



THE  
**BIG**  
AMBITION

 **CHILDREN'S  
COMMISSIONER**

---

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2024

---



Dame Rachel de Souza  
Children's Commissioner

THE BIG AMBITION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Big Ambition was a survey carried out by the Children's Commissioner between September 2023 and January 2024. It asked children about their experiences, views and what they want government to do. The results from the survey have informed the Children's Commissioner's own priorities for the rest of her time in office, and the work she does to influence the government's plans.

The Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza, has engaged with 367,000 children and adults through **The Big Ambition**. It received responses for around 39,500 children with a special educational need and/or disability, and almost 14,000 children with a social worker. Around 390 children who responded were living in secure settings and around 300 in mental health hospitals. There were responses from every local authority in England, and from children of all ages.

Taken together with the Children's Commissioner's **The Big Ask** survey in 2021 and other surveys, visits and focus groups conducted by the office, since taking up her post the Children's Commissioner has engaged with close to a million children.

The report sets out the key findings from **The Big Ambition** survey, both the percentages of children agreeing and disagreeing to different questions, and direct quotes from their response to the question 'what one thing could the government do to improve the lives of children?'

CONTENTS	
The Ambitions	3
Families	4
Health	6
Education	8
Children's Social Care	10
Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children	12
Youth Work	13
Safety from Crime	14
Online Safety	16
Jobs and Skills	17
A Better World	18



THE AMBITIONS

<p><b>1</b> Every child grows up in a family who has what they need to support them and no child grows up in poverty.</p>	<p><b>2</b> Every child grows up in a loving and supportive family.</p>	<p><b>3</b> Every child has access to high quality support in the early years.</p>	<p><b>4</b> Every child grows up happy and healthy and where children need additional help it is provided as early as possible.</p>	<p><b>5</b> Every child has access to high-quality mental health and wellbeing support in their school and local community.</p>
<p><b>6</b> Every disabled child, child with special educational needs, and neurodiverse child receives excellent, joined up healthcare, social care and education.</p>	<p><b>7</b> Every child with the most acute health needs, living away from home, receives loving, caring support.</p>	<p><b>8</b> Every child has access to a brilliant education.</p>	<p><b>9</b> Every child attends and is engaged in school every day.</p>	<p><b>10</b> Every child who needs additional support to engage in education can access it easily.</p>
<p><b>11</b> Every child involved with children's social care is truly listened to, and their views are heard.</p>	<p><b>12</b> All families get consistent, effective help to improve children's welfare, and to stay together wherever it is in a child's best interests.</p>	<p><b>13</b> Every child in care has a loving stable home.</p>	<p><b>14</b> Every young person with care experience continues to receive care and support for as long as they need it.</p>	<p><b>15</b> Every child who needs secure care receives it in an integrated, homely environment. All Young Offenders Institutions are closed.</p>
<p><b>16</b> Every child seeking asylum has access to a stable and loving home.</p>	<p><b>17</b> Every child seeking asylum is supported to thrive in education.</p>	<p><b>18</b> Every unaccompanied child in need of care and protection is supported from the day they arrive.</p>	<p><b>19</b> Every child has access to play and fun things to do, and places to spend time with their friends.</p>	<p><b>20</b> Every child has access to high-quality youth provision in their local area.</p>
<p><b>21</b> Every child is supported by services that work together with youth work, to prevent issues escalating.</p>	<p><b>22</b> Every child is safe in their home, school, relationships and local area.</p>	<p><b>23</b> Every child is prevented from being affected by violence and criminality.</p>	<p><b>24</b> Every child who is a victim of crime receives specialist care and support.</p>	<p><b>25</b> Every child is safer after an interaction with the police or youth justice system.</p>
<p><b>26</b> Every child can play and learn online safely.</p>	<p><b>27</b> Every child has the knowledge and support to be safe online.</p>	<p><b>28</b> Every child is protected from online harms, and services can effectively safeguard and support them.</p>	<p><b>29</b> Every child is taught about the life skills they will need as adults.</p>	<p><b>30</b> Every child has access to high-quality careers advice, information, and guidance which is tailored to their interests.</p>
<p><b>31</b> Every child, no matter their background, is given the support they need to secure their dream job whether that is through further or higher education or an apprenticeship.</p>	<p><b>32</b> Every child feels empowered to enact change about issues that they care about.</p>	<p><b>33</b> Every child's thoughts, feelings, views, and ambitions are listened to.</p>		

