

# GIRLS' ATTITUDES SURVEY 2022



## About the Girls' Attitudes Survey

Since 2009, Girlguiding has given girls and young women a platform to speak out on the issues that matter to them through the Girls' Attitudes Survey.

In 2022, our survey asked more than 3,000 girls and young women aged, 7 to 21 how they feel about the pressures they face today, and what these mean for their happiness, wellbeing and opportunities.

They told us the pandemic will have a lasting negative impact on their wellbeing and opportunities, with notable differences across nations of the UK. We also asked them about community, gender stereotypes, safety, sexism and the climate crisis.

This snapshot gives an overview of what we found out.



## Society after the pandemic

40%

of girls and young women aged 11-21 say inequality has become worse in the last year



- Girls and young women aged 11 to 21 are worried about the long-term impact of the pandemic on their mental health (61%), schoolwork (48%) and money and income (40%).
- Girls and young women in the North are most worried. For example, 44% in the North say they're worried about the long-term impact on money compared to 39% in the South.
- 40% say inequality between different groups of people has become worse in the past year. 30% say gender inequality has become worse.
- Girls and young women chose mental health, women and girls' safety, and equality and inclusion as the issues most important to them.
- Only 5% of girls and young women strongly agree their government is doing enough to tackle the climate crisis.

**'I'm worried about mental health declining because of the pandemic'**

Young woman aged 17-21

## Community and social action

71%

of girls and young women aged 11-21 have experienced discrimination



- In the past year, girls and young women aged 7 to 21 have been active in their local communities through donating (61%), helping others (59%), fundraising (33%) and campaigning (30%).
- Seven in ten (70%) girls and young women aged 7 to 21 are part of an extra-curricular group. Two-thirds of 11 to 21-year-olds (66%) say this helps them have fun. More than half (51%) say it helps them be more confident.
- 71% of girls and young women aged 11 to 21 have experienced discrimination. Numbers increase for girls and young women of colour, those who are disabled, and those who are LGBTQ+.
- Discrimination is highest in the Wales: 74% have experienced it in Wales, compared to 64% in Scotland and 63% in Northern Ireland.

**'You need to treat people the way you want to be treated and respect people'**

Girl aged 7-10

## Sexism and stereotypes

80%

of girls and young women aged 11-21 see or experience sexism online and on social media



- 59% of girls and young women aged 7 to 21 agree that sports and physical activities are good for their mental health but, they continue to face barriers to taking part, including sexism (59%) and insecurities (42%).
- Shockingly, one in five (21%) girls aged 11 to 21 still say gender stereotypes hold them back at school. This is higher in the North of England (26%) and in Wales (24%) where girls and young women are also more likely to say fear of sexual harassment holds them back (22% in the North and 19% in Wales compared to 16% in the South, and 11% in Northern Ireland).
- Girls and young women are more likely than ever to identify as feminists. 54% aged 11 to 21 now do so, compared to 47% in 2018. Those in the Midlands are least likely to identify as feminists (49%, compared to 56% in the South).

**'If I could change one thing to improve girls' lives, I would stop sexism'**

Girl aged 7-10

## Safety

# 36%

of girls and young women aged 11-21 say knowing about the abuse high profile women get online puts them off certain jobs (like politics)



- Girls and young women don't feel safe in their lives. A quarter (26%) aged 11 to 21 don't feel safe online. 53% say they don't feel safe when outside on their own. Those in the North are ten percentage points more likely to feel unsafe in public (51%) than those in the South (41%).
- One in five (19%) say they don't feel safe at school. This is higher in Wales (24%), and in the North (22%) than in the South (16%).
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) has a role to play in changing this. 83% of girls aged 7 to 10 learn about respect and relationships at school.
- However, only half (51%) aged 11 to 21 learn about healthy relationships. And only 40% learn about sexual harassment. 53% of girls and young women in England say they learn about healthy relationships, compared to 31% in Wales and 36% in Northern Ireland.

