

Playday 2008 opinion poll summary

Are children allowed to manage their own risks when they play?

- Half of children (51%) aged 7-12 are not allowed to climb a tree without an adult present.
- 42% of children aged 7-12 are not allowed to play in their local park without an adult present.
- A third of children (34%) aged 7-12 are not allowed to ride a bike to a friend's house without an adult present.
- A third of children (34%) aged 7-12 are not allowed to play in their local streets/area without an adult present.
- Yet three quarters of children (73%) aged 7-12 are allowed to surf the internet without an adult present.

Children's survey: Which, if any, of the following are you allowed to do without an adult being there?

	Children aged 7- 12 weighted base=600
Climb a tree	49%
Ride a bike to a friend's house	66%
Play in local streets/area	66%
Play in a local park	58%
Surf the internet	73%

Are children's opportunities for adventurous play being restricted?

- Half (49%) of children aged 7-12 have been stopped from climbing trees because it's too dangerous.
- 1 in 5 children aged 7-12 have been stopped from playing conkers because it's too dangerous.

Children's survey: Have you ever been stopped from playing any of the following games because they're too dangerous?

	Children aged 7-12 weighted base=600
Climbing trees	49%
Conkers	21%
Chase	17%
British bulldog	32%

(Respondents could also give 'other' examples)

- Three children reported being stopped from playing hide and seek because it was too dangerous.

Do children want more opportunities to play adventurously?

- 77% of children and young people aged 7-16 would like more opportunities to play adventurously and take risks while playing.

Children's survey: *Would you like more opportunities to play adventurously and take risks while playing?*

	Children aged 7-16 weighted base n=1000
Yes	77%
No	21%
Don't know	3%

Why is playing adventurously good for children?

- Adventurous play makes children feel happy, free and confident.

Children's survey: *How does playing adventurously make you feel?*

	Children aged 7-16 weighted base=1000
Happy	90%
Free	58%
Confident	49%

Where do children experience adventurous and challenging play?

- The environment in which children and young people today experience adventurous and challenging play is different from the experience of their parents. As children, 70% of today's adults experienced most adventure in outdoor natural environments. Only 29% of children today have a similar experience. Children today appear to play in more designated areas.

Children's survey: *In which of the following places do you most experience adventurous and exciting play?*

		Children aged 7-16 weighted base=1000
1	Playground/park	56%
2	At home	48%
3	Theme park	44%
4	At school	38%
5	Outdoor natural space (trees, rivers, woods etc)	29%
6	Local streets	24%

(Respondents could choose up to 3 answers from a list of 8 options or 'other')

Adult survey: *In which of the following places did you most experience adventurous and exciting play as a child? (Respondents could choose up to 3)*

		Adults weighted base n=1032
1	Outdoor natural space (trees, rivers, woods etc)	70%
2	Playground/park	59%
3	Local streets	45%
4	At school	32%

5	At home	27%
6	Theme park	16%

(Respondents could choose up to 3 answers from a list of 8 options or 'other')

Can children manage their own risks when playing?

- Children are capable of assessing their own risks whilst playing adventurously. Statistics show that fear of hurting themselves declines as children grow up, gaining more confidence and experience.

Children's survey: *Which of the following is most likely to stop you having adventurous play?*

7-8 year olds

		Children aged 7-8 weighted base=200
1	You might hurt yourself	45%
2	No other children to play with	42%
3	Adults won't let you	33%
4	No adult to look after you	18%
5	Nowhere to play	18%
6	You might annoy other adults	16%

(Respondents could choose up to 3 answers from a list of 7 options or 'other')

9-10 year olds

		Children aged 9-10 weighted base=200
1	No other children to play with	48%
2	You might hurt yourself	40%
3	Adults won't let you	33%
4	No adult to look after you	28%
5	Nowhere to play	24%
6	There are local rules (e.g. 'no ball games')	23%

(Respondents could choose up to 3 answers from a list of 7 options or 'other')

11-12 year olds

		Children aged 11-12 weighted base=200
1	No other children to play with	53%
2	Adults won't let you	41%
3	Nowhere to play	35%
4	You might hurt yourself	32%
5	There are local rules (e.g. 'no ball games')	29%
6	You might annoy other adults	26%

(Respondents could choose up to 3 answers from a list of 7 options or 'other')

13-14 year olds

		Children aged 13-14 weighted base=200
1	No other children to play with	51%
2	Nowhere to play	40%
3	There are local rules (e.g. 'no ball games')	37%

4	Adults won't let you	35%
5	You might annoy other adults	31%
6	You might hurt yourself	25%

(Respondents could choose up to 3 answers from a list of 7 options or 'other')

15-16 year olds

		Children aged 15-16 weighted base=200
1	There are local rules (e.g. 'no ball games')	47%
2	No other children to play with	40%
3	Nowhere to play	39%
4	You might annoy other adults	35%
5	Adults won't let you	28%
6	You might hurt yourself	21%

(Respondents could choose up to 3 answers from a list of 7 options or 'other')

What would help children to play more adventurously?

- Having more places to play was the most cited solution given to enable children to play more adventurously by both adults (33%) and children (40%).

