



A report from children on Åland to the UN

Listen to us
children!

Our
thoughts &
opinions





Introduction

Every five years Finland submits a report to the UN regarding the lives of children here.

Then the UN works out a list of things that must be done, so that children in Finland will be better off.

The UN do not only want to know the opinions of the adults, but they also want to know what children (everyone under the age of 18) think it is like growing up in Finland and on the Åland Islands.

During the summer of 2020 Save the Children's summer workers, "Child Convention Pilots" (14-17 years) started to write a report of their own to the UN. The pilots have included information from various projects that they worked on during the summer and have prepared surveys for Åland children. The pilots and children who are part of Save the Children on Åland's board have continued to work with the children's report to the UN after the summer.

The report has been translated into English and submitted to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Why did we choose to work with precisely this?

We have chosen to work with this to try to achieve the goal of a better society for young people. We had the freedom to choose the projects we were interested in.

Tips for adults:

Here are many important themes and recommendations from children of different ages!

In particular, take a look at the sections that concern yourself, such as school, leisure activities, listening to children, immigrant children, and children with separated parents!





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1. Survey completed by Åland Islands children

To get opinions from other children and young people, we, children who are active in Save the Children, conducted a survey that everyone under the age of 18 had the opportunity to answer.

In total, we received 355 responses from children aged 6-17 years. We had asked, among other things, if the children themselves were allowed to decide, what would they do to make Åland a better place for children and young people. Recurring answers to that question were, among other things, that no one should be exposed to bullying, that everyone should have access to leisure activities and that all children should be able to afford to feel good.

We also asked if they had knowledge of the Convention on the Rights of the Child before. 18% answered that they didn't; the vast majority of these are in years 1-3 in elementary school.

Of course, we would have liked to have seen that everyone answered yes, but that 82% already knew about the Convention on the Rights of the Child are still a very good number. Since it is so important that children and young people know their rights, we hope that more time will be spent on the Convention on the Rights of the Child in schools. Only 24% of those who responded to the survey think that it is talked about enough in school.

Here we have collected all the answers from the survey. All answers are direct quotes from the survey, we have not edited them. Only totally identical answers have been removed as we believe it is due to technical errors. We also removed some answers that could be interpreted as offensive.

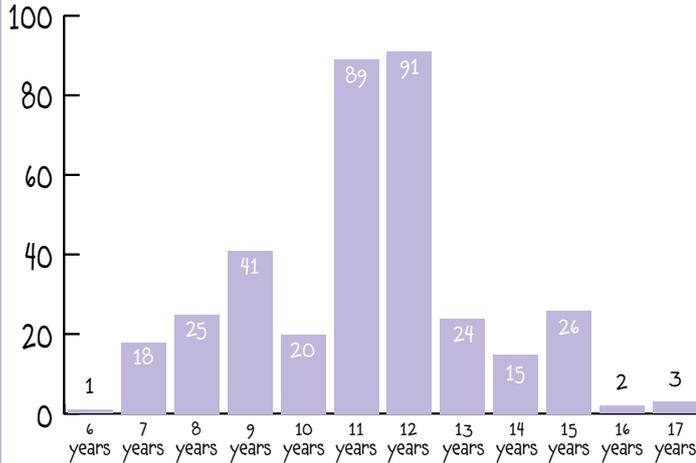




Info about us who completed the survey

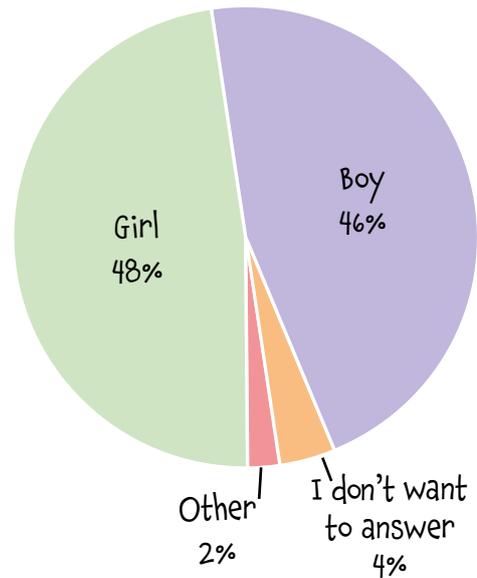
How old are you?

355 children answered this question.