## FAMILIES

### Key findings

- > 86% of children agreed that their family has everything it needs to support them, although 80% of parents agreed.
- > 71% of responses by or on behalf of children with a social worker agreed, compared to 87% for children without a social worker.
- > 73% of children in Hartlepool agreed their family has everything it needs, compared to 86% of children in Hampshire.
- > 83% of children agreed that their family gets to spend quality time together. Younger ages were more likely to agree – 91% of parents of under 6s agreed they get to spend quality time together, compared to 81% of responses by or on behalf of 12 to 18 year olds.
- > 73% of children with SEND, and adults responding on their behalf, agreed that their family has everything it needs, compared to 90% for children without SEND.



### Ambitions

1. Every child grows up in a family that has what they need to support them and no child grows up in poverty:
  - a. The government sets a clear plan for ensuring that no child grows up in poverty.
  - b. All eligible children are auto-enrolled in free school meals, to avoid any entitled children missing out.
  - c. Every school offers breakfast club provision for children who need it, free of charge to parents. These breakfast clubs will be offered to children of all ages who would otherwise start the day hungry.
  - d. Universal credit better reflects the additional costs of having children.
  - e. No child, whether with their family or aged 16 or 17, is homeless, including those living in temporary accommodation.
2. Every child grows up in a loving and supportive family, with close and loving relationships:
  - a. A Family Hub in every area, building upon existing children's centres and Family Hubs.
  - b. A 'Family Framework' for assessing policy and commissioning decisions should be developed.
  - c. A public information campaign, that opens up a conversation about the challenges of parenting and normalises seeking help and accessing information or parenting courses.
  - d. Every parent can access parenting courses on an open-access basis.
3. Every child has access to high quality support in the early years:
  - a. Every child can access high quality free early education from the end of parental leave until school starting age.
  - b. Paternity leave is increased to a minimum of 6 weeks with pay of 90% of income, in line with maternity leave.
  - c. Additional health visitors are recruited so that all babies and children receive their checks in person, regardless of where they live, and can access the ongoing support they need.



## HEALTH

## Key findings

- > 84% of children agreed that they can access good healthcare when they need it, compared to 74% of adults responding on behalf of children.
- > Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) were less likely to agree.
- > 68% of children with SEND, and adults on their behalf, agreed they can access good healthcare, compared to 84% for children without SEND.
- > 71% of children agreed they have a healthy diet, compared to 83% of adults responding on behalf of children. 86% of responses on behalf of children under the age of six agreed they had a healthy diet, declining to 65% of responses from or about 17-year-olds.
- > Only 49% of children agreed they feel happy with the way they look. 60% of boys agreed, compared to 40% of girls. This was the biggest difference between girls and boys of any question.
- > 81% of children agreed they have someone supportive to talk to about how they feel. 6 to 11 year olds were more likely to agree (89%) compared to 77% of 12 to 18 year olds. 67% of children with social workers agreed, compared to 75% of children without a social worker.
- > Around 300 children living in mental health settings appeared to face some of the most significant challenges. The biggest percentage point difference was for 'Your thoughts about the future are listened to', which 70% of all respondents agreed with, but only 11% of responses by or on behalf of children living in a mental health hospital.



