



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

Results on Children's Rights from The Scottish Parents' Survey 2021



CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS



Contents

Key Findings	3
1. Introduction	4
Policy background.....	4
Methods	4
2. Awareness of UNCRC	5
3. Sources of awareness	6
4. Awareness of UNCRC incorporation	7
5. Understanding of children’s rights	7
6. Confidence in helping children challenge rights breaches	8
7. Importance of parental awareness	9
8. Desire to know more about the UNCRC.....	10
9. Locations for and sources of future learning about children’s rights	11

Key Findings

This report presents the findings on children's rights from the Scottish Parents' omnibus survey of 1,004 parents of children and young people aged 0-17 across Scotland, run by Ipsos MORI Scotland. The survey was conducted between 1 November and 2 December 2021.

The key findings from the survey were:

- One third of parents (32%) said that they knew a fair amount or a great deal about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). A similar proportion (28%) said they had never heard of it.
- When asked an open question, parents who said they knew at least a little about the UNCRC were most likely to have heard about the UNCRC through their work (28%), their children's school, nursery, playgroups, or clubs (21%), or courses, training, or studies (18%). 15% said they had heard about the UNCRC through the traditional media and 11% through online sources or social media. 9% had heard about it directly from their child or children.
- The majority of parents (61%) said they were not aware that the Scottish Government is incorporating UNCRC into Scots Law.
- Almost three-quarters of parents (72%) agreed that they had a good understanding of the rights of their child or children.
- 88% of parents agreed that they would feel confident in helping their children challenge breaches of their rights, if their rights were not met.
- Almost all parents (94%) agreed that it is important for parents to be aware of children's rights.
- Parents were asked if they would like to know more about the UNCRC and what it means for their child or children. Around two thirds of parents (63%) agreed that they would.
- Women were more likely than men to be aware of the UNCRC and were also more likely to strongly agree that: they had a good understanding of children's rights; that they felt confident in helping their children protect their rights; and that parental awareness of children's rights is important.
- Parents educated to degree level or above were more likely to be aware of the UNCRC and to say that they had a good understanding of children's rights than those with other qualifications.
- When asked an open question about where and from whom they would like to learn more about children's rights, the most commonly given answers were that they would like to learn *through* schools, nurseries or childcare providers (54%); online (22%); in the media (10%); and *from* health professionals (14%); the government (11%); teachers (11%).

1. Introduction

This report presents the findings on children's rights from a survey of parents in Scotland in 2021. Questions covered awareness, knowledge views on the rights of children, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Policy background

The Scottish Government continues to recognise, respect and promote children's rights. These include the right to be treated fairly, to be heard and to be as healthy as possible. Our vision is a Scotland where children's human rights are embedded in all aspects of society - a Scotland where policy, law and decision making take account of children's rights and where all children have a voice and are empowered to be human rights defenders.

In March 2021, the Scottish Parliament unanimously passed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill ('the Bill') with the aim to incorporate the UNCRC into Scots law to the maximum extent of the Scottish Parliament's powers. Following the Supreme Court's ruling in October 2021 that sections of the Bill went beyond the powers of the Scottish Parliament, the Bill cannot receive Royal Assent in its current form. The Scottish Government is urgently and carefully considering the most effective way forward for this important legislation. It has indicated that the preferred approach is to do this by returning the Bill to parliament via the 'reconsideration stage'. In the meantime, the majority of work in relation to implementation of the UNCRC can proceed and is continuing at pace.

To deliver their vision of a Scotland where children's rights are respected, protected and fulfilled, the Scottish Government has published a [3 year action plan](#). This includes a commitment to co-create a national awareness raising campaign for children's rights with children and families and produce a wide range of information and guidance resources aimed at raising public awareness.

Parents and families, communities, local and national governments, and organisations which work with children and families, all play a critical role in helping children understand and experience their rights.

