A major effort should be made to ensure all first-time parents-to-be have this knowledge."

(Parent/other, Online survey)

Improving education

Improving education is thought to be key to preventing problems; however, the verbatims reveal specific concerns about:

- Making children and young people feel included in education; and
- Allowing those who are less academically able to pursue other interests from a younger age.

"Education – if classes are composed of 15 students instead of 30, the standards of education would improve dramatically."

(Work with children and young people, Paper survey)

“Working in a prison, I see, every day, people who have been failed by the ‘system’. Kids are dropping out aged 11, smoking heroin at 13 and are involved in serious crime by the age of 15. In part this is the fault of the education system, with its over emphasis on achievement... We could start by tailoring education earlier.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“They need to feel that education/training is something that is being done WITH them, rather than TO them.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Early intervention

Early intervention is thought to have both a ‘soft’ and a ‘hard’ side:

- Noticing problematic behaviour at a young age and working with parents to resolve it; and
- Using legal interventions to ‘shock’ young people into good behaviour.

“The nursery and primary school authorities should support parents by informing them of children who begin to show signs of unruly behaviour at such a tender age to prevent it from escalating to a higher degree where it becomes uncontrollable.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“Swift and early legal intervention for criminal behaviour in young people and children – short, sharp shock tactics do work. Zero tolerance by everyone of rule breaking.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Encouraging self-worth

People mention role models, the role of parents and schools in encouraging children’s self-worth and therefore making them resistant to peer pressure.

“Build up linguistic and cognitive skills in children to provide them with confidence. Make classrooms ‘safe zones’ where there are no stupid questions and children are allowed to expose their weaknesses. This is about teacher training.”

(Other, Online survey)

“Teach them right from wrong, protect them from bad influence, punish them if it helps, get them involved in something they love doing like a hobby and interest in it.”

(Other, Paper survey)

More policing and punishment and stronger discipline in schools

Some respondents believe that more policing and discipline will prevent young people from getting into trouble, this includes:

- Giving police and teachers more authority to deal with bad behaviour;
- Curfews for young people; and
- Corporal punishment.

“The area needs to be watched by police, checks of bags should be carried out in schools.”

(Parent, Paper survey)

“More power for the authorities to impose sanctions on those who misbehave... Having ‘curfew’ times for different age groups, so they can’t roam the streets or hang about causing trouble in the evenings.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“Rediscover the idea of discipline including judicious application of corporal punishment. ASBOs are not the answer.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“Secondary education needs to be addressed, teachers seem to be unable to control classes, mainly through lack of training to do so. Disciplinary measures are long winded and ineffective, and have resulted in what is effectively mob rule.”

(Parent, Online survey)

Encouraging responsibility and voluntary work

There were also several responses focusing on giving young people responsibility or voluntary work to do.

“Stop telling them they have to expect everyone else to do things for them. Give them responsibility for organising things for themselves.”

(Other, Online survey)

“Why not establish a ‘young community support scheme’ whereby young people assist hard-pressed social workers and teachers, gaining work experience and possibly some pocket money.”

(Parent/other, Online survey)

Being more tolerant and supportive of children and young people

Some responses focus on the need to be more tolerant and supportive of children and young people, including:

- Not stereotyping young people;
- More emphasis on informal approaches to dealing with problems; and
- Recognising that children and young people are more likely to be victims of crime than to perpetrate it.

“Don’t assume all young people are getting into trouble. What is the percentage of the young people who were cautioned or on ASBOs, etc, compared with the total population? Why not make sure the real situation is communicated to the general public.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

“More emphasis on informal approaches. Too many young people come into the criminal justice system for very minor offences.”

(Other, Online survey)

“NCH believes it is vital that young people’s offending and antisocial behaviour should be kept firmly in perspective. Young people are statistically more likely to be the victims of offending behaviour than the perpetrators.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Other topics

A number of other topics were also mentioned in verbatims for this question.

The need to control media portraying sex and violence is emphasised by some as a measure for preventing problems.

“Reduction in the portrayal of violence and sex in the media... We are giving the wrong messages to society on how we want them to behave.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

“Television, games, DVDs are too horrible for words. What do we expect when they watch violence and horror.”

(Other, Online survey)

Reducing the gap between rich and poor is also mentioned as a way of preventing problems.

“Not easy, we have to reverse the downward spiral in some communities by getting rid of the widening gap between those that have it all and those that don’t.”

(Parent/work with children and young people, Online survey)

Peer pressure and bullying are also thought to cause problems and the need to avoid negative influences and create good role models for young people is emphasised by some.

“Stopping bullying and peer pressure; i.e. stop making it cool to be in trouble. Reward good citizenship.”

(Parent, Online survey)

“Good role models. Adults that children and young people can identify with and learn from. Ways of identifying children and young people that may be experiencing neglect, therefore not experiencing a sense of belonging and feeling valued and loved, through schools and having systems that can try and address some of these gaps in these children’s lives.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

The need to improve support for children and young people in care is also mentioned.

“Urgent improvements in care and particularly for those teenagers leaving care.”

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

3.8.2 Responses from GMTV

The main suggestions mentioned in response to this question are:

- More activities for children and young people;
- More severe punishments;
- National or community service;
- More police and discipline; and
- Better parenting skills.

More activities for children and young people

The main cause of trouble identified by respondents is a lack of activities for children and young people, leaving them bored and having nowhere to go but the street. Respondents frequently suggest provision of more leisure activities and clubs for young people as a way of reducing crime and youth offending.

“There are few kids groups about and there should be more and that will get the kids off the street and out of trouble; groups like sports clubs, art clubs, all sorts of clubs.”

(Female, Parent, Bristol)

"More leisure facilities should be provided for youths to practise skateboarding, cycling skills, swimming, abseiling, climbing, football, cricket, tennis, and so on. Youth workers should be trained and assigned to areas of need, especially during school holidays, with adequate facilities and financial-backing from central government."

(Female, Reading)

More severe punishments

Some respondents feel that punishments are not severe enough to be a deterrent to potential young offenders. This is also compounded by the slow nature of the criminal justice system where convictions can take years to come through.

"...and when crimes are committed there should be consequence, many young people I have worked with have committed many crimes before they go to court and even then it may be years before they receive a criminal conviction."

(Female, Practitioner, London)

National or community service

Connected to this, some respondents feel that some form of 'character building' activity scheme would benefit young people who have or are likely to offend. Some people suggest re-introducing a form of national service as a way of doing this. This is particularly important as ASBO's are now seen to be an ineffective way of dealing with young offenders.

"National Service should be re-introduced to teach children respect and this could also allow them to continue within the army after National Service to learn a trade."

(Male, Parent, Banstead)

"I agree children need to be directed towards a basic national service course or character building activities."

(Female, Parent, Minehead)

"As most ASBOs are now deemed to be a badge of honour I feel the government should say that after 2 or 3 ASBOs a young offender should be sent into one of the services for two years."

(Female, Parent, New Milton)

More police and discipline

More police and CCTV cameras are also suggested as a way of preventing crime. Curfews are also suggested by some as a way of preventing children and young people from getting into trouble.

"You need to provide CCTV free of charge to protect adults from accusations of abuse."

(Female, Parent, Chepstow)

"To stop gang culture is to put more police on the streets talking and communicating with residents so they can get the trust with them."

(Female, Berkshire)

"I feel that children under the age of 18 should not be out on the streets after 10 p.m."

(Female, Berkshire)

Better parenting skills

The role of parents is also highlighted as an important factor in preventing children from getting into trouble but some respondents suggest that they may need support in bringing up their children successfully.

“Encourage a sense of worth, in the child and the family unit. Most children know the difference between right and wrong, but unfortunately they are not given much guidance at home or with their peers.”

(Female, Practitioner, Bristol)

3.9 Responses to question 9: Do you have any other comments?

In the open question at the end of the survey, the main topics that were mentioned were:

- The need for more funding, a focus on good news stories, and the need for more affordable housing;
- The need to look to other countries for ideas;
- The need to limit initiatives and ensure they work once they are in place; and
- Positive comments on the consultation process and the need to consult the public on these issues.

3.9.1 Responses from online and paper surveys

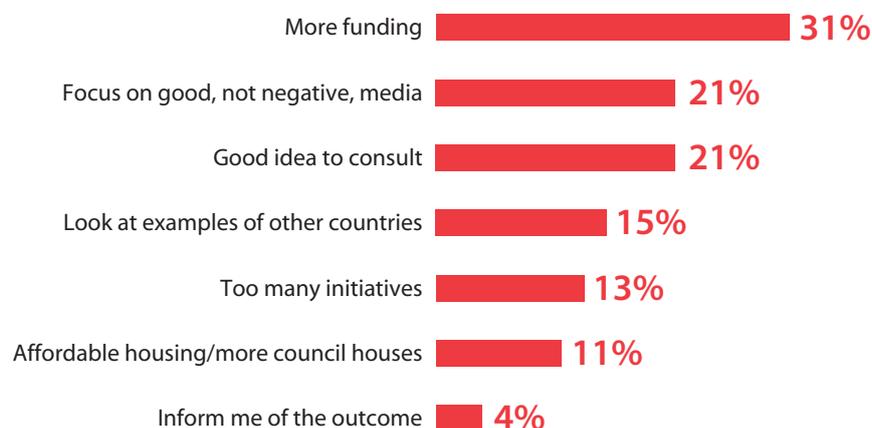
Frequently mentioned

The most frequently mentioned topics for this question are:

- More funding;
- Focus on good, not negative media;
- The need for more affordable housing.
- Respondents also urged the government to look at examples from other countries;
- Some also commented that there are too many initiatives; and
- Other responses focus on the fact that it is considered to be a good idea to consult and that they wish to be informed of the outcome of the research.

Chart 15: Further comments

Q9. Do you have any other comments?



Base: 504 responses

Detailed findings from verbatims

- This section explores some of the themes behind the quantitative results for this question using the verbatims from the paper and online surveys.
- These verbatims have been analysed thematically by the following categories to help explain the quantitative results:
 - Funding
 - Focus on good, not negative, media
 - More affordable housing
 - Learn from other countries
 - Too many initiatives
 - Good idea to consult.
- There is also a sub-section at the end that details some of the verbatims that do not fit neatly into the code frame, to unravel the 2 per cent of responses categorised as 'other'.

Funding

Verbatims on funding focus on the need for:

- Equitable funding across the whole country;
- The needs of children and young people who are disabled or have SEN; and
- The need to fund groups who are supporting young people in the community.