## Ambitions

1. Every child grows up happy and healthy and where children need additional help it is provided as early as possible:
  - a. A unique childhood identifier is developed so no child falls through the gaps in the healthcare system.
  - b. Every child to receive, in addition to the current checks in place before the age of two and a half, an annual health review by a health visitor or school nurse to ensure their health needs are identified at the earliest opportunity.
  - c. Additional health visitors are recruited so that all babies and children receive their checks in person, regardless of where they live, and can access the ongoing support they need.
  - d. A school nurse in every school who can work with youth workers, paediatricians, public health leaders and other partners in a local Integrated Care System to identify and support children who are particularly at risk of poor health.
  - e. Swift, multidisciplinary, assessments in nursery and school for children who present with additional needs, behavioural difficulties and neurodiversity which may require additional support.
  - f. High-quality Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) and Relationships and Sex Education (RSHE) which is taught in an age-appropriate way from primary school.
  - g. Introduce new restrictions on vape flavours, descriptions and packaging so these highly addictive products cannot be intentionally marketed to children.
  - h. A joined-up public health approach to promote healthy attitudes to food, diet and exercise.
2. Every child has access to high-quality mental health and wellbeing support in their school and local community:
  - a. Collate mental health services in every school so that every child can be supported through education.
  - b. An Early Support Hub in every local area to act as a 'one stop shop' to support young people with their mental health and wellbeing, sexual healthcare and other challenges.
  - c. Ensure every child has a positive body image – eliminate harmful eating disorder content online and other harmful content promoting unrealistic and unhealthy body types to children.
3. Every disabled child or children with special educational needs, and neurodiverse children receives excellent, joined up healthcare, social care and education:
  - a. Train teachers throughout their career to identify children who require special educational needs support and ensure the resource and cross-system support is available to make reasonable adjustments.
  - b. Make SEND support in schools statutory, with additional funding that sits separately from a school's SEND budget.
  - c. No child waits longer than one school term to have their needs assessed by their local authority, and an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or reformed 'Child's Plan' to be issued where needed.
  - d. Every child has a single 'Child's Plan' setting out what, if any, additional support they need.
  - e. Improve pathways of support for children with autism, ADHD and neurodiversity, so that no child waits longer than 3 months to start an assessment.
4. Children with the most acute health needs living away from home receive loving, caring support:
  - a. The Department for Education, NHS England and the Ministry of Justice must establish a model of care for all children at risk of needing secure care.
  - b. Reform the Mental Health Act 1983 so that it is fit for the 21st century.
  - c. Ensure that all care that disabled children receive is regulated and loopholes are addressed.
  - d. Every child who is entitled to advocacy must be offered it on a proactive, opt-out basis.

## EDUCATION

### Key findings

- > 60% of children agreed they enjoyed school or college.
- > Secondary-aged children were the least likely to agree that they enjoy school. Responses on behalf of 4-year-olds were the most likely to be agree (93%), while 13-year-olds and adults responding on their behalf were the least likely (44%).
- > Children with SEND were less likely to say they enjoy school (56%) than children without (69%), however, children in state-funded special schools were more likely to agree (76%).
- > 75% of children agreed they had great teachers who supported them.
- > Children in schools rated 'Outstanding' were more likely (79%) to agree that they had great teachers who supported them than those in schools rated 'Inadequate' (72%).
- > Children in schools where the majority of pupils were eligible for free school meals were also more likely to agree (83%) than children in schools where a minority of pupils were eligible for free school meals. (77%).



### Ambitions

1. Every child has access to a brilliant education:
  - a. A unique childhood identifier is developed so that no child falls through the gaps in education.
  - b. Every child can access high quality free early education from the end of parental leave until school starting age.
  - c. Local authorities become the admissions authority for all schools and be given backstop powers to direct admissions.
  - d. Schools and local authorities are held to account for the extent to which they are inclusive and for the outcomes of children who leave their school rolls.
  - e. The government introduces a children not in school register.
2. Every child attends and is engaged in school every day:
  - a. Every child has access to an expanded out of school offer, including trips and enrichment opportunities.
  - b. Every school offers breakfast club provision for children who need it, free of charge to parents.
  - c. Every school can access attendance mentors who can support children to return to school.
  - d. Schools and colleges become full statutory members of local safeguarding partnerships alongside the local authority, police and the NHS.
  - e. Local authorities run multi-agency forums to create local authority wide plans for school attendance.
  - f. Local authorities and schools are held to account for improving school attendance and engaging children in education.
3. Every child who needs additional support to engage in education can access it easily:
  - a. Schools develop strong pastoral policies and wraparound support for all children who need additional help to engage with and thrive in education.
  - b. Collate mental health services in every school.
  - c. Children's support services are delivered on school sites to provide the targeted early help that young people need.
  - d. A school nurse in every school who can work with youth workers, paediatricians, public health leaders and other partners.
  - e. Alternative provision is used as an outreach intervention and delivered through a family of schools.
4. Every disabled child or child with special educational needs and neurodiverse children receives excellent, joined up healthcare, social care and education:
  - a. Train teachers and the early years workforce to identify children who need special educational needs support.
  - b. No child waits longer than one school term to have their needs assessed by their local authority.
  - c. Make SEND support in schools statutory, with additional funding that sits separately from a school's SEND budget.
  - d. Every child has a single plan setting out what, if any, additional support they need.
  - e. The government adopts a joint health, education and care workforce strategy for disabled children and children with special educational needs.



## CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

### Key findings

- > 85% of children with a social worker and adults responding on their behalf agreed that they lived with people who make them feel loved and cared for, compared to 94% for children without a social worker.
- > For children living with a foster family, 84% agreed they lived with people who made them feel loved and cared for, compared to 79% for children in children's homes, 88% of children living with family other than their parents or in kinship care, and 87% of children who were living with parents and had a social worker.
- > 84% of responses by and on behalf of children with a social worker agreed they had somewhere to call home, compared to 95% for children without a social worker.
- > 86% of responses by and for children living with a foster family agreed that they had somewhere to call home, compared to 88% for children in kinship care, 76% for children in children's homes, and 87% for children who were living with their parents and had a social worker.
- > 71% of children with a social worker, and adults responding on their behalf, agreed that their family had everything they need to support them, compared to 87% for children without a social worker. 75% of children who were living with their parents and had a social worker agreed, compared to 45% of children living in children's homes, 74% of children in kinship care and 69% of children living with foster carers
- > 71% of children with a social worker agreed their family gets to spend quality time together, compared to 86% of children without a social worker. 74% of children who were living with their parents and had a social worker agreed, compared to 55% of children in children's homes, 75% of children in kinship care, and 68% of children living with foster carers.
- > 55% of responses by and for children with social workers agreed that their thoughts about the future were listened to, compared to 71% for children without a social worker.
- > 59% of responses by and for children with social workers agreed they had the same opportunities as other children, compared to 72% of children without a social worker. 61% of children living with foster carers agreed, compared to 60% of children in kinship care and 59% of children in children's homes.
- > 63% of responses by and for children with a social worker agreed they are treated fairly, compared to 71% for children without one.
- > 67% of responses by and for children in a secure setting agreed that they had somewhere to call home, compared to 93% of all children or 52% for children in a mental health hospital.
- > 55% of responses by and for children in a secure setting agreed that their family had everything they need to support them, compared to 45% for children in a children's home or 39% of children in a mental health hospital.
- > 32% of responses by and for children in a secure setting agreed that they had great teachers who support them, compared to 77% for all children.
- > 10% of responses by and for children in a secure setting agreed that people who run the country listen to their views, compared to 22% of all children.

### Ambitions

1. Every child involved with children's social care is truly listened to, and their views are heard:
  - a. Every child who is entitled to advocacy must be offered it on a proactive, opt-out basis.
  - b. Social workers, advocates and other professionals are supported to build deeper relationships with the children they support.
2. All families get consistent, effective help to improve children's welfare, and to stay together wherever it is in a child's best interests:
  - a. A unique childhood identifier is developed so that no child falls through the gaps in children's social care.
  - b. A statutory duty to deliver universal early help provision must be introduced.
  - c. A Children's Social Care Funding Formula is needed, ring-fenced by the Department for Education.
  - d. Every child has a single 'Child's Plan' setting out what, if any, additional support they need.
  - e. A review of the Children Act to ensure it is fit for purpose.
  - f. Every local authority has a specialist safeguarding team to address extra-familial harms.
  - g. A safeguarding response to child involvement with criminality is developed.
  - h. Schools and colleges become full statutory members of local safeguarding partnerships alongside the local authority, police and the NHS.
  - i. A strategy for getting every local authority's children's services department to 'Good' or better.
  - j. A consistent offer for children supported under Section 17 of the Children Act.
  - k. Children and families have a clear entitlement to intensive packages of support to keep families together, which includes children being in care 'part-time' while remaining with their families.
  - l. A financial allowance for kinship carers to support them to care for children is needed nationally.
3. Every child in care has a loving stable home:
  - a. Sufficient high-quality placements for all children in care.
  - b. A government strategy to end profit-making provision in children's homes.
  - c. All homes provide care, not just support.
  - d. Legislation is introduced which means that children in care are placed with their siblings whenever it is in their best interests, and are better supported to have contact with siblings if separated from them.
  - e. Every child who cannot live at home, and is provided with accommodation, is legally looked after.
  - f. Consistent support and autonomy for parents and carers providing different permanence options.
4. Every young person with care experience continue to receive care and support for as long as they need it:
  - a. Young care experienced people can stay in care if they want to, or be supported to access the most appropriate housing option for them.
  - b. Care leavers are given the financial support they need to thrive well into adulthood.
  - c. Care leavers are supported with their educational goals.
5. Any child who needs secure care receives it in an integrated, homely environment, to replace current forms of secure provision:
  - a. The Department for Education, NHS England and the Ministry of Justice must establish a model of care for all children at risk of needing secure care.
  - b. Phase out Young Offender Institutions and Secure Training Centres and replace them with the above integrated model of care that can support all children with high levels of needs related to their mental health, welfare or offending.
  - c. Introduce legislation to ensure that children in need of secure care are placed in the most appropriate setting and the use of the inherent jurisdiction to deprive children of liberty is no longer used.

## UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM-SEEKING CHILDREN



### Ambitions

1. Every child seeking asylum has access to a loving and stable home:
  - a. All unaccompanied children are in the care of the local authority from the day they arrive in the country.
  - b. A national foster carer recruitment campaign focused on placements for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children is launched.
  - c. All homes provide care, not just support.
2. All children seeking asylum have access to loving and stable homes:
  - a. Unaccompanied children are on a school roll from the moment they are placed in a local authority.
  - b. They should be given access to a high quality English for Speakers of Other Languages programme.
  - c. Schools support unaccompanied children to integrate.
  - d. As soon as reasonably possible local authorities are made aware of those arriving in their area.
3. Every unaccompanied child in need of care and protection is supported from the day they arrive:
  - a. For those fleeing war and persecution there must be sufficient safe and legal routes available.
  - b. The age assessment process for unaccompanied children must be child-centred, age-appropriate and as non-invasive as possible.
  - c. Unaccompanied children arriving in the UK must not be removed once they turn 18.
  - d. Every unaccompanied child arriving into the country has access to timely and appropriate comprehensive health assessments and care.



## YOUTH WORK



### Key findings

- > 72% of children agreed that they had fun activities to do near where they live. Children are most likely to agree they have fun things to do when they are aged 9 (82%). This decreases with age, with only 54% of 17-year-olds agreeing.
- > 62% of children reported to have a special educational need and/or disability agreed they had fun activities to do, compared to 73% of those without.
- > 69% of children with a social worker agreed, compared to 70% of those without.
- > Children around the country had different views – 50% of children in Knowsley agreed, compared to 82% in Trafford.

### Ambitions

1. Every child has access to play and fun things to do, and spaces to spend time with their friends:
  - a. Local authorities should complete a local child safety audit to map and improve the places children don't feel safe.
  - b. Government should review children's access to safe places to play.
  - c. Every child has access to an expanded out of school offer.
2. Every child has access to high quality youth provision in their area:
  - a. Children can easily find information about things to do in their local area via a directory of youth provision.
  - b. There should be a national formula for funding local youth provision based on the child population.
  - c. Government needs a long-term youth provision strategy based on local decision-making.
  - d. A national and local youth strategy to protect and support open-access youth work provision.
3. Every child should be supported by services that work together to prevent issues escalating:
  - a. Youth sector organisations to participate in multi-agency attendance forums.
  - b. Every police force area has a SAFE taskforce and a Violence Reduction Unit, funded to commission evidence-based youth work to reduce violence.
  - c. All police officers are able to make a 'positive activities referral' for young people they interact with.
  - d. Youth work represented via the local youth partnership in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
  - e. Ofsted works with the youth sector to assure itself of high standards of safeguarding.
- e. Public bodies should be required to make facilities available at cost to non-statutory youth work organisations working with children.

## SAFETY FROM CRIME

### Key findings

- > 73% of responses by and on behalf of children agreed that they feel safe and protected in their local area. 66% of 12 to 18-year-olds said that they feel safe and protected in their local area, compared to 80% of 6 to 11-year-olds.
- > Children were most likely to agree they felt safe at age 7 – 82% agreed – compared to 62% of 15 year olds.
- > Children whose ethnicity was mixed, or other, were the least likely (both 69%) to agree that they feel safe and protected in their local area, while children whose ethnicity was white or Asian/Asian British were the most likely (both 73%).
- > 74% of children in less deprived schools felt safe and protected, compared to 69% of children in more deprived schools (schools where a majority of pupils are eligible for free school meals).