Methods

The Scottish Parents' survey is a telephone omnibus survey run by Ipsos MORI Scotland. It is a representative survey of parents of children aged 0-17 in Scotland, weighted by age of the parent, working status, Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)¹ classification and the age of the child.² The survey took place

¹ The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation is a relative measure of deprivation across 6,976 small areas (called data zones). SIMD looks at the extent to which an area is deprived across seven domains: income, employment, education, health, access to services, crime and housing.

SIMD is the Scottish Government's standard approach to identify areas of multiple deprivation in Scotland. SIMD ranks data zones from most deprived (ranked 1) to least deprived (ranked 6,976). ([Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020](#)).

between 1 November and 2 December 2021 and 1,004 parents responded. It asked parents six closed questions and two open questions on the topic of children's rights.³

Socio-demographic variables included in the survey were: age of selected child; respondent age, gender, working status and qualification; household type and income; number of children in the household; rurality; and SIMD. Due to small sample sizes within demographic sub-samples, it is not possible to report all breakdowns. This report therefore only reports demographic findings that are both meaningful and statistically significant at the 5% level. Additionally, numbers may differ between figures and text due to rounding.

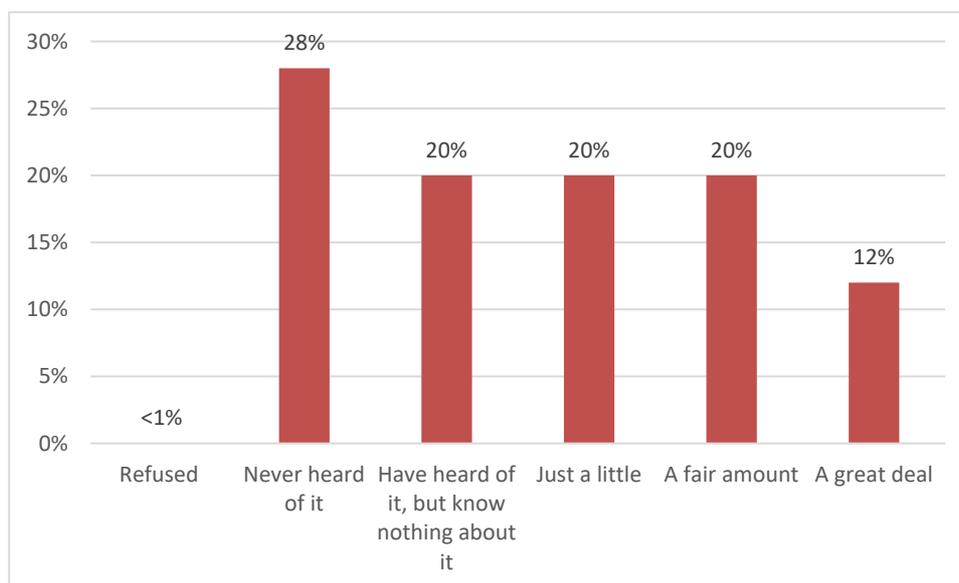
Analysis and reporting was undertaken by the Scottish Government, Children and Families Analysis Unit.

2. Awareness of UNCRC

Parents were asked how much, if anything, they already knew about the UNCRC.

One third of parents (32%) reported that they knew a fair amount or a great deal about the UNCRC. However, a similar proportion (28%) said they had never heard of the UNCRC. Figure 2.1 presents findings.

Figure 2.1 - How much parents said they knew about the UNCRC.



Base: 1004

Women were substantially more likely than men to say that they knew a great deal or a fair amount about the UNCRC (38% compared with 20%). Parents with degree level or above qualifications were more likely to say that they knew a great deal or a

² Note that the sample over-represents respondents educated to degree level and from higher income households.