"Provide fair funding across the country."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

"The government are tackling social issues of children/young people. But they are not tackling the financial situation of children with special needs/disabled. These are the most deprived children/young people."

(Other, Online survey)

"Organisations like ours live from hand to mouth, but have been having a tremendous impact for many years. We get acknowledged on your websites, nominated by you for awards, celebrated in your publications, but ignored when it comes to sustainable funding."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Focus on good, not negative, media

Some participants believe media needs to be more positive, not just about young people but also about the good work that is being done in the community.

"We need more Good News programmes not only doom and gloom news."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

More affordable housing

Responses focus on the need for more affordable housing, particularly for those with physical and learning disabilities.

"The building of more affordable/public housing would help many young people and children by giving them an adequate living space at home."

(Parent, Online survey)

"Not enough being done to provide proper housing for young people with physical and/or learning difficulties."

(Other, Online survey)

Learn from other countries

These comments focus on:

- Bringing school start ages in line with those in Europe;
- Following other countries' examples of politeness and manners; and
- Getting children to be more responsible for their actions.

"I would extend the Foundation Stage to the age of six, to bring us in line with European countries with happier children."

(Other, Online survey)

"We should look at what works in other countries. Why do American kids call adults 'Sir' and 'Ma'am'? Why do Italians welcome children into public places more than we do?"

(Other, Online survey)

Too many initiatives

Some participants think that there are too many initiatives, they focus on:

- The need for basic services to be fully resourced and work together; and
- The need for new schemes to demonstrate their value.

"I am concerned about the seeming proliferation of services which seem like a good idea at the time. I would rather see the basic services fully resourced and obliged to work together."

(Parent/other, Online survey)

"The huge investment in various schemes has shown little valuable or sustainable impact to date."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

Good idea to consult

Those who used this opportunity to say it was a good idea to consult them also mention:

- The need for government to be interactive and ask people questions;
- The importance of the topic matter; and
- The need to listen to what people say.

"Well done on producing this survey – it's a great way of the government being interactive."

(Parent, Online survey)

"It would be nice if I thought that any of these comments would result in action – at national and local government level, but I am not confident!!"

(Parent, Online survey)

"Thanks for asking these vital questions. This area has been a long time coming into focus and is the key to the future prosperity of our country."

(Work with children and young people, Online survey)

4 Main findings: Responses from children and young people

This question was only asked in the online survey.

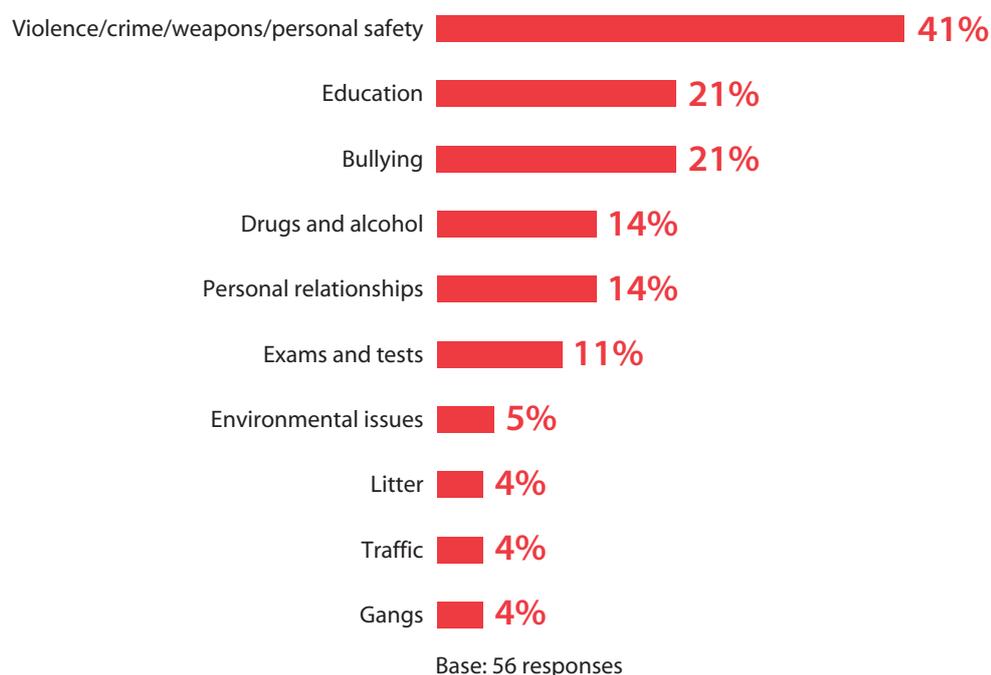
- The responses focus on fear of violence, crime and weapons and worries about education, exams and tests.
- There are also concerns about bullying and gangs and peer pressure to try drugs and alcohol.
- Personal relationships are a particular concern, and the verbatims suggest that family relationships and arguments with parents are the main worry.
- In addition, young people are concerned about environmental issues, litter and traffic.

4.1 Responses to question 1: What are the things that worry and concern you the most?

4.1.1 Quantitative survey responses

Chart 16: What are the things that worry and concern you the most?

Q1. Online: What are the things that worry and concern you the most?



Detailed findings from verbatims

There are verbatims to explain some of the quantitative findings for this question, particularly:

- Violence, crime and weapons; and
- Bullying.

Violence, crime and weapons

41 per cent of young people are concerned about violence, crime and weapons. Young people express personal fear about being exposed to violence, crime and weapons, but they are also worried about other children and young people, particularly those who are very young, carrying weapons.

"Dying at a young age."

(Young person, Online survey)

"The kids growing up nowadays it appals me, young children at the age of 10, carrying knives, guns, even drugs, and the government 'do' say they do things about it, but in the honest eye of my generation, we laugh at that, because really I don't see anything to help prevent this matter."

(Young person, Online survey)

Bullying

21 per cent of young people are concerned about bullying and 4 per cent are concerned about gangs. Young people express fear about bullying: the harmful effect it can have on people and new ways of bullying through the internet, text messaging, etc.

"All the ways available for people to bully others, for example, email, text messaging, msn, etc."

(Young person, Online survey)

"The things that worry and concern me are bullying. There is a lot of bullying in schools. Children and maybe even adults who work in schools get bullied and they are harmed emotionally and physically."

(Young person, Online survey)

4.1.2 Responses from the video diaries

In the video diary room, children and young people were asked the following question:

- If you ran the country, what would you do to make life better for families and children?

The main issues that children highlight as needing improving for families and children are:

- Inequality – particularly financial inequality;
- Leisure activities and family activities;
- Family relationships; and
- Safety.

Inequality

The children and young people interviewed suggest an array of ideas to improve things for families and children. But one of the biggest problems identified is inequality, particularly in terms of finances. There is a very high awareness of the amount of pressure financial strain puts on their parents and lack of money is seen as a big factor in preventing them and their families doing what they want to do.

"There's a big boundary between the rich and the poor – we should take a lot more focus on families."

(Female, Norwich)

"Make footballers give away their wages to poor people."

(Male, Gateshead)

"I'd make people who earn more money pay more taxes which could go towards child support and the health service."

(Male, Gateshead)

"I'd get the government to give money to families that aren't doing so well and give them passes to go places for free and just make sure that everyone has enough family time together."

(Female, Norwich)

Leisure activities and family activities

Provision of leisure activities is another area that children feel could be improved. As highlighted earlier, some children feel that they are not given enough opportunities to do the things they are actually interested in and that this reflects how people in authority do not understand them. Leisure activities are also linked to inequality as children feel that they miss out if they or their families cannot afford to do things. Doing activities as a family is also seen as an important way to build and improve family relationships.

"I'd make more sporting opportunities for children, more things children want to do at school so they have more choice."

(Male, Leeds)

"I think I'd put more money into things for teenagers in general, maybe music festivals, so that teenagers don't feel left out and unwanted by the government – you get such bad coverage of teenagers in the media – so I'd try and change people's perception."

(Female, Norwich)

"I'd make sure that children had lots of things to do and that parents who have less money – like if they want to take their kids to swimming or trampolining lessons but can't afford it – that the government would pay for it."

(Female, Liverpool)

"I would say they should give money to help out the area a bit more so adults and children can get involved in social activities to make them closer together as families."

(Male, London)

Family relationships

Improving family relationships is another priority for many children. Not having enough time together is seen as a problem and barrier to building good relationships, so long working hours are identified as an issue. Ideas to improve family relationships include creating more opportunities for families to talk to each other and learn to understand one another which could be facilitated through clubs or groups.

"Shorter working times for adults so they have more time for their kids – so they can come home at 4pm so they can see their kids after school."

(Male, Nottingham)

"I would have a special club for adults and children, where the children can talk about what they'd like from the parents and the parents can ask what they'd like from their children."

(Female, Leeds)

"Families break up a lot more nowadays – rare to find a family that is 100 per cent together – so I'd have a scheme so that once every few months families have a chance to sit down and talk to each other and discuss issues they might be having – and figure out ways they can improve things and work towards making each other a better family."

(Male, London)

"There are loads of families that don't understand each other, I would try to connect families so they understand what another member of the family is thinking."

(Female, Gateshead)

Safety

Safety is another issue highlighted in response to this question. Children want to feel safe in the areas that they live and feel that crime needs to be reduced.

"I would get rid of guns as I think that's a real problem in the UK."

(Male, Liverpool)

"Try and stop crime, so put more CCTV cameras around where it's not so obvious that people will get hurt."

(Female, Liverpool)

4.2 Responses to question 2: What can be done to keep you healthy, happy and safe?

In the online survey young people were asked to respond to the following question:

- What can be done to keep you healthy, happy and safe?

In the paper survey, young people were asked to respond to:

- What do you think your role is and what more could you do for children to be happy, healthy and safe?

The key themes emerging from these questions are:

- Safety is a key concern and young people would like to see more police/security, greater road safety and streetlighting;
- Healthy eating is seen to be the key to being healthy and young people would like more incentives and easier access to healthy food, particularly in school;
- Activities, youth clubs, sports clubs and facilities are also very important to making sure that children and young people are safely off the streets and happily occupied in their free time.

4.2.1 Quantitative survey responses

Chart 17: What can be done to keep you happy, healthy and safe?

Q2. Online: What can be done to keep you healthy, happy and safe?

Q4. Paper: What do you think your role is and what more could you do for children to be happy, healthy and safe?



