

Children & young people's survey summary report

International Day of Play 2024

In the lead up to the first International Day of Play taking place on 11 June 2024, PlayBoard NI asked children and young people about the importance of play in their lives, what they like to do when they are playing, and what, if anything, stops them from playing as much as they would like to.

The two-week snapshot survey was completed online by 150 children and young people aged up to 18 years old and living in Northern Ireland.

Key findings from the survey include:

- 90% of children and young people said that play was an important part of their lives.
- With regards to what children and young people like to play, 77% like to be active with 55% enjoying wheeled play. 43% enjoy playing in natural spaces, 42% enjoy creating and making things during play, 35% enjoy hanging out with friends whilst 26% enjoy tech-based play.
- When asked why play was so important:
 - 84% said it made them happy, 82% said play was fun whilst 50% said play was important for making friends.
 - 55% said play helped them to keep physically active, with 48% enjoying the opportunity play gave them to be outdoors in fresh air.
 - As well as helping them to be active, 31% of children and young people highlighted the role of play in helping them to learn and develop knowledge and skills, with 34% saying it helped them relax.
- In relation to what prevents children and young people from playing as much as they'd like, 48% stated that they did not have enough time for play; 32% said there were very few places for them to play where they live with 28% highlighting that they had very few other children to play with in their area. Traffic concerns were highlighted by 27%, who said that increased traffic prevented them from playing in their local area and on the streets near to their home.
- As part of the survey, children and young people were also asked what would help them to be able to play more often. More time to play was identified by 48%; 42% identified a need for more spaces or places to play in their local area (with 31% identifying a need for safer spaces to play); whilst 27% highlighted a need for easier ways to travel to, and access spaces for play.

