

Comisiwn
Cydraddoldeb a
Hawliau Dynol

Equality and
Human Rights
Commission

Children and young people

Who do you see?

Living together in Wales



Key Findings.

- There is a widely held belief that the behaviour of young people is worse than it was in the past and that young people lack respect for older people.
- A significant number of the Welsh population think that the views of young people aren't listened to enough.

Children and young people

Introduction

This document provides analysis of a number of attitude statements concerning perceptions of children and young people¹ and older people's behaviour towards them.

Behaviour and attitudes of young people

Amongst Welsh adults there were some strong opinions of the behaviour and attitudes of children and young people. Three quarters of Welsh adults agreed with the statement 'the behaviour of young people today is worse than it was in the past', whilst 17 per cent disagreed.

In terms of gender, women (77 per cent) were slightly more likely than men (73 per cent) to agree that the behaviour of young people today is worse than it was in the past. Perhaps surprisingly, there were no significant differences by age, with the youngest age group being as likely to agree with this statement as the oldest - 77 per cent of those aged 16-34 and 73 per cent of those aged 65+ agreed with this statement.

Welsh adults who were from C2² or DE³ households were markedly more likely than those who were from AB⁴ or C1⁵ households to agree that the behaviour of young people today is worse than it was in the past (81 per cent of C2 and 85 per cent DE adults agreed compared with 65 per cent of AB and 71 per cent of C1 adults). Given C2 or DE adults were more likely than average to have finished education aged 16 or younger, the pattern of response for C2 and DE adults was replicated amongst those who finished in education age at age 16 or younger (table 1.1).

Perhaps surprisingly, families without children were no more likely to agree with this statement than those with children in the household. There were also no significant differences based on ethnicity.

¹ The term 'young people' is used here to refer to those aged 11-25 years.

² Skilled manual workers

³ Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers or on state benefit/unemployed

⁴ Higher and intermediate managerial/administrative/professional households

⁵ Supervisory, clerical, junior managerial/administrative/professional households.

Table 1.1 Agreement with statement ‘the behaviour of young people today is worse than it was in the past’ by sub-group

	<i>Unweighted base, n=</i>	<i>Weighted base, n=</i>	<i>Agree (strongly or tend to) (per cent)</i>
Total	1,589	1,589	75
Male	744	768	73
Female	845	821	77
Age: 16-34	385	413	77
35-54	598	581	75
55-64	262	248	72
65+	344	347	73
White British/Welsh	1438	1555	75
Other	151	34	77
Couple, with children	404	392	76
Couple, no children	542	524	74
Single, with children	115	126	78
Single, no children	522	541	75
AB	382	376	65
C1	533	538	71
C2	242	241	81
DE	428	431	85

Further negative perceptions of the behaviour and attitudes of young people were evident when Welsh adults were presented with the statement ‘*young people lack respect for older people*’. Approximately three-quarters of Welsh adults agreed with this statement (73 per cent), whilst around a fifth disagreed (19 per cent). There were no differences in levels of agreement by gender, age or whether children were present in the household

In terms of ethnicity, white British/Welsh adults were less likely to agree that young people lack respect for older people than those who belonged to non-white ethnic groups (73 per cent agreed compared with 81 per cent respectively).

There were also clear differences in the level of agreement with this statement by social grade. C2 adults were more likely to agree with the statement than adults from all other social grades - 81 per cent of adults from C2 households compared with 69 per cent, 72 per cent and 74 per cent for adults from AB, C1 and DE households respectively. Linked with social grade, those who finished education aged 16 or under were more likely to agree with this statement than those who finished education aged 17 or over - 78 per cent compared with 70 per cent or less respectively.

Table 1.2 Agreement with statement ‘young people lack respect for older people’ by sub-group

	<i>Unweighted base, n=</i>	<i>Weighted base, n=</i>	<i>Agree (strongly or tend to) (per cent)</i>
Total	1,589	1,589	73
Male	744	768	75
Female	845	821	71
Age: 16-34	385	413	75
35-54	598	581	75
55-64	262	248	70
65+	344	347	71
White British/Welsh	1438	1555	73
Other	151	34	81
Couple, with children	404	392	73
Couple, no children	542	524	73
Single, with children	115	126	78
Single, no children	522	541	73
AB	382	376	69
C1	533	538	72
C2	242	241	81
DE	428	431	74

Respect for young people and their views

Over half (54 per cent) of Welsh adults agreed with the statement '*older people lack respect for young people*'. 36 per cent of Welsh adults disagreed. This contrasts sharply with the three quarters of the population who agreed that 'young people lack respect for older people'. This demonstrates that the sentiment of this statement had more resonance amongst Welsh adults.

There were no overall differences in levels of agreement with the statement in terms of gender. However, as might be expected, age played a significant part. Those aged 16-54 (57 per cent) were more likely to agree with this statement than those aged 55+ (46 per cent).

There was a noticeable difference in levels of agreement between households with children and those without. Welsh adults with children were more likely to agree that older people lack respect for young people than those without children - 65 per cent compared with 50 per cent respectively. However, the latter group tended to comprise of older adults.