Base: 99 responses

Detailed findings from verbatims

There are verbatims to explain some of the quantitative findings for this question, particularly:

- More police/security;
- Healthy eating;
- Activities, youth clubs, sports clubs and facilities;
- Counsellors/trained people;
- Practical lessons; and
- Other.

More police/security

23 per cent of young people surveyed think that more police and security would make them happy, healthy and safe. Concerns around police and security focus on two key areas: feeling safe at school and feeling safe in the community.

"Make school a safer environment. Keep the schools and gangs of youths away from schools and other public areas."

(Young person, Online survey)

"I am a child and I think there should be more than 1 community police officer."

(Young person, Paper survey)

"I would be more [healthy, happy and safe] if I wasn't scared in my area and if there was more to do such as play groups or activity days in my community."

(Young person, Paper survey)

Healthy eating

20 per cent of young people who answered the survey thought that healthy eating was key in staying happy, healthy and safe. The verbatims point to the need to make healthy eating accessible for people on low incomes. They also stress the role of schools in educating children and young people about health.

"I feel that it is hard for people to maintain a healthy lifestyle when 'healthy foods' are more expensive than the nasty cheap processed foods that contain salt, fats and sugar with little fibre. I think that cooking classes should be made compulsory up to the age of 16, that children/young adults go into life knowing how to cook healthy meals properly."

(Young person, Online survey)

"Schools to encourage to have health awareness provide workshops, drop in sessions about all issues young people may face today."

(Young person, Online survey)

Activities, youth clubs, sports clubs and facilities

20 per cent of young people think that activities and youth clubs are important and 14 per cent mention the need for more sports clubs and facilities. The verbatims mention sports clubs and weekend study groups and cite the benefits as:

- Keeping young people off the street;
- Helping them make friends; and
- Giving them confidence in their neighbourhood, because of their friendships.

"More facilities within school. Perhaps a facility for students to use at weekends but is not compulsory i.e. a weekend study group."

(Young person, Online survey)

"Make a sports club to keep people fit and healthy, happy and it keeps them off the streets."

(Young person, Paper survey)

"Sports clubs keeps them fit and healthy they make new friends to keep them happy and safe on the streets."

(Young person, Paper survey)

Counsellors/trained people

10 per cent of young people who responded to this question mentioned the need for counsellors and trained people. The verbatims illustrate that this is particularly important for people who suffer from stress at school and people with SEN.

"I am fairly lucky but I know people who suffer from stress due to too much work at school and pressure from friends going out all the time. Health campaigns in school are also an important source of opportunity to talk."

(Young person, Online survey)

"Provision of a full-time support worker and help when I leave school to find a job where the employer understands my needs."

(Young person, Online survey)

Practical lessons

9 per cent of young people mention the need for more practical lessons. The key themes on this topic in the verbatims are life skills (e.g. financial matters) and health.

"More life lessons. Not always about drugs and smoking, but about how to do practical things like using credit cards."

(Young person, Online survey)

Other

The other themes that emerge in the verbatims are:

- The importance of communities caring for their members;
- The need for emotional and financial stability; and
- The need for positive reinforcement.

"To know that I live in a community that cares about each and every one of us. Better praise if you get something right."

(Young person, Online survey)

"Emotional and financial stability. As well as a safe neighbourhood."

(Young person, Online survey)

"The thing that will help [keep] me healthy, happy and safe is we get along well in the environment and we should not be against each other but work as a team and do our best to the people our age that need help."

(Young person, Online survey)

4.2.2 Responses from the video diaries

In the video diary room, children and young people were asked the same question as the online survey, however it was split into three themes:

- 'Happy', 'Healthy' and 'Safe'.

The main themes that come out in response to being **happy** are:

- More time with friends;
- More time with family + better family relations
- Improving school – making it more fun, getting more praise;
- More fun and free activities – making gyms more accessible; and
- Stopping bullying and stereotyping.

The main themes that come out in response to being **healthy** are:

- Making healthy food more appealing;
- Making healthy food in school more accessible; and
- Encouraging exercise – both in school and outside school.

The main suggestions for keeping children **safe** are:

- More police patrols; and
- Better CCTV.

Friends

Friends are mentioned as a high priority for children and they frequently mention a desire to spend more time socialising, which homework interferes with. Linked to this, some children complain that there are not enough places for them to go with their friends or things for them to do.

"Socialising with my friends cause that always makes me happy."

(Female, Leeds)

"If I could have less time on homework and more time on social stuff."

(Male, Leeds)

"Free places to go when you want to go out."

(Male, Liverpool)

"I would have more leisure centres, something closer to where I live, and also lower the age for Gym – not just for over 16."

(Female, Gateshead)

Family

Spending more time with the family is also a key priority mentioned by the children, with many feeling that they don't have enough of this, often because of parents' work commitments. Also some feel that their relationship with their family could be better which would make them happier.

"Mums and dads should get more time off work to spend with the kids."

(Female, Liverpool)

"More family time cause as a family we don't spend much time together – there should be a place where we can go and spend family time and that isn't that much money."

(Female, Norwich)

"If my family understood more of how I'm feeling about things like exams and friends – they don't quite have the same idea of what it's like to be a teenager nowadays as it was then."

(Female, Norwich)

Improving school

Improvements in how schools are run are also identified as a way of keeping children happy. Some suggest having more choice over what subjects they can take and also helping children achieve their full potential. Others are also aware of things that make children unhappy in school – such as bullying and stereotyping – and that putting an end to these is important.

"Taking options in school earlier, so it's more fun as you get to do what you want."

(Male, Leeds)

"When you do something good in school, teachers should give you a lot of praise for it and that makes you feel good and makes you want to do good more."

(Male, Leeds)

"I would like to see people not judging people by their looks, cause in schools you have 'the goths', and the rough kids, the emos – people saying 'oh why are you wearing that ... you must be a goth'. I don't want people to think 'I don't want to hang around with them cause their different to me'."

(Female, Gateshead)

Making healthy food more appealing

The children in the video diaries generally have a very good awareness of what it means to be healthy, with almost all mentioning that they need to eat healthier food and get more exercise. However, they are also aware that children do not necessarily follow this advice and more needs to be done to actively encourage them to take up healthier lifestyles. Healthy food being seen as 'boring' compared to junk food is reported as a barrier to children choosing it voluntarily. They suggest that healthy food should be made more appealing and tasty. More positive advertising is suggested as a way of changing children's perceptions of healthy foods.

"If they had nicer healthy meals, not just broccoli, even if it's just like – a hamburger – but it's not McDonalds – like with real chicken, not fake."

(Female, Gateshead)

"More healthy food, advertise more often and maybe giving out free tasters and different fruits, not just apple and pears."

(Male, Leeds)

"Try to make foods that taste nice cause most kids moan that healthy foods don't taste nice."

(Male, Plymouth)

Healthy food in schools

There were mixed experiences of healthy food provision in schools. Some children felt their school did a lot to promote healthy eating and gave them healthy options in the canteen. Others felt that they had no option but to eat junk food as this was all that was provided for them. Some also complain that the healthy option is more expensive so often children do not buy it. The main suggestions for making healthy food more accessible in schools were giving a greater variety of healthy food options in canteens (such as salads and more fruit), lowering the price of healthy food

in schools and making it a more natural part of school life, e.g. eating fruit in lessons and having fruit vending machines.

"They should stop selling junk food in our canteen – kids don't actually realise what it does to them – like the smoking ads showing really disturbing pictures – they should do that with the healthy thing."
(Female, Norwich)

"School meals could be better cause its pizza and chips all the time and they never have any salad."
(Female, Liverpool)

"In the canteen they could put the healthy food on a low price so you're encouraged to buy it. Last year they had this scheme with a card and you got stamps every time you bought some food and the winner got a big prize."

(Male, Leeds)

"Be allowed to eat fruit in class."

(Female, Gateshead)

"Put more fruit vendors throughout school and healthy beverages."

(Male, Leeds)

Encouraging exercise

Exercise is the other main factor identified by the children in keeping healthy. They suggest that PE should be given more time in the school timetable and also that they should have more options of different sports to do. Outside of school, children want more clubs to be on offer as they feel that adults can go to gyms but these are not accessible to young people.

"More fitness programmes and things to do in school."
(Female, Liverpool)

"More sports because there's only a very limited range of sports."
(Male, Leeds)

"Put sports clubs round the areas – maybe give us a person to come to the area where we live who takes us out on a daily sports routine and gives us activities to do."

(Male, London)

"More sports places that kids can go – cause gyms are for older people and really expensive."
(Female, Norwich)

More police patrols

The children in the video diaries most frequently suggest more police patrols as a solution for keeping them safe. As with their responses to question 1, children feel the most unsafe areas are where gangs tend to hang around at night and so having a bigger police presence, particularly in 'unsafe' areas, would make them feel protected and prevent crimes from occurring. The children have quite a high awareness of current police activities and can distinguish between police, special constables and community support officers.

"More supervision around the skate park as there's a lot of anti-social behaviour there – I don't go there because I don't feel safe."

(Male, Leeds)

“More of those patrol people – ‘Specials’ – who walk round the streets. We used to have them in our area last year, but now they don’t and there’s more trouble with kids breaking into houses and things.”
(Female, Liverpool)

Better CCTV

CCTV cameras are also seen as a way to ensure that children are protected and reflect the feeling that if ‘no one’s watching’ then they are unprotected.

“More people to come into the estates to actually look around – when there’s nobody there anyone can get away with anything and the cameras are usually broken.”

(Male, London)

“More police and CCTV as people don’t think there’s anyone watching them.”

(Male, Leeds)

“Our school is really safe as there are CCTV cameras and big gates around the school.”

(Female, Leeds)

4.3 Responses to question 3: a) What do your parents/carers do to help and support you? b) What else could they do?

In the online survey young people were asked to respond to the following question:

- a) What do your parents/carers do to help and support you? b) What else could they do?

In the paper survey, young people were asked to respond to:

- What is the role of parents – mums, dads, carers – and what more support do they need?

The key themes emerging from the first part of the question are that parents do/should:

- Look after, love, protect, help and support their children;
- They should also educate them and help them with school work; and
- Provide financial support and encourage and listen to their children.

