

Children's Safety Survey Results 2021

The Institute of Child Protection Studies developed the Children's Safety Survey. We use the survey to hear from children and young people about how safe they feel in youth-serving organisations. Examples of youth-serving organisations include schools, sports clubs and other places where children and young people learn, play and stay.

In the survey, children and young people answer questions about:

- how safe they think an organisation is
- how confident they are adults in the organisations will keep them safe
- what might stop them from asking for help if they feel unsafe.

How many children and young people took part in the survey in 2021?

3,032 children and young people, aged between 10 and 18 years, took part in the survey in 2021.



10 – 12 years:

1,011 (33.4%)



13 – 15 years:

1,508 (49.7%)



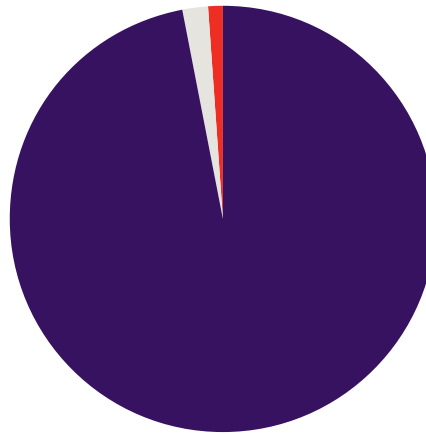
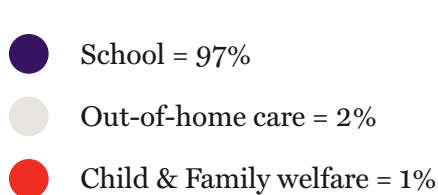
16 – 18 years:

513 (17.0%)

Children and young people thought about the organisation that arranged for them to take part in the survey when answering questions.

Most children and young people who participated in the survey in 2021 were telling us about how safe they felt at their school (97%).

Other children and young people responded about other organisations they do things at.



What did the survey tell us?

Feelings of safety in an organisation

We combined children and young people's answers to discover how safe they felt within organisations. We found that overall:

61% of children and young people felt safe all the time

30% some of the time; and

4% never felt safe.

Feelings about unsafe situations

Children and young people watched videos or read short stories about unsafe situations and answered questions. There were two types of stories. One story was about an adult doing something that made a child or young person feel unsafe. The other story was about a young person doing something that made a peer (that is, another child or young person) feel unsafe.

Children and young people's answers about the stories helped us understand four things:

- How likely that situation was to happen in their organisation and if it would worry them.
- Whether they would tell someone about it and, if yes, who they would tell.
- Whether they had confidence an adult could help them.
- What would stop them from telling someone (that is, any barriers to seeking help).



If an adult made a child or young person feel unsafe

81%

of children and young people would tell someone.



Most children and young people would tell their mum, a friend, or dad.

Confidence in adults



6 out of 10

children and young people:

- Had confidence adults would know what to do.
- Believed adults felt it was their job to help.

Just over half

said they had an adult they trust who they would talk to.

Barriers to help seeking

15%

felt there were things stopping them from asking for help.



Around 1 in 3

of children and young people said they felt uncomfortable talking to adults about situations like this.

If a young person is making another young person feel unsafe

72%

of children and young people would tell someone.



Most children and young people would tell their mum, a friend, or dad.

Confidence in adults

60%

of children and young people had confidence adults could help.

1 in 10

were unsure if adults would ask them what help they might want.

30%

said they knew what to do when unsafe because they had spoken about situations like this at their organisation.

Barriers to help seeking

16%

felt there were things stopping them from asking for help.

1 in 3 

felt uncomfortable talking with an adult about unsafe situations with their peers.

1 in 4

worried things would get worse if they told an adult.

So what?

The survey results show us that most children and young people feel safe in organisations. But we see areas for improvement. Many children and young people don't know what to do when they feel unsafe. The Institute will use these results to help organisations improve how they support children and young people to seek help.