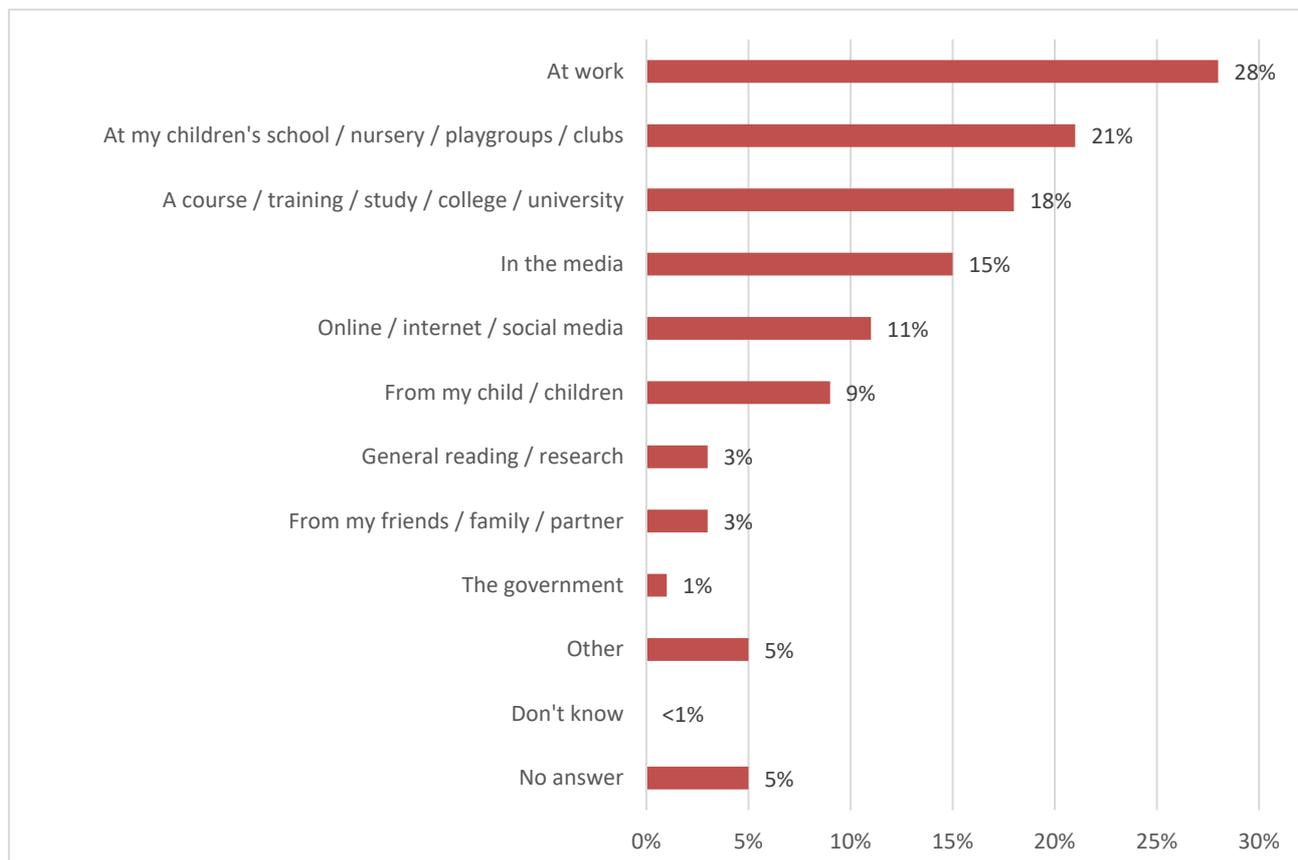
³ Responses to open questions were coded by Ipsos MORI.

fair amount about the UNCRC than those with other qualifications (42% compared with 25%). They were less likely to say they had never heard of it (18% compared with 35%). Parents aged 16-34 were more likely to say that they had never heard of the UNCRC than parents aged 35 or above (42% compared with 22%).

