

PRESS RELEASE

National Children's Day UK 2024
Sunday 12th May



- for immediate release -

National Children's Day UK provides a wonderful opportunity for everyone to share all the great work that they are doing to protect the wellbeing of children and families. And with so many worrying stories about how children are currently doing in the UK, this year that really matters.

Most adults think that children are worse off today than when they were children (Yougov)

Almost a quarter of English children are now obese at the end of primary school

Young Minds is warning of a UK mental health emergency

Nurseries are closing down in response to the government's free childcare policy

NCDUK2024 will take place on **Sunday 12th May**, but people can raise national awareness about their activities for the week up to and including the day. It's an opportunity for everyone to raise awareness about the things they care about. This year we will be promoting the activities of all the great organisations that are working so hard to raise awareness about child wellbeing – and especially those that are actively working with schools and young people. So we are encouraging every community to get involved!

We will also be highlighting the fact that all the children in the world share the same planet as our home – and that children want our politicians to take stronger action.

Child Rights * Child Physical Health/Obesity * Child Mental Health * Celebrating diversity * The impact of poverty * Struggling Families * Struggling Schools * Key Campaigns * Political Priorities * Protecting the Planet

Why is it so important? Because all children have the right to expect the adult world to support their health and wellbeing - and happy, healthy children are essential for happy, healthy societies.

The conversation continues on social media #NCDUK2024 @NCDUK2024
www.nationalchildrensdayuk.com

For more information, please contact

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NOTES TO EDITORS

- **National Children's Day UK (NCDUK)** is all about the importance of a healthy childhood and how we need to protect the rights and freedoms of children in order to ensure that they can grow into happy, healthy adults.
 - The concept of Children's Day was established by the UN General Assembly in 1954 as a day of worldwide fraternity and understanding between children. The Assembly suggested to governments that the day be observed on the date and in the way which each considers appropriate.
 - In the UK the day was launched by the Save Childhood Movement in 2014 and is now held at the beginning of summer.
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CHILD RIGHTS

All children have the right to expect the adult world to help support their health and wellbeing

POVERTY

The Children's Charities Coalition, a newly formed partnership of the leading children's charities: Action for Children, Barnardo's, The Children's Society, the National Children's Bureau and NSPCC, has been raising serious concerns about the lives of UK children and young people. **'The Children at the Table Campaign'**, which is a collaboration with young people and has the support of over 75 charities, **is calling on the Government to put babies, children and young people at the heart of policy making.**

<https://childrenatthetable.org.uk>

- Children are a priority for people across the UK, **with 84% of adults saying that they think it's important for political parties to outline their plans for children and young people in their manifestos.**
- It's estimated that more than **1 in 4 UK children now live in poverty** and **1.4 million are thought to have a mental health disorder.**
- Research from The Children's Society last November found that an estimated **1 in 5 children (20%) are worried about how much money their family has**, while half are 'sometimes' worried (52%).
- When asked what they would like politicians to focus on to improve children and young people's lives, **more than a quarter of children (27%) said helping families struggling with money and having the basic things they need.** Nearly one in five (18%) want children and young people's mental health

prioritised.

- **62% of UK children think that politicians don't understand the issues that affect children and young people today.** Almost three quarters (73%) don't feel that children are listened to by politicians and 66% don't feel they have a say when it comes to decisions politicians make about things which are important to them.

OBESITY

Almost one in four children aged 10 and 11 in England are obese, according to the largest study of its kind – a finding that experts say exposes the “profound” and “alarming” long-term impact of the coronavirus pandemic. The study, published in the journal [PLOS One](#), also found that the sharp uplift would cost the UK more than £8bn in additional spending on healthcare and impact on the economy.

CHILD MENTAL HEALTH

- **1 in 5 children and young people have a probable mental health condition**, and many continue to have these problems into adulthood.
- 50% of those with lifetime mental health problems **first experience symptoms by the age of 14.**
- 1 in 10 boys aged 5-19 with a mental health condition **are suspended in some form from school.**

<https://www.place2be.org.uk>

- Children who play adventurously have better mental health.
EPlay England, Play Wales, PlayBoardNI, HAGS and Association of Play Industries, Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL), Learning through Landscapes

https://news-archive.exeter.ac.uk/homepage/title_912650_en.html

CLIMATE ANXIETY

- Climate anxiety has been rising in children in the UK, with **70% worried about the world they will inherit**
- 75% of the 3,000 children surveyed by Save the Children in 2023 **want the government to take stronger action** on the climate and inequality crisis.
- 60% think climate change and inequality **are affecting their generation's mental health in the UK.** More than half (56%) believe it is also causing a deterioration in child mental health globally.

CHILDCARE

- In the March Budget, the government announced plans to extend the 30-hours so-called ‘free childcare’ offer to children aged between nine months and two years old in 2024 and 2025.
- However, the results of two parallel surveys aimed at parents/carers and early years providers, carried out online by the Early Years Alliance between 10 and 21 July 2023, highlight a significant

National Children's Day UK (NCDUK2024)

disconnect between parent/carer expectations of the new offers and provider capacity to deliver places in line with demand.

<https://www.eyalliance.org.uk/news/2023/11/alliance-ceo-pens-open-letter-criticising-government-delays-confirming-early-years>