There was no significant variation in levels of agreement in terms of social grade or ethnicity.

Table 1.3 Agreement with statement ‘older people lack respect for young people’ by sub-group

	<i>Unweighted base, n=</i>	<i>Weighted base, n=</i>	<i>Agree (strongly or tend to) (per cent)</i>
Total	1,589	1,589	54
Male	744	768	53
Female	845	821	55
Age: 16-34	385	413	62
35-54	598	581	58
55-64	262	248	49
65+	344	347	44
White British/Welsh	1438	1555	55
Other	151	34	49
Couple, with children	404	392	64
Couple, no children	542	524	50
Single, with children	115	126	67
Single, no children	522	541	50
AB	382	376	54
C1	533	538	54
C2	242	241	60
DE	428	431	53

Despite negative perceptions of the behaviour and attitudes of young people, the majority of Welsh adults felt that ‘the views of young people aren’t listened to enough by adults’. Around two thirds (67 per cent), of Welsh adults agreed whilst approximately a quarter (24 per cent) disagreed.

Welsh adults in the youngest age band were more likely to agree with this statement than those in the oldest age band (73 per cent of those aged 16-34 years compared with 61 per cent of those aged 65+). This difference appears to be driven by women as those aged 16-34 were more likely to agree with this statement than those aged 55-64 or 65+ - 78 per cent of those aged 16-34 compared with 67 per cent of those aged 55-64 and 57 per cent of those aged 65+.

Those adults whose family status was ‘single with children living in household’ were markedly more likely to agree with this statement than

those with any other type of family status (83 per cent agreed compared with 70 per cent or less for all other groups). Again this relates to age, as 58 per cent of those in a single household with children fell into the 16-34 age range.

There were no differences by ethnicity or social grade.

Table 1.4 Agreement with statement ‘the views of young people aren’t listened to enough by adults’ by sub-group

	<i>Unweighted base, n=</i>	<i>Weighted base, n=</i>	<i>Agree (strongly or tend to) (per cent)</i>
Total	1,589	1,589	67
Male	744	768	65
Female	845	821	69
Age: 16-34	385	413	73
35-54	598	581	67
55-64	262	248	65
65+	344	347	61
Male Age: 16-34	172	193	67
35-54	297	298	64
55-64	128	125	63
65+	147	153	66
Female Age: 16-34	213	220	78
35-54	301	284	71
55-64	134	123	67
65+	197	194	57
White British/Welsh	1438	1555	67
Other	151	34	59
Couple, with children	404	392	70
Couple, no children	542	524	64
Single with children	115	126	83
Single, no children	522	541	65
AB	382	376	64
C1	533	538	67
C2	242	241	67
DE	428	431	70

Summary

The research demonstrates some fairly negative perceptions of young people amongst adults in Wales, and this is replicated in other areas of the survey (see below).

Around three quarters of Welsh adults agreed that the behaviour of young people is worse than it was in the past and that young people lack respect for older people. In contrast only half thought that older people lacked respect for younger people.

Nonetheless, two thirds of Welsh adults agreed that the views of young people were not listened to enough by adults. This perhaps reveals an acknowledgment that there may be a connection between young people not feeling 'heard' and impacts on their behaviour. In this instance, the results were heavily influenced by age: older people (65+) were less likely to agree than younger age groups (16-34) that the views of young people were not listened to enough.

The other analysis documents 'Everyday Encounter' and 'The Workplace' explore other attitudes towards children and young people.

Notes

Further information on the research is available on the Commission in Wales pages on our website at:

www.equalityhumanrights.com

About the attitudinal survey

EHRC Wales commissioned GfK NOP to undertake research into people's attitudes towards discrimination, human rights and social cohesion in Wales. The research seeks to explore people's attitudes towards discrimination relating to gender, ethnic minority groups, disabled people, gay men and lesbians, issues on age, religion and faith and also the Welsh language. These results establish a baseline measurement of attitudes which could be repeated at future intervals.

The overall sample was 1,589 respondents. The survey was carried out by telephone. All respondents were offered the option of completing the survey in Welsh. Access issues were addressed by offering those with hearing impairments the opportunity to use a TypeTalk service. Those who found it difficult to communicate in English were offered the chance to have the interview interpreted using Language Line.

The sampling method used in the survey combined the selection of Random Digit Dial (RDD) numbers with the application of quotas to control the profile of those taking part in the survey. Quotas were set by region within Wales (five regions), by gender interlocked with working status, by age band and by ethnic origin based on demographic information derived from the 2001 Census. These were set to ensure that the sample would be representative of the Welsh population by these factors.

An interviewing boost was carried out in areas with higher proportion of ethnic minority people in the population.

Comparisons with Scotland and GB

Comparisons have been drawn with the findings from the Scottish Social Attitudes Survey 2006 and the perceptions audit carried out by GfK NOP. It should be noted that only broad comparisons are possible because different methodologies were used in both these surveys. Therefore, any similarities or differences between the findings from these surveys and the results of the EHRC Wales survey must be treated as indicative rather than absolute.