3. Sources of awareness

Parents who were aware of the UNCRC were asked an open question on where they had heard about it. As Figure 3.1 shows, these parents were most likely to have heard about the UNCRC through their work (28%), their children’s school, nursery, playgroups, or clubs (21%), or courses, training, or studies (18%). Nearly one in six parents (15%) said they had heard about the UNCRC through the traditional media and 11% through online sources or social media. 9% had heard about it directly from their child or children. 9% had heard about it directly from their child or children. 9% had heard about it directly from their child or children.

Figure 3.1 – Sources parents said they had heard about the UNCRC from.



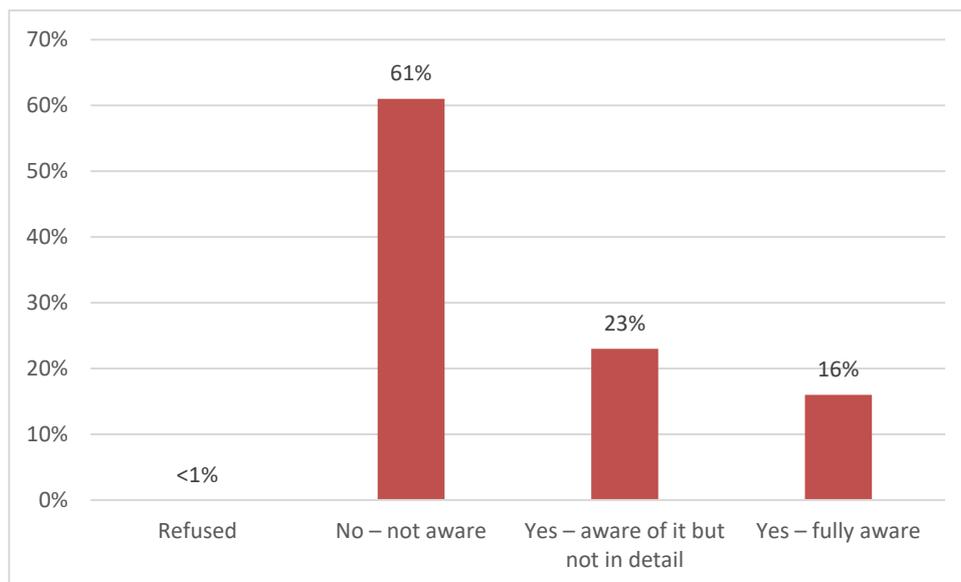
Unweighted Base: 539

Women were more likely than men to say that they heard about the UNCRC at work (33% compared with 17%) or through a course, training, study or college (22% compared with 6%), potentially reflecting gender differences in sectors of employment or study. Men were more likely than women to have heard about the UNCRC through the media (28% compared with 9%) or online or social media sources (18% compared with 8%). Parents with qualifications at degree level or above were also more likely to have heard about the UNCRC through work, compared with those who had other qualifications (37% compared with 19%).

4. Awareness of UNCRC incorporation

Parents were also asked if they were aware that the Scottish Government is incorporating UNCRC into Scots Law. The majority (61%) said they were not aware, 23% said they were aware, but not in detail, and 16% said they were fully aware. See Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1 – Parents’ awareness of The Scottish Government’s incorporation of the UNCRC into Scots Law.