Children's survey: *What would help you play more adventurously?*

		Children aged 7-16 weighted base=1000
1	More places to play	40%
2	More friends to play with	25%
3	More playgrounds/ adventure playgrounds	20%
4	Places that feel safer to play	8%
5	Adults letting me play how I want	8%
6	Fewer notices restricting play	5%
7	An adult to look out for me	2%

(Respondents were asked this question unprompted)

Adult's survey: *What do you think would help children play more adventurously?*

		Adults weighted base n=1032
1	More places to play	33%
2	More playgrounds/ adventure playgrounds	31%
3	Places that feel safer to play	28%
4	An adult to look out for them	26%
5	Adults letting them play how they want	19%
6	Less concern with health and safety regulations	12%
7	More friends to play with	11%

(Respondents were asked this question unprompted)

What sort of adventures do children and young people enjoy?

- Both boys and girls get the most challenge and adventure from bike riding/skate boarding compared to other play activities. Girls cited exploring new and unfamiliar places as second favourite, followed jointly by playing with nature and playing in a playground or park. Playing computer games was the second most popular choice for boys, followed by exploring new and unfamiliar places.

Children's survey: *When you are playing, what do you find the most challenging and adventurous?*

Top 3 challenging and adventurous play activities for boys:

		Boys aged 7-16 weighted base n=494
1	Bike riding/skateboarding	53%
2	Playing an electronic/computer game	43%
3	Exploring new/unfamiliar places	33%

(Respondents could choose up to 3 answers from a list of 7 options)

Top 3 challenging and adventurous play activities for girls:

		Girls aged 7-16 weighted base n=506
1	Bike riding/skateboarding	45%
2	Exploring new/unfamiliar places	39%
3	Playing with nature (trees, rivers, woods etc)	37%
3	Playing in a playground/park	37%

(Respondents could choose up to 3 answers from a list of 7 options)

Do children enjoy the same type of adventures that adults did when they were children?

- Adults also cited bike riding/skateboarding as their favourite adventurous activity as a child, this was followed by playing with nature and exploring new/unfamiliar places.

Children's survey: *When you are playing, what do you find the most challenging and adventurous?*

Top 3 challenging and adventurous play activities for children:

		Children aged 7-16 weighted base=1000
1	Bike riding/skateboarding	49%
2	Exploring new/unfamiliar places	36%
3	Playing an electronic/computer game	35%

(Respondents could choose up to 3 answers from a list of 7 options)

Adult's survey: *When you were playing as a child, which of the following did you find the most challenging and adventurous?*

Top 3 challenging and adventurous play activities when adults were children:

		Adults weighted base n=1032
1	Bike riding/skateboarding	55%
2	Playing with nature (trees, rivers, woods etc)	52%
3	Exploring new/unfamiliar places	50%

(Respondents could choose up to 3 answers from a list of 7 options)

Do adults think that children should experience adventurous and risky play?

- 80% of adults think that children should be free to experience adventurous play even if it puts them at risk of minor injury.

Adult's survey: *Which of the following statement do you most agree with?*

	Adults weighted base n=1032
Children should be free to experience adventurous play even if it puts them at risk of minor injury.	80%
Children should be prevented from experiencing adventurous play if it puts them at risk of minor injury.	19%
Don't know	1%

Why do adults think opportunities for children to play adventurously have declined?

- Many reasons were cited by adults for the decline in opportunities for children challenge to themselves and take risks whilst playing. The most common reason was thought to be an increased concern with health and safety regulations (30%). The second biggest reason was attributed to adults perceiving it to be more dangerous for children to play now (19%).

Play England
July 2008

Notes:

1. This research was commissioned to support Playday 2008: *Give us a go!* A breakdown of statistics is available on request.
2. ICM Research interviewed a random sample of 1032 adults aged 18 + by telephone between 27 – 29 June 2008. Interviews were conducted across the UK and the results have been weighted to the profile of all adults. They

also interviewed a random sample of 1000 children and young people aged 7 – 16 across the UK by telephone between 24 June – 9 July 2008. Interviews were conducted across the UK and the results have been weighted to the profile of all children. Where no age is specified there is little difference across the age spectrum of children. ICM is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules. Further information at www.icmresearch.co.uk.

3. Further research commissioned to support Playday: *Give us a go!* is available from the Playday website www.playday.org.uk or by request:
 - Survey of play providers
 - Review of published literature on risk and play
 - Qualitative research from focus groups with children and young people
4. For more information about Playday and the *Give us a go!* campaign, visit www.playday.org.uk or contact **Clare Quarrell on 020 7843 6044 or email cquarrell@ncb.org.uk** for press enquiries.
5. Playday is coordinated by Play England working in partnership with PlayBoard Northern Ireland, Play Scotland and Play Wales. The national campaign involves thousands of children and young people getting out to play at locally organised events. Playday events range from small-scale neighbourhood get-togethers to large-scale public events organised by local authorities and national organisations.
6. Play England promotes excellent free play opportunities for all children and young people. Play England provides advice and support to promote good practice, and works to ensure that the importance of play is recognised by policy makers, planners and the public. Play England is part of NCB and is funded by the Big Lottery Fund. For further information visit www.playengland.org.uk
7. NCB promotes the voices, interests and well-being of all children and young people across every aspect of their lives. As a membership and infrastructure support agency for the children's sector in England and Northern Ireland, NCB provides essential information on policy, research and best practice for our members and the members of our wide range of partnership bodies which operate under our charitable status and are based in our London headquarters. For further information visit www.ncb.org.uk