



Parenting
across Scotland

Facts and Figures 2024: Play and leisure



Introduction



Our main source of statistical evidence in relation to parents and carers' views and experiences of children's participation in play, leisure and hobbies activity comes from the The COVID-19 Early Years Resilience and Impact Survey (CEYRIS). Round 4, published in 2024 covers parents' reports of their children's participation organized activities. The survey also explores parents and carers' views on the barriers to participation in play and leisure. It covers children aged one to eleven years old.

Organised activities, classes, groups or sports clubs

Parents and carers were asked if their child routinely attended organised activities, classes, groups or sports clubs outside of school or childcare (with or without them).¹ Around three-quarters (74%) reported their child had routinely attended paid organised activities, classes, groups, or sports clubs, with a fifth (20%) attending free organised activities.

However, a fifth (20%) did not routinely attend any (paid or free) activities. Children from low income families were less likely to attend activities than those from wealthier backgrounds (33% and 12% respectively).

The reasons given for not attending routinely organised groups were diverse, but around one third stated that cost was a significant barrier:

- No interest in attending – 30%
- Cannot afford activities – 30%
- the activities on offer did not meet their child's needs or interests – 24%
- Activities were fully booked – 16%
- Other – 32%.

Equipment for leisure

Overall, 38% of parents taking part in CEYRIS reported that their financial situation had some impact on their ability to buy **sporting equipment**. The proportion of families reporting a very negative impact was much higher for low-income households (35%) compared to high income households (4%).²

Similarly, 34% of parents reported that their financial situation had a slight or very negative impact on their child's ability to **buy outdoors equipment**. The proportion of families reporting a very negative impact was much higher for low-income households (26%) compared to high income households (3%).³

¹ Public Health Scotland. "COVID-19 Early Years Resilience and Impact Survey (CEYRIS) – Round 4: Report 2 – Children's Play and learning", Public Health Scotland, May 2024.

² Public Health Scotland. "COVID-19 Early Years Resilience and Impact Survey (CEYRIS) – Round 4: Report 4 – Household economic circumstances", Public Health Scotland, May 2024.

³ Ibid.

Events and family activities

As will other activities, family financial situations had an impact on children’s attendance at birthday parties, celebrations and family trips;

- 30% of parents and carers reported that their financial situation had a slightly or very negative impact on their child attending birthday parties and other celebrations. A much higher proportion of low-income families reported a slightly or very negative impact (50%) compared to high income households (17%).⁴
- 47% of parents and carers reported that their financial situation had a slightly or very negative impact on their child's ability to participate in family trips and visiting relatives. The proportion was much higher for low-income households (31%) compared to high income households (7%).⁵
- 58% of parents and carers reported that their financial situation had a slight or very negative impact on their child's ability to participate in family holidays. The proportion of families reporting a very negative impact was much higher for low-income households (48%) compared to high income households (16%).⁶

Briefing prepared by Marino Tomita

Sources

- **Public Health Scotland. “COVID-19 Early Years Resilience and Impact Survey (CEYRIS) – Round 4: Report 2 – Children’s Play and learning”, Public Health Scotland, May 2024.** <https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/covid-19-early-years-resilience-and-impact-survey-ceyris-report/covid-19-early-years-resilience-and-impact-survey-ceyris-findings-from-round-four/>
- **Public Health Scotland. “COVID-19 Early Years Resilience and Impact Survey (CEYRIS) – Round 4: Report 4 – Household economic circumstances”, Public Health Scotland, May 2024.** <https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/covid-19-early-years-resilience-and-impact-survey-ceyris-report/covid-19-early-years-resilience-and-impact-survey-ceyris-findings-from-round-four/>

⁴ Public Health Scotland. “COVID-19 Early Years Resilience and Impact Survey (CEYRIS) – Round 4: Report 2 – Children’s Play and learning”, Public Health Scotland, May 2024.

⁵ Public Health Scotland. “COVID-19 Early Years Resilience and Impact Survey (CEYRIS) – Round 4: Report 4 – Household economic circumstances”, Public Health Scotland, May 2024.

⁶ Ibid.