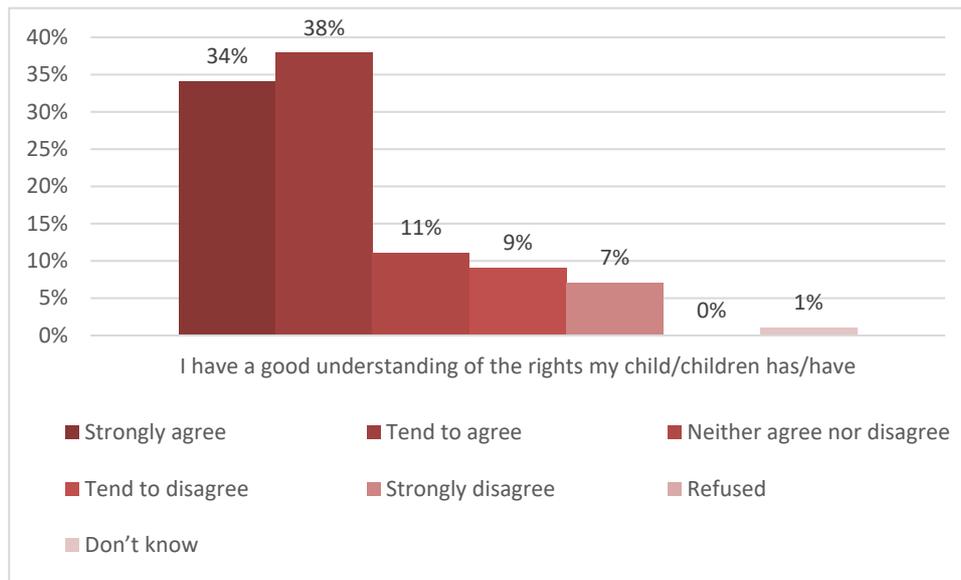
Base: 1004

Parents with qualifications at degree level or above were more likely to be aware of UNCRC incorporation than those who had other qualifications (24% compared with 10%).

5. Understanding of children’s rights

Parents were asked about their understanding of children’s rights. Almost three-quarters (72%) agreed that they had a good understanding of the rights of their child or children, including 34% who strongly agreed. 16% disagreed.

Figure 5.1 – Parents’ agreement with the statement ‘I have a good understanding of the rights my child/children has/have.’



Base: 1004

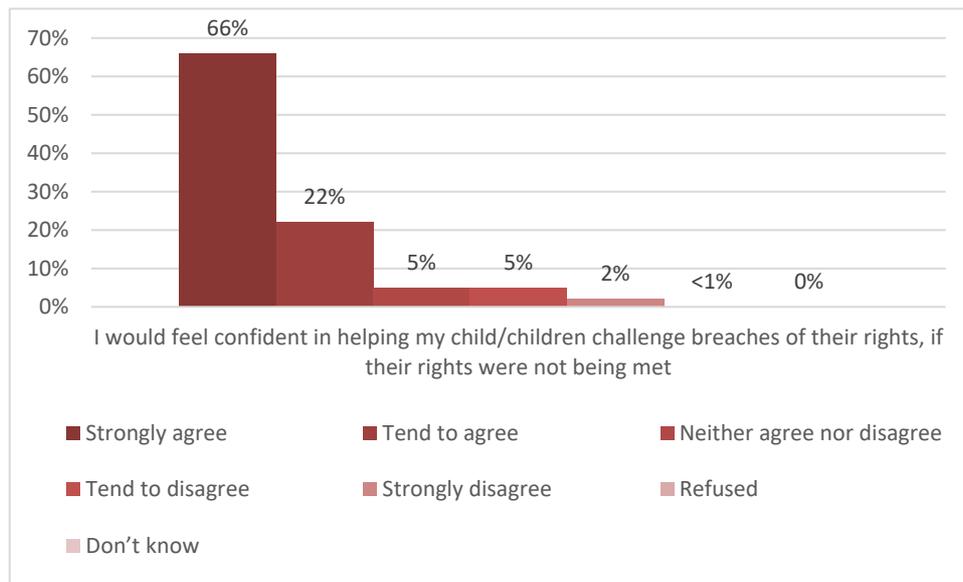
Parents with qualifications at degree level or above were more likely to agree that they had a good understanding of the rights of their child or children than those with other qualifications (77% compared with 68%). There were limited gender differences in agreement, although women were more likely than men to strongly agree that they had a good understanding (37% compared with 28%), while men were more likely than women to disagree that they had a good understanding (21% compared with 13%).

When asked whether parents had a good understanding of the rights of their children, this generally corresponded to how much they said they knew about the UNCRC.

6. Confidence in helping children challenge rights breaches

Parents were also asked about their confidence in helping their children challenge breaches of their rights, if their rights were not met. A large majority of 88% agreed that they would feel confident in doing so, including 66% who strongly agreed.