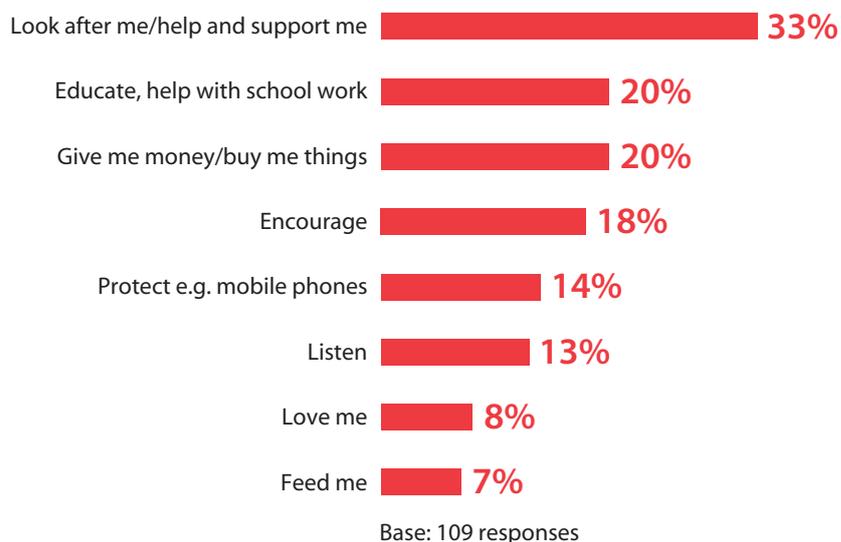
But young people also understand that their parents need support, both from their children and from others. In particular parents need moral support from schools and others, and financial help.

4.3.1 Quantitative survey responses

Chart 18: What do your parents/carers do to help and support you?

Q3. Online a) What do your parents/carers do to help and support you?

Q5. Paper: What is the role of parents – mums, dads, carers – and what more support do they need?



In response to part b) of the question, 6 per cent of young people said their parents should provide financial help and 10 per cent said 'Nothing'. Many participants did not respond to part b) of the question.

Detailed verbatim findings

The verbatims relate to the following themes from the quantitative findings:

- Look after, love, protect, help and support their children;
- Educate and help them with school work;
- Encourage and listen to their children; and
- Other.

Look after, love, protect, help and support their children

33 per cent of young people believe parents should look after, help and support their children, 14 per cent say they should protect their children, 8 per cent say their parents should love them, and 7 per cent say they should feed them. The verbatims strongly illustrate how interlinked these elements of the parental role are.

"To love, care and protect."

(Young person, Paper survey)

"Their role is to care, protect and teach children, values, right from wrong, protection and comfort are important to a child's development."

(Young person, Paper survey)

Educate and help them with school work

20 per cent of young people say that parents do/should educate them and help them with school work. The verbatims illustrate the following roles that children see for parents in education, as well as helping with homework: ensuring schooling is of high quality and providing essential education that is not given by the school.

"Ensure schools carry out their policies, providing a safe and happy learning environment."

(Young person, Paper survey)

"Educate them what the schools obviously don't do: sexual education (16+ is the legal age), diet and exercise."

(Young person, Paper survey)

Encourage and listen to their children

18 per cent of young people say their parents should encourage them and 13 per cent say they should listen. The verbatims illustrate the fact that while children want parents to encourage them, they also want them to listen to their aspirations and not pressurise them.

"I think all parents need to encourage independence and success."

(Young person, Online survey)

"Always speak about what they want to do, not only education and higher study."

(Young person, Paper survey)

Other

Other themes include:

- The desire for independence among older children and young people;
- Counselling, advice and teaching young people how to behave in society; and
- Getting involved in wider activities, such as youth clubs.

"I believe it would be best to give teenagers space. All parents say to talk to your child. We want to be left alone."

(Young person, Online survey)

"They support me with my work, and like to keep close tabs on how I'm doing with school work. I do, however, find that this is too much, I would prefer to have a little more independence."

(Young person, Online survey)

"My parents can teach me how to act around people."

(Young person, Online survey)

"Counselling, advice."

(Young person, Online survey)

"Run youth clubs."

(Young person, Online survey)

"Join in with some clubs."

(Young person, Online survey)

4.3.2 Responses from the video diaries

In the video diary room, children and young people were asked the following questions:

- Your mum and dad or the people who are looking after you do their best to help you grow up and get on. Sometimes they need a little help too. What help do you think they need?

The main methods of support suggested by children and young people for this question are:

- Support from children themselves – not being naughty and help around the house;
- Parents being given a break;
- Financial support – seen as big area of stress for parents;
- Help from school; and
- Parenting classes.

Support from children

Children are very aware of the impact they have on their parents' lives and frequently mention themselves as a source of help for their parents. They often suggest that they could help their parents more by behaving better and giving them more support in the family by talking to them and helping out around the house.

"Help around the house, looking after my brother and sister."

(Female, Gateshead)

"Us not being horrible or naughty."

(Female, Gateshead)

"Housework and problems we could always like help them out ... We could give my Mum and Dad a break when they're really busy or just come home from work – me and my brothers could just help out."

(Male, Oxford)

Giving parents 'a break'

Children are quite sensitive to their parents' stress levels and often suggest that they should be given a 'break' and a chance to relax.

"My mum's quite stressed with work so just to have somewhere she can chill out, maybe let us go out somewhere where she knows we're safe but she can relax at the same time."

(Male, Leeds)

"I think sometimes they need to go on a holiday to get some rest – maybe they need to go for an hour a week or something where the children can play and they can just relax."

(Female, Norwich)

Financial support

Children are also highly aware of financial pressures on their parents and suggest that more financial support would be helpful.

"My mother and step Dad are having a bit of trouble with finances and money at the minute – so a bit of financial help if anything."

(Male, Gateshead)

"For the bank to lay off us a bit ... we're not in debt or anything, but it just takes up a lot of our time."

(Female, Nottingham)

Schools

Schools are seen as a big source of potential support for parents particularly in giving advice on how to help their children.

"Maybe they could ring in the school and just talk to teachers about how I'm doing and also get more help and information and give them advice."

(Male, Leeds)

"They could set something up like a teachers-parents thing where they can talk and advise them on the curriculum so they know what's going on."

(Male, Leeds)

"Support for adults in teaching their children and helping them tell their children what they need to learn."

(Female, Leeds)

Parenting classes

Parenting classes are also suggested by some children as a way of getting support and advice. Talking to other parents about their experience is suggested as a form of mutual support – particularly for single parents. Parents of children who misbehave are also seen as needing extra help and support.

"Have someone to talk to that they can get some advice back from."

(Female, Plymouth)

"Talking to other parents is always good – some people parents are too over protective and some let them do anything so if they talked to each other they could establish more general boundaries."

(Female, Nottingham)

"If you've got a single parent, like me, parents tend to get lonely, so make sure they get a lot of support. I reckon one of the number one thing parents worry about if their kids making them same mistakes as them."

(Male, London)

"If their children are naughty, they should get support and help for it."

(Male, Liverpool)

"They could do a class for parents if they have naughty children to help them."

(Female, Liverpool)

4.4 Responses to question 4: a) What do the people where you live do to help and support you? b) What else could they do?

In the online survey young people were asked to respond to the following question:

- a) What do the people where you live do to help and support you? b) What else could they do?

In the paper survey, young people were asked to respond to:

- What is the role of the local community and what more can they do?

In response to part a) of the question, which was only asked online, most young people did not believe that their community gave them any kind of support at present.

In response to part b) of the question, and the paper questionnaire, young people said they thought the community had the potential to provide activities for children and young people, keep them safe and support them.

However, they feel that to do this the community needs to understand them and be tolerant of them.

4.4.1 Quantitative survey responses

Chart 19a) What do the people where you live do to help and support you?

Q4. Online a): What do people where you live do to help and support you?

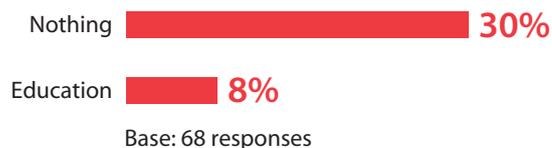
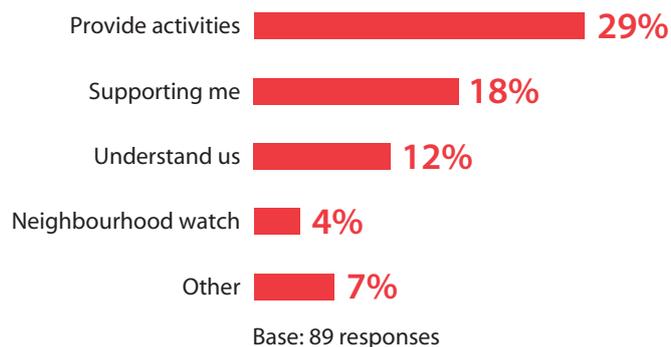


Chart 19b) What else could they do?

Q4. Online b): What else could they [the community] do?

Q6. Paper: What is the role of the local community and what more can they do?



Detailed verbatim findings

The verbatims relate to the following themes from the quantitative findings:

- Providing activities for children and young people;
- Supporting young people;
- Understanding young people; and
- Keeping them safe.

Providing activities for children and young people

29 per cent of young people say their community should provide them with activities. The verbatims suggest that young people believe it is up to their local community to provide activities for them to do and to make an effort to keep local young people off the streets.

“Build more youth clubs for different ages.”

(Young person, Paper survey)

“The local community’s role is to keep kids busy and off the street. The community need to make more schemes to keep kids busy.”

(Young person, Paper survey)

Supporting young people

18 per cent of young people say the community should support them. The verbatims demonstrate that young people feel the community has a role to play in making them feel welcome and supported and that they currently do not feel that the community does support them.

"They make me feel safer by being kind to me. If they see me doing something bad stop me. If I'm shy encourage me."

(Young person, Online survey)

"Create bonds so people look out for each other."

(Young person, Online survey)

"Smile and say hello."

(Young person, Online survey)

"Not shouting abuse."

(Young person, Online survey)

Understanding young people

12 per cent of young people say the community should try to understand them. The verbatims demonstrate how closely linked understanding and supporting young people are considered to be. They specifically mention the need for the community as a whole to have a more positive perception of young people and the need for the police to understand young people better.

"Stop the police following young people, encourage them to talk to us instead and get to know us."

(Young person, Paper survey)

"Doing more to smash the stereotype of young people – publicise the positive contributions young people are making to the local community."

(Young person, Online survey)

"Accept young people, accept that we want to gather together safely on the park."

(Young person, Online survey)

Keeping them safe

4 per cent of young people mention the role of the Neighbourhood Watch and the verbatims illustrate the fact that several young people see the role of the community as keeping them safe.

"Help keep me safe."

(Young person, Online survey)

"Stop violence and drug abuse."