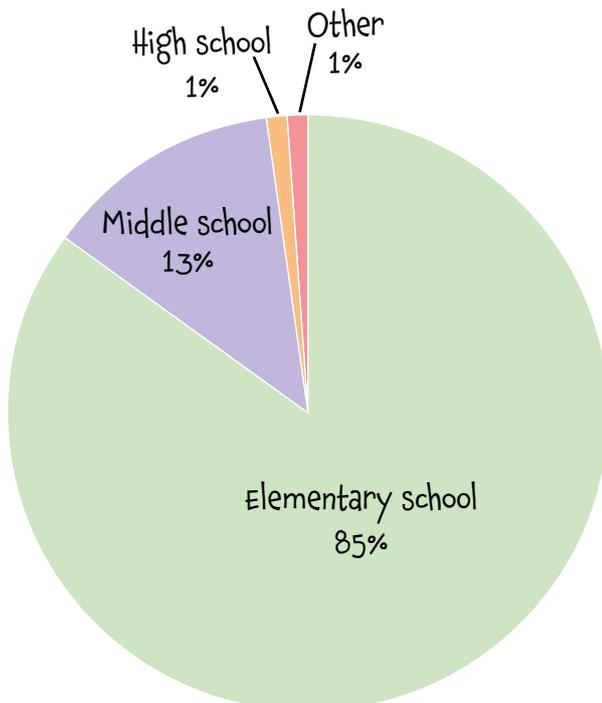
What is your gender?

355 children answered this question.



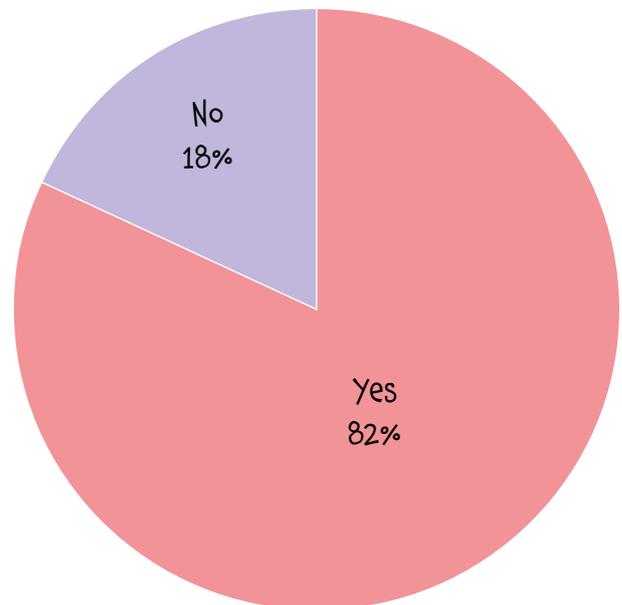
What kind of school do you attend?

355 children answered this question.



Have you always lived on Åland?

354 children answered this question.





If you could decide one thing that would make life better for children on Åland, what would it be?

Right to education

6-9-year-olds

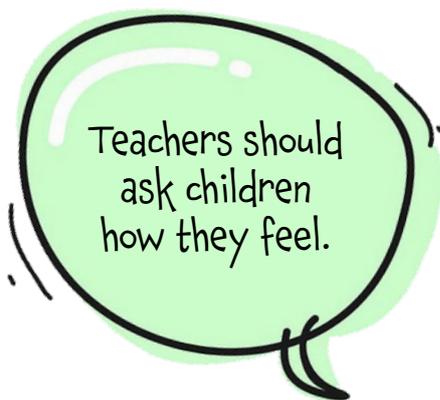
- That some children stop being bullied
- No bullying
- No bullying



- Good schools for everyone and everyone feels good.
- Free use of mobile phones i schools again
- Children can go to more excursions with school.

10-13-year-olds

- Shorter schooldays
- Less school
- Less homework
- Less homework
- No more homework
- Less stress in school
- More focus on children's wellbeing (at school) as a school subject. That it's okay to feel bad. But that you should also tell an adult how you feel.
- Not so much homework and pressure from school
- I'd like them to study more and finish school. That's all I want, nothing more. Other than that, all is fine.
- Nobody should be bullied
- No child should be bullied
- No bullying
- Nobody should be bullied
- I want bullying to disappear and everybody should have a friend.
- Less bullying in school, more equal and more privacy
- Nobody should bully
- No bullying on Åland
- No child should be bullied
- Exterminate bullying



- One child per day should choose the lunch at school
- Better food at school
- Good lunches in all schools.
- Everybody should be allowed to eat equally much at school
- Good lunches at school and kind teachers.

If you could decide one thing that would make life better for children on Åland, what would it be?



- It would be that the children would be allowed to choose a subject so that it would not be so boring at school if you think so.
- Teach children home economics and care in elementary school
- Be allowed to use the phone at recess

That everyone is treated equally well in school by the teachers!