Figure 6.1 - Parents' agreement with the statement 'I would feel confident in helping my child/children challenge breaches of their rights, if their rights were not being met.'



Base: 1004

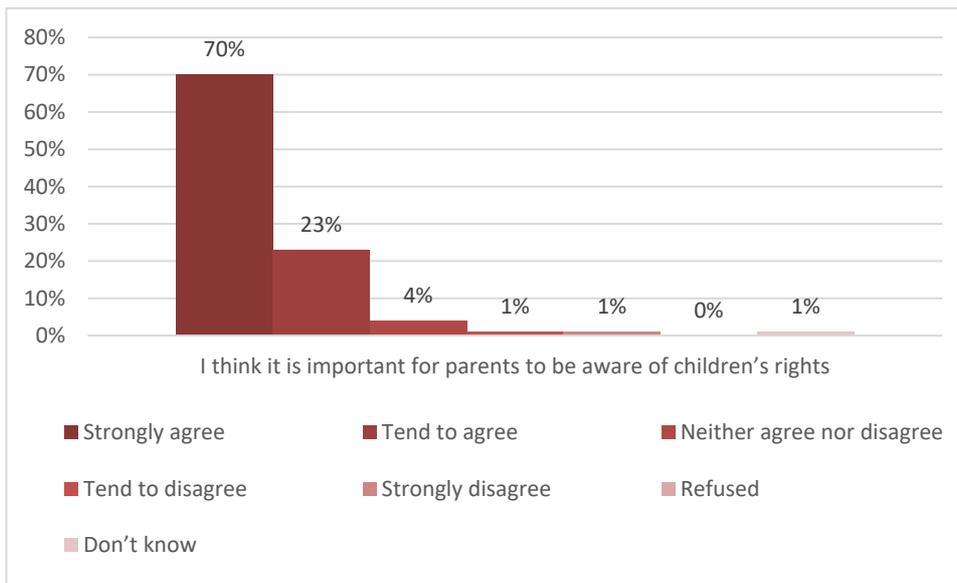
While there were limited gender differences in overall agreement with this statement, women were more likely than men to strongly agree (71% compared with 57%).

While agreement with this statement was very high regardless of background knowledge, parents who said they knew a great deal about the UNCRC were more likely to strongly agree that they would feel confident in helping their child or children to challenge breaches of their rights than those who had never heard of UNCRC (92% compared with 62%).

7. Importance of parental awareness

Almost all parents (94%) agreed that it is important for parents to be aware of children's rights, including 70% who strongly agreed.

Figure 7.1 - Parents' agreement with the statement 'I think it is important for parents to be aware of children's rights.'



