

Facts and Figures 2024: Children's rights



Introduction



On Tuesday 16 July 2024, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) became law in Scotland. This means that public bodies have a duty to ensure that children's rights are being protected and upheld within the support and services they provide to children and their families.

The Scottish Government has produced information for parents and carers about what UNCRC incorporation means for children and families. However, little statistical evidence exists that captures parents and carers' views of children's rights and the UNCRC.

Children's right to participate in decision making

One area where information has been gathered is in relation to adult views of children's involvement in decision making (Article 12 of the UNCRC).

The Scottish Social Attitudes (SSA) Survey 2021/22 asked the following questions on young peoples' involvement in decision making:

- "How much say, if any, should 11- to 15-year-olds in Scotland have in decisions that affect their lives?"
- "How much say, if any, should 16- to 18-year-olds in Scotland have in decisions that affect their lives?"

A large proportion of adults surveyed felt that those aged 16 to 18 should have a say in decisions that affect their lives – 72% of adults felt that those aged 16 to 18 should have 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot' of say. However, a smaller proportion of people felt the same way towards those aged 11 to 15 – only 39% felt those aged 11 to 15 should have 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot' of say. Only 6% of adults felt that those aged 16 to 18 should have 'not very much' say or 'none at all', compared with 21% for those aged 11 to 15.

Children in the household

The results were slightly more positive for adults with children living in the household, many if not most of whom were likely to be parents or carers.

Adults with children aged up to 15 living in the household were more likely to say that young people aged 16 to 18 should have either 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot' of say in decisions that affect them (79%), compared with those not living with children (71%).

Those with children aged up to 15 living in the household were also more likely to say that young people aged 11 to 15 should have either 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot' of say in decisions that affect them (45%), compared with those not living with children (37%).

Briefing prepared by Marino Tomita

Sources

- **Scottish Government. *Scottish Social Attitudes survey 2021/22: public attitudes to children and young people's decision making*.** <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-social-attitudes-survey-2021-22-public-attitudes-children-young-peoples-decision-making/>