- > 48% of children who were not in education agreed that they felt safe, compared to 73% of children who attended school or college. 55% of children in Alternative Provision agreed they felt safe, compared to 74% in state-funded mainstream schools and 82% of those in independent mainstream schools.
- > There was notable variation around the country – 61% in Croydon felt safe, compared to 79% in Richmond upon Thames.



### Ambitions

1. Every child is safe in their home, school, relationships and local area:
  - a. Every local authority completes a children's safety audit to map and improve the places where children don't feel safe.
  - b. Every child learns about safety, their rights if they are a victim of crime, and where to go to if the need support, through high-quality PSHE lessons in schools.
  - c. Every child is safe from bullying or sexual harassment and abuse, wherever they experience them.
2. Every child is prevented from being affected by violence and criminality:
  - a. The government commits to a cross-government public health strategy to preventing serious violence, taking a life-course approach.
  - b. The government defines serious violence affecting children and has a clear and ambitious target to reduce it to its lowest-ever level.
  - c. Every police force area has a SAFE taskforce and a Violence Reduction Unit, which is funded to commission evidence-based youth work to reduce violence.
3. Every child who is a victim of crime receives specialist care and support:
  - a. Every child victim has their rights as a victim upheld, and all professionals working with children understand their responsibilities to them.
  - b. Every child victim of the most serious crimes is supported by a specialist advocate.
  - c. All child victims are recognised in law and consistently identified.
  - d. Child victims of crime receive therapeutic support that is holistic and not subject to a postcode lottery.
4. Every child is safer after an interaction with the police or youth justice system:
  - a. The age of criminal responsibility is raised from 10 to 14.
  - b. Every police force has an action plan to treat every child fairly, with respect, and as children first, which addresses ethnic disproportionality.
  - c. The Home Office reforms PACE codes to reform stop and search.
  - d. Children who have suffered exploitation are given specialist support.
  - e. A safeguarding response to child involvement with criminality is developed.
  - f. Every local authority has a specialist safeguarding team to address extra-familial harms, with a focus on relationship abuse, criminal exploitation and sexual exploitation.
  - g. The youth justice system recognises vulnerability in children, and agencies have the knowledge and resources to effectively safeguard children in need.





## ONLINE SAFETY



### Key findings

- > 75% of children said that they felt safe when they went online. Adults responding on behalf of children were less likely to agree (52%) than children responding on their own behalf (75%).
- > The majority of adults responding on behalf of children aged five or under did not agree with the statement 'They feel safe online', while 11-year-olds were the most likely to agree with 'You feel safe when you go online'.
- > Children in school or college were more likely to agree they felt safe when they went online (71%) than children in home education (56%) and children not in education (53%). Boys were more likely to agree they felt safe when they went online (75%) than girls (67%).

### Ambitions

1. Every child can play and learn online safely:
  - a. Protections in the Online Safety Act are implemented swiftly and robustly.
  - b. Children's rights are protected and their voices are empowered in the online world.
  - c. Highly effective age assurance prevents children from seeing illegal or harmful content online.
  - d. Online spaces are safe for children by design with child safety features built-in from the beginning.
  - e. Platforms use age-appropriate engagement and algorithms and are transparent with users and regulators on their design.
  - f. The standards for online and offline pornography and adult content are aligned.
  - g. No child is able to use a platform under the age specified in their terms and conditions.
  - h. Children are familiar with and have confidence in the processes to make complaints, report content or users, or seek help and advocacy online.
  - i. Children are not exposed to gambling harms online through paid loot boxes in video games, with appropriate regulation.
2. Every child has the knowledge and support to be safe online:
  - a. Children are adequately prepared for the online world, and get high-quality education and guidance about online safety in and out of school.
3. Every child is protected from online harms, and professionals can effectively safeguard and support them:
  - a. The UK has a proactive culture to protecting children from emerging threats online, monitoring emerging threats and closing legal loopholes.
  - b. Professionals working with children have the expertise and powers to address online harms that children are experiencing.
  - c. Children who experience online harms receive specialist support.
  - d. Illegal content, including child sexual abuse material (CSAM), is identified and removed.
  - e. A robust, safeguarding-first response to intimate images.
4. Parents and caregivers of children have the information that they need to make decisions about children's online lives.
5. Schools are empowered to address difficult and emerging topics and to counter extreme views, such as misogyny and the normalisation of sexual harassment and abuse.
6. Platforms provide adequate and accessible links to tools, information and advice for parents, children, and teachers.