- School without cost
- School at no cost for all children
- All children should have free school without having to pay
- School for all

- All schoolwork should be done at school and not at home.

Many young people (middle school) are very stressed and feel bad mentally, all because of school. After being at school for 6 hours I can promise you that you are tired and just want to go home and take it easy and then maybe do your leisure activity. But no, after school you must start with homework. Yes, okay if they were like two, but when you have different teachers in all subjects and everyone gives homework in their subject, you can have homework in 5 subjects every day. I think school should take place in school and not in my spare time. Instead of 6 hours of school, it will be 7-8 depending on how much time and energy you spend on your grades. It gets to be even worse when you must sit and study for tests. Two tests a week for many weeks is very stressful and it doesn't feel good to skip studying and performing very well because most teachers only consider what you get in tests and oral quizzes. I think we should be assessed more on what we do in class, oral activity, presentations and other than written tests. Too many kids cannot perform their best during tests because they become so nervous or prefer to talk than write down what they know. It seems that we have more homework and tests at *(one of the middle schools)*. I have that from those I talk to in the other schools. My friends at *(another middle school)* have much less homework than me. *(MY SCHOOL)* MUST change its view on homework and tests!

When adults come home from work are very tired and do not feel like doing anything at all. Young people as us are at least as tired and have had an equally difficult day at school. But when we come home from school, unlike adults, we have to do homework and study. After school you are too tired to do homework and therefore you have to do that late in the evening which leads to you going to bed late. Most people sleep too little and almost fall asleep at school.

Those in school also do not know what happens outside of school in one's life. You may not have a good situation at home, have bad relationships, feel bad about your body, parents who are alcoholics or are depressed. When you are at home you must do homework and so much else is going on in a young person's life at the same time, such as keeping up on social media. It is not easy to catch up with everything without starting to feel bad or get really stressed.

School would benefit from having less homework. I'm not saying that you should stop having homework altogether, but that you reduce it. Tests as well. Instead of tests, you can have more oral exercises in class, presentations, writing projects, pair exercises and quizzes.

Many more than adults think feel bad about themselves and their appearance. Many more than you know about have eating disorders. Almost all the girls I know cry every night without anyone knowing about them.

I know I'm not the only one who thinks this. I know they are many, many more.

I have talked a lot with my friends from mine and other schools and they think the same.



14-17-year-olds

- Do something more about bullying
- Making distance education an option
- EDUCATION IN LGBTQ



- Stop mobile free school
- Allow smartphones at school. Start earlier and finish earlier.
- Stop mobile free school
- Stop mobile free school
- Allow smartphones at recess
- Stop mobile free school

Right to spare time

6-9-year-olds

- More football matches
- More climbing frames
- Have a playland
- More time to play



10-13-year-olds

- Building more playgrounds so all get access to play
- More activities
- More activities on Åland
- More spare time activities
- More activities with motor vehicles
- More kinds of activities than now
- More to do for school children than just sports, and Finnish activities so as to learn the Finnish language
- Sports for free and the like
- Cheaper/subsidised leisure and sports activities!
- Let them do more fun things
- More amusement parks, e.g. a trampoline park
- One more alpine slope like Germundö

- More dog-friendly so that children and young people can train their dogs for free, as in Espoo, for example
- Less racist children, more activities to enjoy
- A children's taxi (you get a ride to where to go because your parents may not be able to drive you there or back home)

14-17-year-olds

- Mountain bike circuit at Lemböte
- Sibylla, something to do, internet café
- More chicks
- Introduce EPA vehicles to Åland
- Allow EPA-tractor driving
- Make leisure activities an opportunity for everyone, regardless of background and finances. This is to help children's mental, physical, and social health
- More activities for archipelago children
- Develop activities, fun events that are free
- More spare time
- Create youth cafés and ban mobile free school
- Introduce Starbucks, ban mobile free school

If you could decide one thing that would make life better for children on Åland, what would it be?



6-9-year-olds

Right to be listened to

- I think you should be able to decide more
- That they should be allowed to decide more.
- That you can always say what you think without being interrupted
- That everyone should respect children and that all adults do not always have to decide.
- That we get to decide
- That children get to more what they want.

10-13-year-olds

- That adults should not always do as they want, for example. If a family is going to move, then maybe the adults can ask the children or the child in that family where they or that person thinks they should move.
- I think we should decide more.
- I do not really know but give a stronger voice and I want all adults to listen more
- That children should be allowed to express their opinions
- That we can do what we want
- That we should have more freedom

That adults do not have to decide everything. The children as well get to decide something.

