

Children more worried about the future, exams and bullying

By James Kirkup, Political Correspondent, and John Bingham | Friday, October 31, 2008



Children as young as 10 are reporting growing fear and uncertainty for their own futures as adult influences put the traditional idea of childhood under increasing threat. A survey of 150,000 children aged 10 to 15 found evidence of a generation increasingly under pressure to perform in exams, facing a growing threat from bullying in the playground and turning to adult activities such as drink and drugs. Children's charities and commentators said that the study carried out by Ofsted, the Government's education watchdog, showed that adult influences are increasing undermining the idea of childhood itself.

The "Tellus" study, carried out during the spring term of this year, recorded a marked rise in the number of children who said they were worried about their life in the years ahead. Some 49 per cent said they worried about "my future," - a dramatic rise from only 30 per cent in a similar survey last year. The pressure of exams is also growing, with 57 per cent of children saying they worried about school tests, up from 50 per cent last year. And 27 per cent of children said they worried about being bullied, up from 25 per cent last year. Meanwhile as many as 10 per cent of children their final primary school year spoke of being drunk while significant numbers of 12 and 13 year-olds reported experimenting with drugs.

Sue Palmer, author of the book *Toxic Childhood*, said that the findings bore out fears that over-exposure to the adult media and risk averse parenting, preventing children playing outside, was damaging their outlook and leaving them unduly influenced by marketing. "In the past, adult worries were very much kept to the adult world - adults read about them in newspapers but children were largely kept away from that and had their own playground culture," she said.

The percentage of children who said they have "never" been bullied while at school fell from 70 per cent last year to 56 per cent this year while six per cent say they are bullied "most days." On alcohol, as many as 16 per cent of children claimed they had been drunk in the previous month while a third of year 10 pupils said they had been experienced drunkenness. While there was progress on smoking, with 75 per cent of children saying they had never tried a cigarette, nine per cent of Year 10 children said they did so every day. More than a tenth of those in Years eight to 10 admitted having taken drugs at least once, with cannabis the most commonly-used narcotic.

1. In appropriate paragraph form, provide a brief however, thorough synopsis of the "Tellus" study conducted by Ofsted, the Government's education watchdog. Additionally, incorporate Sue Palmer's findings into your response in an effort to comprehend the rather enlightening statistics revealed in the editorial above.
(GPS - Grades 6 - 8: MRC a, d)
2. Design and solve a series of simple one-step equations using each of the four basic operations (sum +, product \times , difference -, and quotient \div) and evaluate algebraic expressions, including those with exponents, provided the statistical data in the passage above. Express all of the percentages referenced throughout the passage above interchangeably as fractions, decimals, and illustrate each figure into a collection of circle graphs.
(GPS - Grade 6: M6P1 - M6P5; MRC; M6A3; M6N1f, g; M6D1c)
3. Solve question two. Define a variable, write and solve an equation, and interpret the solution. Simplify and evaluate these algebraic expressions using the commutative, associative, and distributive properties as appropriate. Describe how change in one variable affects the other variable when.
(GPS Grade 7: M7P1 - M7P5; MRC; M7A1b; M7A2 a; M7A3c)
4. Represent a given situation (question three) using algebraic expressions or equations in one variable in terms of others. Simplify and evaluate the results. **(GPS Grade 8: M8P1 - M8P5; M8A1 a - e)**
5. Upon completion of this assignment, how far have we progressed through the 2008-09 series of *The Daughtry Times*®? Express your answer interchangeably as a fraction, decimal, percentage, and circle graph.
(GPS - Grade 6: M6N1f, g; M6D1c; Grade 7: M7D1f)
6. Using contextual clues only, define the following italicized words: *undermining*, *averse*, and *cannabis* obtained from the passage above. Additionally, use each word in a complete sentence to demonstrate further comprehension. **(GPS - Grades 6 -8: MRC a, c, d)**

Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) adapted from georgiastandards.org. Standards specifically addressed in this edition are strategically aligned with the curriculum map and annotated adjacent to the respective grade level inquiry.

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