## JOBS AND SKILLS



### Key findings

- > 51% of respondents agreed that children knew about apprenticeships, university options and career paths.
- > 65% agreed that children knew about good jobs for when they were older.
- > 70% of children agreed they had the same opportunities as other children and young people.
- > 57% of responses by or on behalf of children with SEND agreed they had the same opportunities as other children and young people, compared to 76% of responses for children without SEND.
- > 59% of responses by children with a social worker or on their behalf agreed they had the same opportunities as other children and young people, compared to 72% of responses for children without a social worker.
- > 61% agreed that they, or the child for whom they were responding, knew about money and life skills.
- > 48% of responses by or for children with SEND agreed they knew about money and life skills, compared to 64% of responses for children without SEND.

### Ambitions

1. Every child is taught about the life skills they will need as adults:
  - a. The Department for Education updates the statutory RSHE guidance to include life skills.
  - b. All teachers receive better and more thorough training on how to deliver the RSHE curriculum.
  - c. Oak National Academy becomes a platform that teachers and professionals can go to access high-quality, kitemarked materials and resources to support the teaching of RSHE.
  - d. Teachers are able to specialise in RSHE as they do in other subjects given the nature and breadth of the topics covered.
  - e. Ofsted should hold schools to account for the quality of their PSHE lessons.
2. Every young person has access to high-quality careers advice, information, and guidance which is tailored to their interests:
  - a. A greater emphasis given to careers in primary and secondary schools.
  - b. All schools are supported by a Careers Hub by the end of 2024.
  - c. All Careers Leaders are given training on improving careers provision and establishing relationships with local employers.
  - d. All schools and colleges publish child-friendly guidance on their careers provision.
3. Every child, no matter their background, is given the support they need to secure their dream job:
  - a. All school leavers are offered a Young People's Apprenticeship Guarantee.
  - b. The government introduces more supported internships for children most at risk of becoming not in education, employment, or training.
  - c. Care leavers are supported with their educational goals.

## A BETTER WORLD



### Key findings

- > 22% of children and young people agreed that people who run the country listened to what they had to say. This was the most negatively answered question in the survey.
- > A little over half (52%) of responses by children agreed with the statement 'You feel empowered to change issues you care about'. Children aged 9 were most likely to agree (71%), but less than half of teenagers and under-6s agreed.
- > Overall, 70% of respondents agreed with the statement 'You are treated fairly'. Adults responding on behalf of children more likely to agree (82%) than when children responded on their own behalf (68%). Younger children and adults responding on their behalf were also more likely to agree: 90% of 4-year-olds agreed, compared to 55% of 15-year-olds.

### Ambitions

1. Every child feels empowered to speak out about issues that they care about:
  - a. Every school and alternative provider runs a student voice council;
  - b. Schools should develop oracy and PSHE programmes which give children the chance to debate key topics affecting their lives; and
  - c. Every elected official establishes a regular forum to hear from children about their priorities.
2. Every child's thoughts, feelings, views, and ambitions are listened to:
  - a. Every political party commits to writing a manifesto for children that sets out what they will do and how they will engage children, and to holding a leaders' debate about childhood.
  - b. Select Committees hear regularly from children.
  - c. Child rights impact assessments are conducted on every policy development.
  - d. Children are consulted on every piece of legislation and policy reform that affects them.
  - e. The Children's Commissioner continues to run her Youth Ambassador programme and recruits another group of Youth Ambassadors for 2024-25.



READ THE  
FULL REPORT:



Sanctuary Buildings,  
20 Great Smith Street,  
London SW1P 3BT

020 7783 8330  
[www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)

 @childrenscommissioner

 @ChildrensComm

 @childrenscommissionersoffice