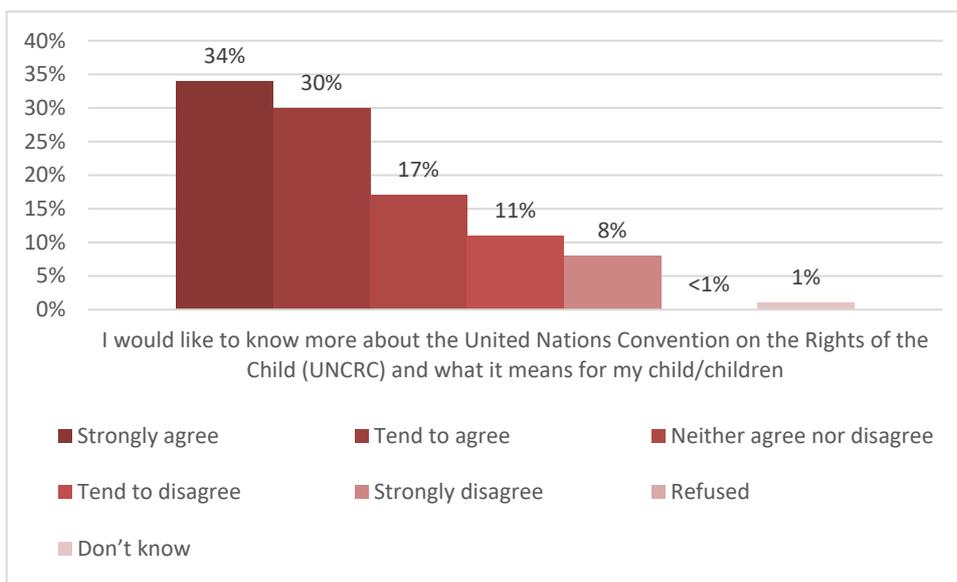
Base: 1004

Women were more likely than men to strongly agree with this statement (74% compared with 62%).

8. Desire to know more about the UNCRC

Parents were asked if they would like to know more about the UNCRC and what it means for their child or children. Overall, a majority of parents (63%) agreed that they would. This was split between those saying they strongly agreed and tended to agree (34% and 30%, respectively). 19% of parents disagreed with the statement.

Figure 8.1 - Parents' agreement with the statement 'I would like to know more about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and what it means for my child/children.'



Base: 1004

Generally, the less parents knew about the UNCRC, the more likely they were to agree that they would like to learn more about what it and what it means for their child or children. Parents aged 16-34 were more likely to agree that they would like to know more about the UNCRC and what it means for their child or children than parents aged 35 or above (77% compared with 58%). Parents with qualifications at degree level or above were more likely to disagree that they would like to know more than those with other qualifications (25% compared with 15%).

9. Locations for and sources of future learning about children's rights

Parents were asked an open question about *where* and *from whom* they would like to learn more about children's rights from.⁴ Responses were coded by Ipsos MORI. 903 parents gave responses to at least one part of this question. They were more likely to give an answer to the first part of the question relating to places they would like to learn more from.

In terms of places, the majority of parents (54%) said they would like to learn more about children's rights from schools, nurseries, and/or childcare providers and 22% said they would like to learn online. 10% said they would like to learn more through the media and 7% said through leaflets.

In terms of people, 14% of parents said they wanted to learn more about the UNCRC from health professionals, 11% from the government, 11% from teachers, and 9% from local authorities and local MPs. Fewer than 2% of parents who responded said they wanted to learn more from each the following groups: young people and children, from charities or NGOs, legal professionals, or people with professional knowledge in the area.

⁴ Parents could have indicated more than one person and/or place for these questions.

How to access background or source data

The data collected for this social research publication:

may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact socialresearch@gov.scot for further information.



© Crown copyright 2022

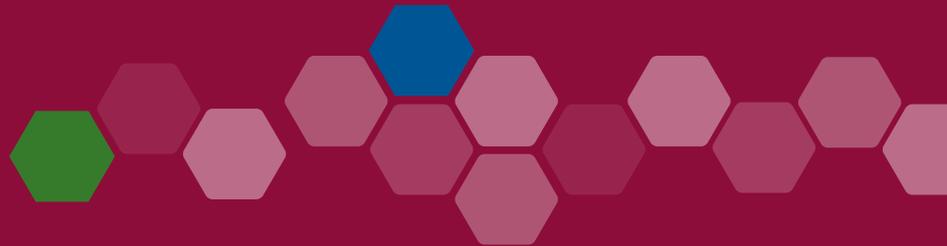
You may re-use this information (excluding logos and images) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/> or e-mail: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk. Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

The views expressed in this report are those of the researcher and do not necessarily represent those of the Scottish Government or Scottish Ministers.

This document is also available from our website at www.gov.scot.
ISBN: 978-1-80435-229-8

The Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

Produced for
the Scottish Government
by APS Group Scotland
PPDAS1050130 (03/22)
Published by
the Scottish Government,
March 2022



Social Research series
ISSN 2045-6964
ISBN 978-1-80435-229-8

Web Publication
www.gov.scot/socialresearch

PPDAS1050130 (03/22)