(Young person, Paper survey)

"The community's role is also to help protect children in ways that they can."

(Young person, Paper survey)

4.5 Responses to question 5: a) What do the government do to help and support you? b) What else could they do?

In the online survey young people were asked to respond to the following question:

- a) What do the government do to help and support you? b) What else could they do?

In the paper survey, young people were asked to respond to:

- What is the role of government and what more could they do?

The key themes emerging from the first part of the question are that government currently provides education, money, activities and a safe environment for young people and children.

However, they think that government should also:

- Provide more funding and better transport and health;
- Listen to young people more and tackle negative images of young people in the media; and
- Reduce crime.

4.5.1 Quantitative survey responses

Chart 20a) What do the government do to help and support you?

Q5. Online a): What do the government do to help and support you?

Q7. Paper: What is the role of government?

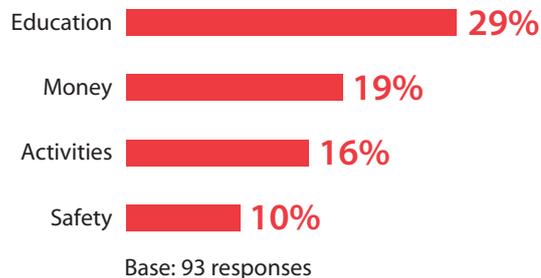
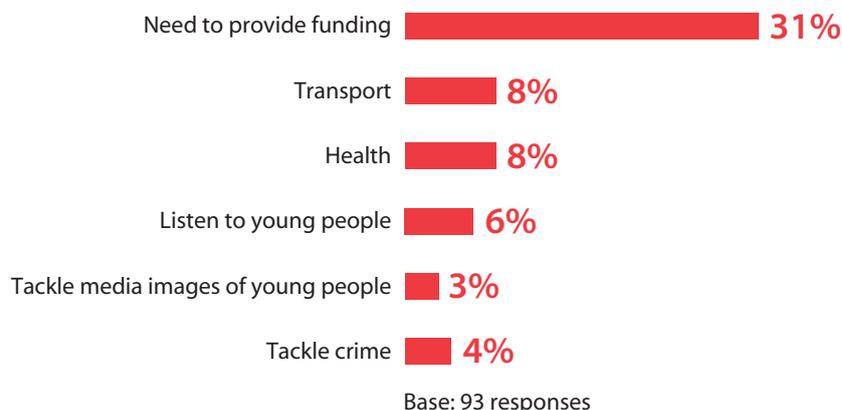


Chart 20b) What else could they do?

Q5. Online b): What else could they [the government] do?

Q7. Paper: ...and what more could they [the government] do?



Detailed verbatim findings

The verbatims relate to the following themes from the quantitative findings:

- What the government currently does to ensure children and young people are happy, healthy and safe; and
- What more the government should do to ensure children and young people are happy, healthy and safe.

What the government currently does to ensure children and young people are happy, healthy and safe

The verbatims demonstrate some uncertainty among young people about what the government currently does for them. Some young people feel that they do not need help from the government.

“Not sure of anything government directly does for us.”

(Young person, Online survey)

“I don’t think I need help from the government at my age.”

(Young person, Online survey)

29 per cent of young people mention education as a key service provided by the government. The verbatims also indicate a high awareness of EMAs; however, those who do not currently receive them can be annoyed that they get less help from the government than some of their peers.

“The government help and support me by education because all our books and stuff that we use at school is free and we have a nice school which we could learn and understand more about the environment that we are in.”

(Young person, Online survey)

19 per cent of young people who responded to the survey mention that the government provides money.

In the verbatims, mentions of funding are generally linked to the EMA and tuition fees.

“The government fund my education however I [feel] really strongly about the EMA certain students benefit from. I don’t think that only certain pupils who parents don’t earn much should receive the EMA. Just because someone’s parents earn more money doesn’t mean they give it to their kids. I also know a lot of people who spend their EMA on nights out rather than school resources.”

(Young person, Online survey)

16 per cent of young people mention that the government provides activities. In the verbatims the emphasis is on improving and extending the facilities that are already available.

“The government could improve parks, fields and make more so children don’t get so bored.”

(Young person, Paper survey)

What more the government should do to ensure children and young people are happy, healthy and safe

8 per cent of young people mention the importance of improving transport. The verbatims indicate that this relates to local and school buses for young people.

“Provide buses and education, increase buses in local areas.”

(Young person, Online survey)

8 per cent of young people think the government should do more on health. The verbatims indicate that this is particularly important in terms of delivering healthy meals in schools.

“Cheaper school dinners. They always say healthier school meals. We never get them.”

(Young person, Online survey)

6 per cent of young people who answered the survey said that they thought the government should listen to young people. This is a particularly strong theme in the verbatims and relates both to listening to young people and acting on their suggestions.

“They should listen to children and young people more and use their ideas. They just listen to adults and ignore children.”

(Young person, Online survey)

“The government should do more interviews and surveys like these to make sure young people get a say in what goes on in the country.”

(Young person, Paper survey)

“Act on feedback – it’s all well and good doing these questionnaires but when you don’t get back to us with the outcomes and plans of action it feels like a total waste of time and promotes apathy.”

(Young person, Online survey)

4 per cent of young people said that the government should tackle crime. The verbatims illustrate some of the ideas that young people have about tackling crime:

- Giving young people choice and opportunity;
- Making laws stricter and enforcing them;
- Curfews; and
- Neighbourhood Watches.

“The government provides us with the basic laws and guidelines. However, there should be more laws enforced which tackle job culture and crime within today’s youth. Government should also give students more choice and opportunity to take an interest in different things and give them more variety which distracts them from drugs and other things.”

(Young person, Online survey)

“The government should take action against unruly youths, making curfews and neighbourhood watches.”

(Young person, Paper survey)

3 per cent of young people say the government should tackle negative images of young people and the verbatims demonstrate that young people can feel that the government joins in perpetuating negative stereotypes at present.

“Stand up for us and not join in the bashing of young people.”

(Young person, Online survey)

4.6 Responses to question 6: a) What's your best experience of services available to you and your family? b) How can we make them better?

In the online survey young people were asked to respond to the following question:

- a) What's your best experience of services available to you and your family? b) How can we make them better?

In the paper survey, young people were asked to respond to:

- What have been your best experiences of support for children, young people and their families?
- What would you stop or improve about support for children, young people and families?

The main positive experiences of services tend to centre around education services, health services, clubs and activities, individuals such as social workers or youth workers, and Connexions. However, quite a number of young people say they have never had any support.

Young people indicate a number of ways in which services could be improved, including:

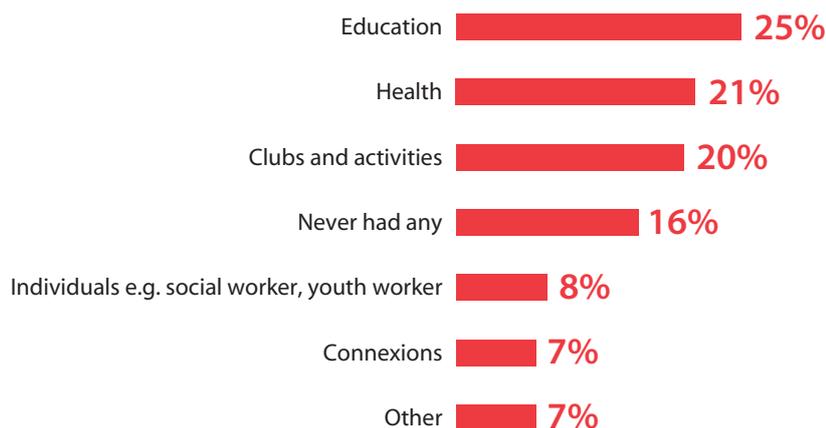
- More funding, more activities, longer opening hours and more health practitioners;
- More information and support readily available;
- Addressing abuse/bullying/poverty;
- Smaller class sizes; and
- Providing job opportunities.

4.6.1 Quantitative survey responses

Chart 21a) What's your best experience of services available to you and your family?

Q6. Online: a) What's your best experience of services available to you and your family?

Q1. Paper: What have been your best experiences of support for children, young people and their families?

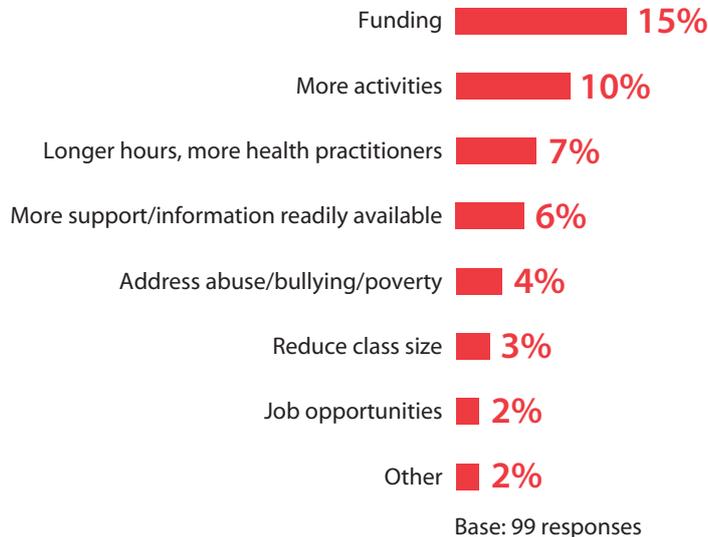


Base: 101 responses

Chart 21b) How can we make them better?

Q6. Online: b) How can we make them better?

Q2. Paper: What would you stop or improve about support for children, young people and families?



Detailed verbatim findings

The verbatims relate to the following themes from the quantitative findings:

- What the government currently does to ensure children and young people are happy, healthy and safe; and
- What more the government should do to ensure children and young people are happy, healthy and safe.

What the government currently does to ensure children and young people are happy, healthy and safe

25 per cent of young people mention education services as their best experience of support. The verbatims indicate that this is both academic support and emotional support.

"I think that my best services that is available for me and my family is school because it help me learn things that I don't know and it's really available when my parents wanted to discuss something."

(Young person, Online survey)

"In school when I needed adult support to help me through emotional times, my head of year and others were there."

(Young person, Paper survey)

"Local school have been brilliant and I have achieved excellent grades as a result."

(Young person, Online survey)

21 per cent of young people mention health services as providing good experiences of support. The verbatims illustrate the key role of the school nurse in providing support. They also illustrate the way support can work very well for disabled young people.

