

RELEASED: Tuesday, October 6, 2105

BtN Kids' Happiness Survey

20,000 Australian children tell ABC's *Behind the News* about their mental health challenges in record survey

The inaugural **BtN Kids' Happiness Survey** has revealed that bullying, family issues and the future dominate the thoughts of many Australian children.

67% of kids responded that they had experienced bullying. And of those, 39% said it went on for a year or more.

1 in 4 kids responded that they worry about the future all of the time. 1 in 4 kids said they worried about their family all of the time too.

And perhaps most worryingly, nearly 1 in 5 kids say they prefer not to talk to anyone about their concerns.

When it comes to sleep, 32% of kids reported that they regularly sleep fewer hours than recommended (9 - 10 hours a night).

Body image concerns also featured, with 35% of kids saying they would change their body if they could.

And finally, 18% of kids responded that they often don't feel valued.

The **BTN Kids' Happiness Survey** was conducted online by ABC TV's *Behind the News*, with guidance from a registered child psychologist.

With 20,000* responses recorded over 2 and a half weeks, the **BtN Kids' Happiness Survey** is now the biggest survey of kids' mental health in Australian history.

Responses were tallied for kids aged 6 to 16.

Location of respondents: NSW 35%, VIC 24%, WA 14%, SA 11%, QLD 8%, TAS 4%, ACT 3%, NT 1%.

*Please note, all mental health-related questions in the **BtN Kids' Happiness Survey** were optional, so the number of responses varied a little for each section. The total number of responses quoted reflects the number of children who filled out the first three compulsory questions: AGE, GENDER and HOME STATE or TERRITORY.

For more information, please contact *Behind the News* Series Producer, Nathan Bazley on (08) 8343 4660 or [email](#)

Children's Psychologist Kirrilie Smout is available for expert commentary on this survey. Please phone (08) 8357 1711 or [email](#)

More results from the **BtN Kids' Happiness Survey**:

- **Which gender is happier?** It's about the same – 65% of girls compared to 63% of boys said they were always or mostly happy.
- **Which gender worries the most?** 22% of girls said they worry most or all of the time, compared to 15% of boys.
- **Do girls worry about body image more than boys?** Only just – 31% to 27%. But interestingly, 35% of girls reported that they wished they could change their body, opposed to 27% of boys.
- **Which gender is more likely to experience bullying?** It's close. 68% of girls and 65% of boys reported experiencing bullying.
- **Which age is most likely to be bullied?** Similar across the board. (6 – 53%, 7 – 63%, 8 – 70%, 9 – 69%, 10 – 68%, 11 – 66%, 12 – 65%, 13 – 65%, 14 – 64%, 15 – 62%, 16 – 64%)
- **Do young kids worry less often than old kids?** Yes. It goes from 9% of 6 year olds right through to 38% of 16 year olds (6 – 9%, 7 – 16%, 8 – 14%, 9 – 16%, 10 – 17%, 11 – 19%, 12 – 22%, 13 – 25%, 14 – 30%, 15 – 30%, 16 – 38%) (percentage refers to kids that reported feeling worried most or all of the time)
- **Which gender is most likely to not talk to someone about their worries or concerns?** Both genders equally not likely to talk about issues. (girls 18%, boys 17%)
- **Do kids worry about their future more often as they get older?** Yes, once they hit their teens. (6 – 38%, 7 – 34%, 8 – 41%, 9 – 43%, 10 – 42%, 11 – 41%, 12 – 41%, 13 – 41%, 14 – 47%, 15 – 54%, 16 – 51%)

The **BtN Kids' Happiness Survey** results are being released as part of **Mental As...** the ABC's week long initiative in support of Mental Health Week which aims to encourage Australians to start talking about mental illness and to give to mental health research.

Visit abc.net.au/mentalias or SMS "MentalAs" to 0455 021 021 to show your support and make a contribution. **#mentalias**

For further information, please contact:

Chris Chamberlin | News Publicist | ABC TV Publicity
02 8333 2154 / 0404 075 749 / chamberlin.chris@abc.net.au
[@popculturechris](https://twitter.com/popculturechris)