**'I want to feel safe leaving the house and going somewhere on my own'**

Girl aged 11-16

## Mental health and wellbeing

# 59%

of girls and young women aged 7-21 say they would like to change many things in their life



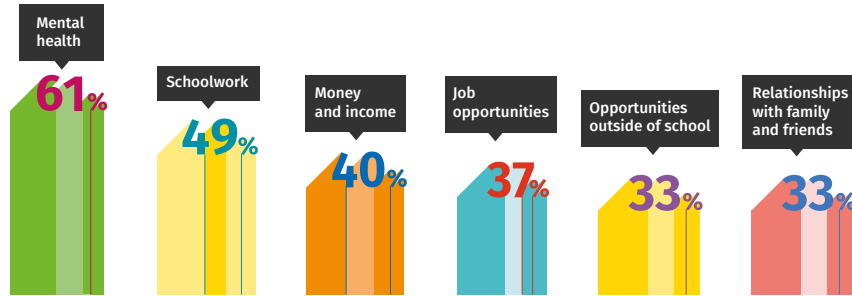
- Girls' and young women's mental health and wellbeing has improved since the pandemic, but remains low. 78% aged 7 to 21 think they have a number of good qualities, but this is lower for LGBTQ+ girls and young women (68%).
- 75% of girls and young women aged 7 to 21 say their life is going well and 84% agree they have a good life but this decreases with age.
- Girls and young women in the North are most likely to say they wish they had a different kind of life. 45% agree with this compared to just 41% in the South.
- A quarter of girls and young women aged 7 to 21 (23%) don't like being the way they are. Just 10% of young women aged 17 to 21 are completely happy with their appearance, compared to 42% of 7 to 10-year-olds.

**'It's important to learn about mental health so you know how to ask for help'**

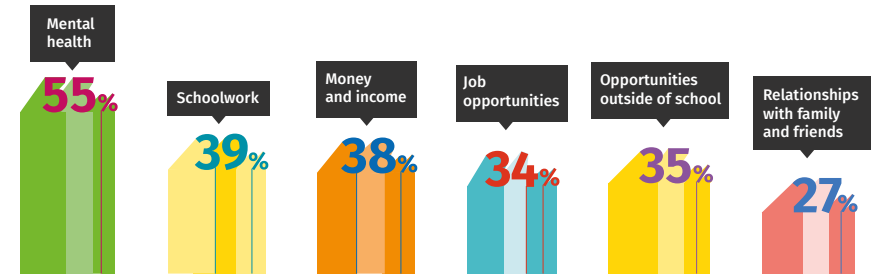
Girl aged 7-10

I think the pandemic will have a long-term negative impact on my...

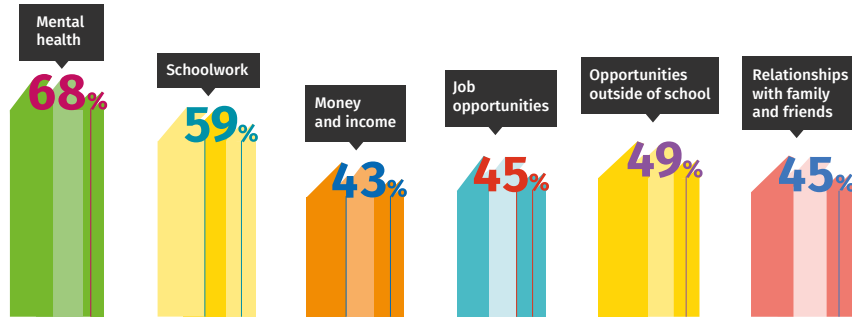
England



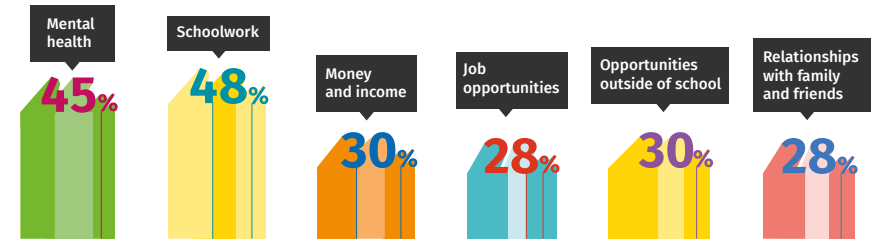
Scotland



Wales



Northern Ireland



## Methodology

- Girlguiding commissions CHILDWISE, leading specialists in research with children and young people, to do the Girls' Attitudes Survey.
- A total of 3,015 girls and young women aged between 7 and 21 took part in this year's survey in March and April 2022.

## About Girlguiding

Girlguiding is the leading charity for girls and young women in the UK, with nearly 370,000 members. With over 24,000 groups meeting weekly powered by over 80,000 volunteers, we're active in every part of the UK offering girls and young women a space where they can be themselves, have fun, build brilliant friendships, gain valuable life skills and make a positive difference in their communities.

To find out more visit [girlguiding.org.uk](https://girlguiding.org.uk)

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Scan the QR code below to read the Girls' Attitudes Survey 2022.