"School nurse who supports us confidentially with our worries/personal problems."

(Young person, Online survey)

"I like my school nurse she has helped me loads."

(Young person, Paper survey)

"I found my best experience with children's services was the Community Respite Nursing. This is a service which they offer to all children, who have a disability, they come look after children during the day or night and give parents or carers a break. I have two girls that come in once a week to look after me for the night. This allows my parents to go out or just relax. I think this is the best service as I enjoy having them at the house but also they help my parents, so it's a win-win situation."

(Young person, Online survey)

20 per cent mention clubs and activities as providing them with positive experiences. The verbatims suggest that while clubs and activities do provide positive experiences, young people think there should be more of them.

"Local workshops in my youth club but it would be good if there were more."

(Young person, Paper survey)

What more the government should do to ensure children and young people are happy, healthy and safe

There is an emphasis in the quantitative results on providing more support services, with 15 per cent asking for more funding, 10 per cent wanting more activities, 7 per cent calling for longer opening hours and more health practitioners. The verbatims help to contextualise these results by indicating specific areas where young people think services should be expanded or given more funding, including equipment for schools and providing more facilities and leisure activities for young people and the whole community.

"New computers for school because most of ours are broken or train the people who come in to mend them better. It would be nice if more people came in to do things with us."

(Young person, Online survey)

"Young people need more social activities in Gravesend, Kent."

(Young person, Paper survey)

"Make clubs for people to go to instead of hanging around on the street doing nothing."

(Young person, Paper survey)

"More activity days for the community where anyone can come."

(Young person, Online survey)

6 per cent of young people would like more information and support readily available. The verbatims indicate that this includes information and support for young people but also for their families.

"More talk about information we want to know about."

(Young person, Paper survey)

"I would improve moral support for families in need to let them know that they are supported."

(Young person, Paper survey)

4 per cent believe that addressing abuse/bullying/poverty would improve their experiences of services. The verbatims suggest that this may relate to making services more effective in these areas.

"I would improve help for children being abused at home or school."

(Young person, Paper survey)

3 per cent call for smaller class sizes. The verbatims expand this finding to suggest that what young people want is more space and quieter learning environments as well as smaller classes.

"We can make school better by having more space in the classrooms."

(Young person, Online survey)

"Classrooms should have fewer children and calmer, quiet places should be created for children who like to study like this."

(Young person, Paper survey)

"I would improve the schooling. The classroom is full of 30 children and they don't get enough help because there's only one teacher."

(Young person, Paper survey)

4.6.2 Responses from the video diaries

In the video diary room, children and young people were asked the following questions:

- What's the best bit of support you or your family have received?
- Now can you tell us about the times that people from outside the family have tried to help and you think it's made the situation worse or made no difference at all?

The main areas of support that children have experienced include:

- Parents and siblings;
- Extended family members and family friends;
- Friends;
- Teachers; and
- Other professionals – doctors and nurses, counsellors and youth workers.

Most of the children who took part in the video vox pops have not experienced poor support, but for those who have the key themes are:

- Insensitive interventions in delicate situations; and
- Lack of support when you need help.

Parents and siblings

Children most often report getting all the support they need from within their own family and only rarely need support from other sources when there is a particular problem. Some even say that they wouldn't want help from outside the family and would not expect this.

"I reckon most families just help themselves, they don't get much help from other people nowadays."

(Male, Liverpool)

"Mainly we try to keep our family problems to ourselves."

(Female, Nottingham)

Parents are frequently mentioned as being a strong source of support. But other members of the family are sometimes seen as easier to talk to, such as siblings.

"My mum when I was getting bullied – she helped me to get through it and stand up to them."

(Female, Leeds)

"My dad has helped me the most, in Year 7 I had loads of trouble and I didn't want to go into school, but he encouraged me and supported me loads."

(Female, Liverpool)

"I get a lot of support from my sister because I feel like I can talk to her about things that I can't talk to my parents about."

(Female, Leeds)

Extended family members and family friends

Other extended family members are also mentioned as a source of support. Family friends or parents of friends are also reported as being supportive too.

"My Aunty Michelle has given me a lot of support."

(Male, London)

"That would be some of my family friends. They've always been there for my family and always helped us in all our problems."

(Male, Oxford)

After family members, children mention their friends as a major source of support and advice.

"My older friends – they give me a heads up as to how to avoid certain problems."

(Male, London)

Teachers

Children also report positive experiences of support from teachers. They are often the first port of call and can give continued support as they see children on a regular basis. They are also able to give direct help with problems that occur inside school, such as bullying.

"Miss Phillips has helped me a lot when I get bullied."

(Female, Leeds)

"Teachers – they are really hands on and work with you inside and outside school to solve your problem – they give you coping methods or refer you to see someone."

(Male, London)

"From my teacher, cause when my mum was pregnant and she had a miscarriage and I told my teacher and she helped me out a lot."

(Female, Leeds)

"A few months ago my mum had cancer and we told the school about it and they were really supportive and told us that me and my brother could always go and talk to them if we needed to."

(Female, Leeds)

Other professionals

Some children have also received help from other professionals, usually to help them through a specific problem. These include youth workers, counsellors and NHS staff.

"When my parents split up we had counsellors asking us what we wanted to do – yeah it helped as sometimes you don't want to straight to them [parents]."

(Male, Plymouth)

"From the NHS – my Grandad is really ill but they've been really supportive so I really like them."

(Male, Nottingham)

"We had a youth worked at school and if we had a problem we used to go and see her so we if we had a problem at home she was the best person to sort it out."

(Male, Leeds)

Satisfaction with support

Children have very rarely experienced poor support and are generally happy with the level of help they receive.

"No not really. All the friends we have, they're really trusting, we can really trust them. They've always been really honest and they've always helped us in a way."

(Male, Oxford)

Insensitive interventions

Some children comment that a situation can be made worse when someone tries to intervene in a tense situation, such as a dispute and that they are best left to sort it out for themselves.

"Sometimes when arguments are going on and someone tries to help or interfere and they get caught up in it."

(Female, Leeds)

"Sometimes when teachers get involved in incidents it doesn't always help so sometimes it's just best to leave us to sort things out for ourselves."

(Male, Plymouth)

Lack of support when you need help

Some children do report occasions when support from external people has not been very helpful, but this is very rare.

"When I was little I used to get bullied and there was a school counsellor and she didn't really do anything about it."

(Male, Gateshead)

"When I had trouble in Year 7 they [the school] didn't do anything to help, so my mum and dad had to sort it out."

(Female, Liverpool)

4.7 Responses to question 7: How can we make sure you get the services you need?

In the online survey young people were asked to respond to the following question:

- How can we make sure you get the services you need?

In the paper survey, young people were asked:

- What needs to happen so that support is tailored to meet the needs of individual children and young people?

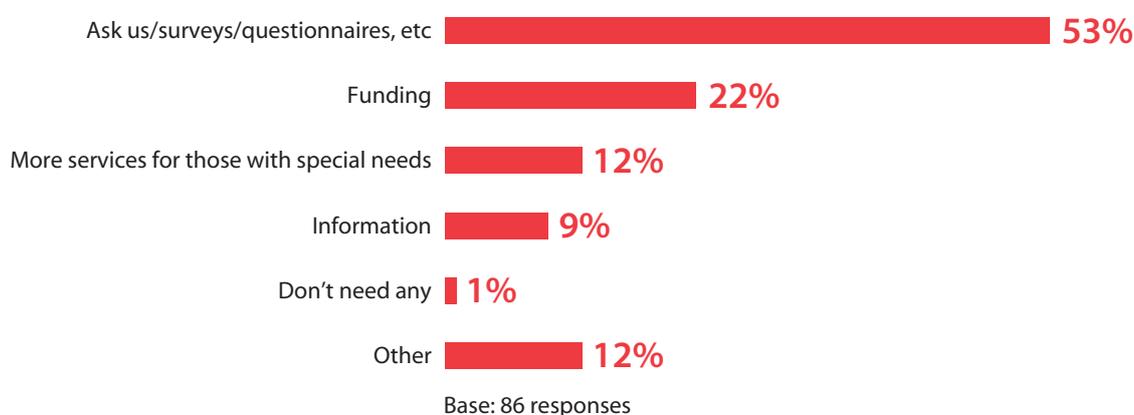
The most important factor in ensuring children and young people get the services they need is thought to be to consult them and ask them what they want and need. Another key need is for information about the services that are available and more funding, especially for SEN services.

4.7.1 Quantitative survey responses

Chart 22: How can we make sure you get the services you need?

Q7. Online: How can we make sure you get the services you need?

Q3. Paper: What needs to happen so that support is tailored to meet the needs of individual children and young people?



Detailed verbatim findings

The verbatims support and elaborate the following themes from the quantitative findings:

- Consulting young people; and
- Providing more funding.

Consulting young people

53 per cent of young people say that it is important to consult young people in order to make sure they get the services they need. The verbatims illustrate the importance of this theme, both in assessing current services and in helping to design new services for children and young people.

“Children of all ages should be heard and from that people can work out what children really want.”
(Young person, Paper survey)

“By making questionnaires to give to students for them to reply to on the subject or if they feel they are getting the services they need.”

(Young person, Online survey)

“Local councils getting in touch with young people directly in schools, etc, and actually following the research through to getting results.”

(Young person, Online survey)

Providing more funding

22 per cent of young people who responded to this survey think that more funding is important in ensuring children and young people get the services they need. The verbatims illustrate some of the areas where they believe funding should be distributed:

- Equipment for schools and youth centres;
- Education Maintenance Allowances for all young people; and
- More projects and activities for young people.

“By the government giving them money to help fund for the equipment but don’t take it out of our tax we have to pay.”

(Young person, Online survey)

“All young people should be given EMA.”

(Young person, Paper survey)

“More projects and funding for young people.”

(Young person, Paper survey)

4.8 Responses to question 8: What can be done to keep children and young people out of trouble?

In the online survey young people were asked to respond to the following question:

- What can be done to keep children and young people out of trouble?

In the paper survey, young people were asked:

- What more needs to happen to keep children and young people out of trouble?

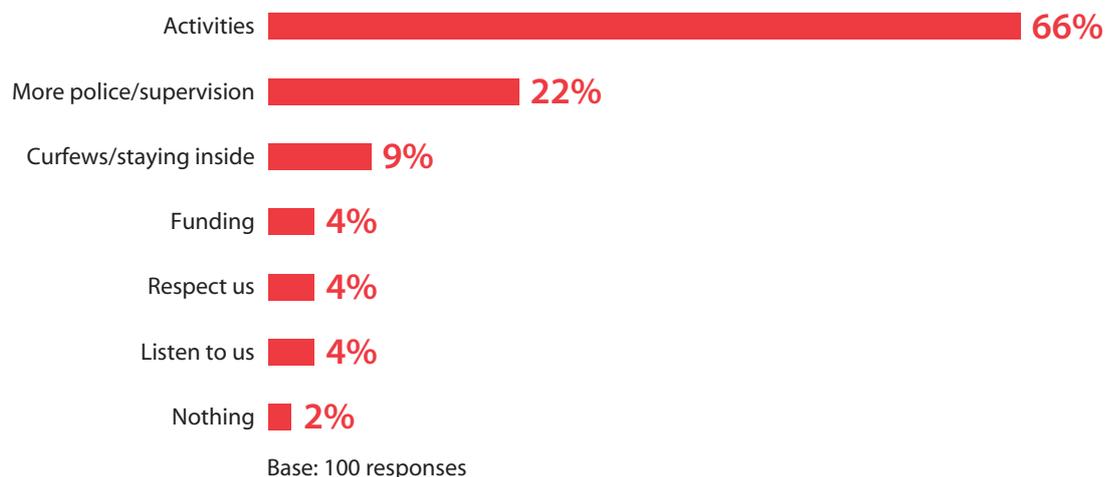
The main ways that the respondents believe children and young people can be kept out of trouble are by providing more funding and activities for young people. They also endorse more police, supervision and curfews as long as this is combined with a respect for young people and involves them by listening to them.

4.8.1 Quantitative survey responses

Chart 23: What can be done to keep children and young people out of trouble?

Q8. Online: What can be done to keep children and young people out of trouble?

Q8. Paper: What more needs to happen to keep children and young people out of trouble?



Detailed verbatim findings

The verbatims support and elaborate the following themes from the quantitative findings:

- Providing more funding and activities for young people;
- More police, supervision and curfews; and
- Respecting and listening to young people.

Providing more funding and activities for young people

66 per cent of young people who took part in the survey think that more activities for young people would help to keep them out of trouble and 4 per cent of young people think more funding would help. The verbatims indicate that young people believe that activities can stop them being bored and therefore keep young people out of trouble. They can also help to broaden horizons and give young people aspirations.

“Allow youth groups to broaden the activities they can offer by subsidising the cost of specialist instructors and facilities, empower young people into deciding what they want to do and achieve and facilitate that as much as possible.”

(Young person, Online survey)

“More entertainment at weekends.”

(Young person, Paper survey)

“Not allow them to just wander the streets and set up clubs and activities for them to take them off the streets.”

(Young person, Paper survey)

More police, supervision and curfews

22 per cent of young people want more police and supervision and 9 per cent mention curfews and staying inside as good ways to prevent children and young people getting into trouble. The verbatims demonstrate specific anxieties about children and young people being out on their own in public places, and fears of gun and knife crime.

"Local parks are usually dangerous and attract trouble. They are perfect places to vandalise, as the local papers show. More police patrolling parks."

(Young person, Online survey)

"The government need to keep kids off the street and stop gun and knife crime."

(Young person, Paper survey)

"Curfews and one school child at a time in a shop."

(Young person, Paper survey)

"More bobbies on the beat."

(Young person, Paper survey)

Respecting and listening to young people

4 per cent of responses suggest that respecting young people is important and 4 per cent also say that listening to young people can help to keep them out of trouble. The verbatims provide some suggestions for how this could be achieved, for example, free phone numbers, email addresses, and safe places where young people can talk about their problems.

"Safe places to go, free phone numbers to ring. Texting numbers and email addresses, patient, confidential people to talk to. People who can relate to their feelings/situation."

(Young person, Online survey)

4.8.2 Responses from the video diaries

In the video diary room, children and young people were asked:

- How would you keep children and young people out of trouble?

The main themes that come out in response to this question are:

- Providing places for young people to go and activities for them to do;
- Stricter laws;
- More police;
- Curfews; and
- More support, especially for those at risk of offending.

Places/activities for young people

The main cause of children getting into trouble is identified as boredom. The children frequently describe kids hanging around on street corners as the most likely situation for trouble with the police to occur. Children are seen to have to resort to this when there is nowhere else for them to go or no other activities provided for them. More youth centres and activities for children therefore comes up as the most frequently suggested solution to keeping kids out of trouble.

"I'd give them something to do. I think the only reason they get into trouble is because they have nothing to do. Give them something to do that gives them a buzz."

(Male, Liverpool)

"There should be a lot more youth clubs – 'cause there's not a lot of stuff for them to do they have no choice but to hang around the streets and that's when they get into trouble."

(Male, London)

Children are aware of some youth clubs and facilities that already exist, but these are often dismissed as inadequate or boring, and some facilities have become unusable.

"I know they have the skate park but there's a lot of trouble that goes on down there, so we need more clubs like a youth club after school."

(Male, Leeds)

"Something to do – like a play area or a youth club – we have near our house but it's vandalised – so would nice to see it without glass all over the floor."

(Male, Plymouth)

The children also express a feeling that clubs currently provided don't always meet children's needs and are not engaging enough or providing activities that they really want to do. Children suggest that there should be a greater variety of clubs provided to suit different ages, genders and interests.

"I'd try to get them involved in other things they enjoy – they usually think 'oh after school clubs they're for geeks' and they just go messing around in the streets – get them to think of something they really do enjoy."

(Female, Gateshead)

"Different sport activities for different ages."

(Male, Gateshead)

"For the lads I'd do more football and for the girls I'd do dancing."

(Female, Gateshead)

Stricter laws

Drink, drugs and smoking are seen by the children as big causes of kids getting into trouble. Making tougher laws and raising the age of consent is suggested as a way of tackling this.

"I would increase the drinking limit and the smoking limit 'cause that's the main problem why they're acting childish and getting into trouble with the police."

(Female, Gateshead)

"More rules to stop people doing illegal things when they're too young – like raising the smoking age to 18."

(Female, Leeds)

However, ASBOs are seen as a step too far and not achieving the purpose for which they were intended.

"Don't give out too many ASBOs cause people use it as a label like a good thing for them that they've been in trouble and they think it's cool."

(Male, Plymouth)

More police

More police patrols are also frequently suggested as a deterrent to youth offending, with the idea that with more surveillance, children would not get into trouble.

"I'd put more police on the streets as you don't see much police on the streets."

(Female, Liverpool)

"People should be patrolling outside to check on people."

(Female, Liverpool)

Curfews

Curfews are also suggested by some children as a way of preventing them from getting into trouble, though some don't think that it could be enforced.

"I'd have a curfew for them to come in so they're not out too late, so they can't get in trouble before 9pm but changing in the summer and winter."

(Female, Nottingham)

"I wouldn't like a curfew 'cause more people would disobey it ... but we need to do something about the times children stay out at night."

(Male, Nottingham)

More support

Greater support in school is also suggested as a way of preventing children from getting into trouble outside of school. Some see the school as having a responsibility to treat children as adults so that they don't feel the need to rebel as much. Others have had good experience of schools educating them about the consequences of breaking the law.

"That's difficult 'cause everyone thinks it's cool to rebel, but I think the way schools treat people is wrong ... they say they're going to treat us as adults and then they don't."

(Female, Norwich)

"They should have some extra lessons like PSHE – there was one lesson when they brought in someone from a prison to talk about what it was like – then they have more of an understanding that they shouldn't do it."

(Female, Liverpool)

"If you give them proper support in school then they tend to stay out of trouble outside of school."

(Male, Leeds)

Also specific help for children who are already offending is suggested as a way of addressing their behaviour issues.

"Put some sort of adult support into schools, like counsellors, to help kids who are having trouble maybe at home or at school."

(Female, Nottingham)

"The children that are naughty could attend psychology lessons or something ... or a child psychologist so they could get help to overcome their problems."

(Female, Liverpool)

4.9 Toolkits

In contrast to other material which is organised according to the consultation questions, the young people's toolkits were structured thematically, by the following themes:

- Families and others;
- Staying safe;
- Enjoying and achieving; and
- Being good/making a positive contribution.

The findings below are presented according to these themes.

4.9.1 Families and others

The key themes in this section are:

- The important role that family plays in the lives of children and young people;
- The need to reinforce the positive aspects of family life by spending time with parents and siblings and ensuring parents are involved in their school life;
- Children and young people's desire to be listened to, respected and have their views taken into account by parents.

Families are acknowledged as always 'being there for you'. They are seen to provide unconditional love and support which is highly valued. Socialising and talking with families is seen as making you feel closer to your family. Being able to communicate with your family and generally feeling comfortable makes children feel happy and secure.

Arguments and 'taking sides' are identified as negative aspects to family life. Trivial arguments with siblings are common. Tension exists between young people and parents over wanting more independence and freedom. Children often don't feel respected by parents and want to be treated as equals.

Young people want parents to be better informed of their academic life (e.g. more regular feedback, how to help with coursework, etc). They think that this will make parents more interested and involved in their school life. It is important for children that their family recognises when they try hard at school.

4.9.2 Staying safe

The key themes in this section are:

- The only really safe places are perceived to be in the home or the homes of friends;
- School and the community can be seen as very unsafe places;
- Children and young people call for more safe places for them to go outside of the home and greater law enforcement to help them feel safer in the community; and
- They also feel that adults need to get to grips with bullying and provide effective support mechanisms to help them feel safer at school.

Feeling safe is very important for children and young people. They feel safest in places they know best and which feel familiar e.g. homes, friends' and families' homes.

Bullying is a big issue and bullies can make school (and school buses) feel unsafe. Because children feel teachers cannot adequately help or prevent bullying, this leads to a lack of trust between

children and adults on this matter. More support is called for, e.g. teachers especially trained to stop bullying.

There is a high awareness of unsafe or 'rough' places in the community such as train stations, shops, alleyways, playgrounds and particularly parks. These areas are avoided and, in the main, not considered safe. Children associate these areas with large groups of people and anti-social behaviour which they find intimidating and a big cause for concern. Fights, stealing, gun and knife crime are also top of mind concerns.

Children and young people want more places to go that feel safe outside the home. There is a call for more places to go and things to do, for example youth centres and clubs. Children believe boredom leads to trouble; and that youth clubs should be safer and more entertaining.

Cameras (CCTV) and lights make people feel safer as well as more police/patrol people. Taking precautions is recognised as a sensible way to stay safe. The safety rules that young people currently adhere to include: having credit on their mobile phone; knowing emergency numbers; not looking for trouble and being aware of their surroundings.

4.9.3 Enjoying and achieving

The key themes in this section are:

- The importance of career aspirations and role models in making children want to do well at school;
- Suggestions for improvements in education e.g. more practical classes and a tailored approach; and
- The need for children and young people to be given recognition of their achievements to encourage hard work.

Children and young people want to be successful and happy when they grow up. Many know what jobs/careers they want to do when they are older. The importance of having goals and 'something to aim for' is emphasised and many children and young people make the link between doing well at school and achieving a good job.

Education is considered important. However, children and young people could suggest many improvements. For example they want PSHE lessons to be more practical and career-based. While traditional subjects are still considered important, children and young people would like more careers advice, cooking classes and sport. They would also like better equipment and school buildings and more funding. They call for mentoring systems to support younger pupils and greater awareness and understanding of different levels of academic ability and other cultures within school.

Praise is a significant driver of good behaviour. Children acknowledge that positive feedback and rewards encourages people to do better which, in turn, builds confidence. Having a role model(s) is considered important and some believe parents are the most important role models. Children would also like people coming into school to offer advice and guidance on future jobs and they want to speak/hear from people that they aspire to be.

4.9.4 Being good/making a positive contribution

The key themes in this section are:

- Children and young people want to make a positive contribution and stand up to peer pressure but they need encouragement and support to do this;
- They recognise that adults are sometimes right to tell them off; and
- But they feel that too often their point of view can be disregarded which can make them feel rebellious.

Children and young people recognise the importance of helping their local community and thinking of others. Although many schools already offer community schemes/voluntary work for children to get involved with, children and young people call for more opportunities at school to help their communities/charities.

There is a high awareness of right and wrong and children can identify the right choice to make in particular situations. However, peer pressure is often a barrier to 'doing the right thing'. Children do not want to 'follow the crowd' and stand up to bullies but they can find this difficult.

As mentioned above, children and young people like receiving praise and being praised makes them feel proud, but some feel that there is little praise for those that are consistently good. They also recognise that in some circumstances adults are right to tell children off. However, they feel adults should trust children more to do the right thing and resent being stereotyped by adults. They would welcome adults giving them more responsibility.

A big source of tension in children and young people's lives is arguments with adults, particularly parents. Common arguments are over swearing, drinking, having fun, smoking and underage sex. Children and young people report being misunderstood by adults/parents. They believe 'respect' should be mutual and say that feeling supported by friends/family/teachers is important and helps children gain confidence.

5 Summary and key themes

This chapter provides a thematic summary of the findings, detailing some of the key themes that have emerged from both the children/young people's responses and across the different questions.

The key themes identified are:

- Anxieties about family relationships;
- The views of children and young people versus adults;
- Providing good support services for families, children and young people;
- The role of the community;
- The importance of having something to do; and
- Ideas for improving education.

Anxieties about family relationships

Parents are thought to be key to providing children with positive childhoods and children and young people generally feel that their parents do this well. However, there are some anxieties, particularly among adults, about the amount of time parents have available to spend with their children these days. This is particularly salient for parents with very young children who can feel that they are 'forced' to work and would like more help to stay at home with their children. Time is also thought to be an issue as children get older, and are seen to need more active encouragement and guidance from parents, as well as for parents to be available to listen to them.

However, as well as time, adults are also concerned about the quality of their relationships between parents and their children and feel that parents sometimes need support to help them develop good relationships with their children. **Parenting classes** are mentioned by both parents and children as useful support services for those who need specific help, and **schools are thought to have the potential to support parents** in this area; however, informal support from other parents and family members is perceived to be the main way parents are helped at present.

Adults and young people alike feel that parents need more support, and that parents can find it hard to know what support is available for them. Young people are particularly sensitive to parents' need for respite from parenting occasionally and their own role in helping their parents. Financial worries can cause tension within families and financial support for families is identified as a key need by adults and young people. Parents, in particular, focus on the need to give more **support to enable them to stay at home if they choose to** (either with childcare allowances or 'parenting payments'). Some also feel that there needs to be more **incentives to encourage families to stay together** and support couples as well as single parents.

The views of children and young people versus adults

Children and young people have similar worries, concerns and priorities to adults. Young people are particularly worried about their own safety, especially when out and about in the community and can feel at risk from violence, theft and gangs. On some key issues, such as preventing problems, policing and security, the quantitative results from the consultation survey suggest that young people are more likely than adults to mention spontaneously measures such as **curfews and stricter enforcement of laws** relating to young people. This attitude may seem to contradict other responses where young people can feel that they are unfairly targeted and stereotyped by the

community and the police. However, another key theme raised by young people is that they want to **feel listened to, included and consulted by the adults they come into contact with.**

Taking all of these findings together, it appears that young people and adults have similar aims: they want to feel safe out on the streets and happy and secure within their communities. Young people are likely to endorse interventions that will make them feel safer; however, they want to be consulted and included by the community, schools, parents and the police before these interventions are implemented. They need to feel that actions to make them and the community safer are done 'with' them rather than 'to' them.

Providing good support services for families, children and young people

There is a lack of awareness of the support services that are available to parents and young people, especially among young people and more information that advises families which services are available to them will be an important step towards making sure families get all the help and support they need.

There also appears to be some reluctance to go to organised support services to get help for problems that arise in the family. Informal support networks are popular and the verbatims from the video diaries with young people suggest that they feel family problems should be dealt with 'in the family'. In order to break down some of these barriers and ensure that families do have positive experiences of support, the quantitative findings and the verbatims suggest that people want to develop **strong, trusting relationships with individuals from agencies and organisations** that provide support. **Continuity of contact** with one key person is believed to help build a strong relationship between parents or children and the support service, and the consultation survey suggests that this will be one of the main factors that contributes to a positive experience.

Those who work with children and young people stress the need for **better interagency working and more training of staff** in order to make sure that services are tailored to the individual. However, parents and young people are more likely to call for **services to listen to parents and young people and design services around their needs** to provide the basis for tailored support. There is a perception that services are not always available, especially for children and young people with SEN, and this contributes to the perception that services will require **more funding** to ensure that everyone gets the support they need.

The role of the community

The community is perceived to have the potential to contribute greatly to positive childhoods; however, at present it is seen as falling short of this potential. Young people and children can feel isolated by adults in the community, that they are judged and stereotyped by them. There is a perception among adults that the community is currently fractured and that it needs to unite and recognise the collective responsibility of all for the children and young people in their midst.

People see the role of the community as providing guidance and support for young people, but also spending time with them and providing activities for them to do. This suggests the potential for the **community to get more actively involved** with young people, giving time, skills and resources to promote happy, healthy and safe childhoods.

The importance of having something to do

Boredom and lack of aspirations are identified by young people as triggers for getting into trouble. Many of the respondents to the consultation, both adults and young people, say there is not enough for children and young people to do in their area and that as a result, teenagers in particular can congregate in the streets. People who responded to the children's toolkits indicated that most children and young people currently only think that their home and the homes of their friends are safe places for them to go to.

Both adults and young people think that giving children and young people **more activities, after school and at the weekends** will help to keep them out of trouble. This includes giving children and young people safe places to go that are 'off the streets' and places where they can socialise safely with others. However, some stress the importance of giving young people organised, supervised activities within the community that will give them a focus and potentially introduce them to new role models who will give them aspirations. People who work with children and young people also indicate that these kinds of activities need sustained, long-term funding to really make a difference.

Ideas for improving education

In response to many of the questions in the consultation, people gave their ideas for how education could be improved. Experiences with professionals working in educational settings (including counsellors, school nurses and form teachers as well as other teachers) are often very positive and school is thought to have the potential to provide even more support, especially for parents. Schools are thought to be able to help parents in their parenting role and to involve parents more in their children's education. While schools can do more to support children, there is a recognition that parents also need to play their part and sometimes the school can help them to do this.

Young people and children call for a more **holistic approach to education, including practical lessons** such as how to manage money and use a credit card sensibly, and how to look after their health, through healthy eating and maintaining their sexual health. They also ask for more **school counsellors** to be put in place and for their role to be explained clearly to all students at school so that they feel they have someone to turn to when they have problems. Some young people and adults also call for a more **individualised approach to education** that assesses the strengths of each student and allows them to develop them. The children and young people who responded to the toolkits indicate that when they do well at a subject in school they enjoy it more and therefore allowing children and young people to concentrate on their strengths may make them enjoy their education more.

There are also calls for **smaller class sizes, a calmer learning environment in school, and more support for those who need it**. Some adults also ask for **stronger discipline in schools**, which may reflect this desire for a more orderly environment in which to learn.

6 Appendices

6.1 Paper and online survey questions

1. What have been your best experiences of support for children, young people and their families?
2. What would you stop or improve about support for children, young people and families?
3. What needs to happen so that support is tailored to meet the needs of individual children and young people?
4. What do you think your role is and what more could you do for children to be happy, healthy and safe?
5. What is the role of parents – mums, dads, carers – and what more support do they need?
6. What is the role of the local community and what more can they do?
7. What is the role of government and what more could they do?
8. What more needs to happen to keep children and young people out of trouble?
9. Do you have any other comments?

6.2 Online questions for young people

1. What are the things that worry and concern you the most?
2. What can be done to keep you healthy, happy and safe?
- 3a. What do your parents/carers do to help and support you?
- 3b. What else could they do?
- 4a. What do the people where you live do to help and support you?
- 4b. What else could they do?
- 5a. What do the government do to help and support you? (e.g. help with money, places to go, education)
- 5b. What else could they do?
- 6a. What's your best experience of services available to you and your family? (e.g. school, Connexions, doctors, youth clubs)
- 6b. How can we make them better?
7. How can we make sure you get the services you need?
8. What can be done to keep children and young people out of trouble?
9. Is there anything else you would like to say?

6.3 Video diary questions

1. How would you keep children and young people out of trouble?
2. What do you think could be done to keep you:
 - a) Happy
 - b) Healthy
 - c) Safe
3. What's the best bit of support you or your family have received?
4. Now can you tell us about the times that people from outside the family have tried to help and you think it's made the situation worse or made no difference at all?
5. Your mum and dad or the people who are looking after you do their best to help you grow up and get on. Sometimes they need a little help too. What help do you think they need?
6. If you ran the country, what would you do to make life better for families and children?

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