14-17-year-olds

- Get one's voice to be heard more

Right to be treated well

6-9-year-olds

- I would be fair
- That everyone wanted to be involved and be kind and everyone lived well
- Everyone can join in and play
- To have peace
- I want supportive guys and potlucks and that EVERYONE is kind and listens
- That all children should be treated equally
- That everyone is good
- I would make sure that all children have the right to everything
- I would be fair
- That everyone must be kind
- That they should have a better life
- A good life

I would build a place, where everyone who felt sad would be able to go and make new friends and talk to others about their problems.

That all children on Åland would be treated equally well

10-13-year-olds

- All are treated in the same way
- That everyone is doing equally well.
- All children should have the same lessons
- That all children should be fair
- All children should receive what they need
- Not to be bad towards the children
- Everyone should have friends
- That everyone is kind to each other
- No children need a bad life

If you could decide one thing that would make life better for children on Åland, what would it be?



6-9-year-olds

- Give food to those who are poor :)
- I would give them food and money
- I would feed them
- That they should get proper food
- All children should get enough food
- Give them better houses and food and money so they can pay for the house and a car
- Food
- The children who do not have a home and food should be given food and clothes and a friendly life for children.
- It would be that all children would have a home
- All children should have a home
- Access to family and home
- All children should receive 1000 euros for free

All children are to have food and company.

Right to food, clothing and a safe home

10-13-year-olds

- Everyone needs to live well and have a good family and get good food
- That no child should be poor.
- That all children should have good food
- Food for all children
- Food home and a family
- That no child should be poor
- That everyone gets a home, water and food.
- That all children have a roof over their heads and enough food
- Donate money to the poor
- More money for people who have a hard time with it and save more children
- More money for those families with children who are having a hard time with money.
- Give all homeless people a house and money
- To give homeless people home
- Everyone should have a house, and food, rest and fun
- The children do not have to pay
- More money for children

Spend more money on children.

Right to health and protection

6-9-year-olds

- I would be a magician and conjure up a portal where everyone can wish to go somewhere. I wish there was no Corona.
- No mosquitoes, no ticks, or horseflies.

14-17-year-olds

- That they would keep a better eye on children in families with divorced parents.
- People need to keep a better eye over what their children actually do
- Children should not get screentime or social media until 12 years

10-13-year-olds

- That everyone should get help with everything and that all adults take everything seriously.
- That all children should feel safe
- That everyone should wear a corona mask
- That you should not need a facemask
- That covid-19 would disappear
- That all children who need to, would receive vaccines against various diseases free of charge
- That fewer parents would divorce so that the child can live with them right up to adulthood
- Age limit on telephones



If you could decide one thing that would make life better for children on Åland, what would it be?

6-9-year-olds

- To buy lots of sweets when me and my sister and I grow up
- That you can eat sweets on Sundays and Mondays
- That everyone should take care of their rubbish
- McDonalds

Other

10-13-year-olds

- That people drive a car less
- That it is not so dirty in the city
- That children should receive food that is vegetarian if you are a vegetarian
 - Discount on certain items
 - Cheaper clothes
 - Larger shopping centers
 - Give computersto all
 - Tax on sweets and sugar
- That I become president
- That *(we have removed a name here)* become president
- A place for orphans.
- fewer tests and something to do, also UN sucks
- I just want to make my children manage everything in school and manage all the way to the end otherwise everything is fine

14-17-year-olds

- Build a tunnel to Föglö.
- More capitalism
- Be more independent from an earlier age



We're fine!

6-9-year-olds

- We are doing fine



10-13-year-olds

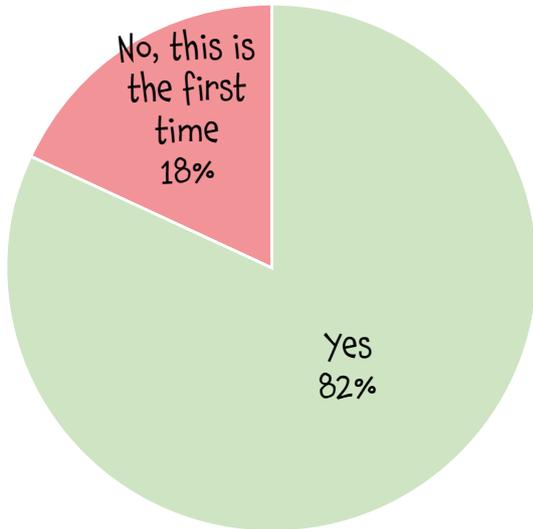
- I think we are doing well.
- I think children are doing well on Åland
- Nothing! I think we are doing well here on Åland



Children's rights

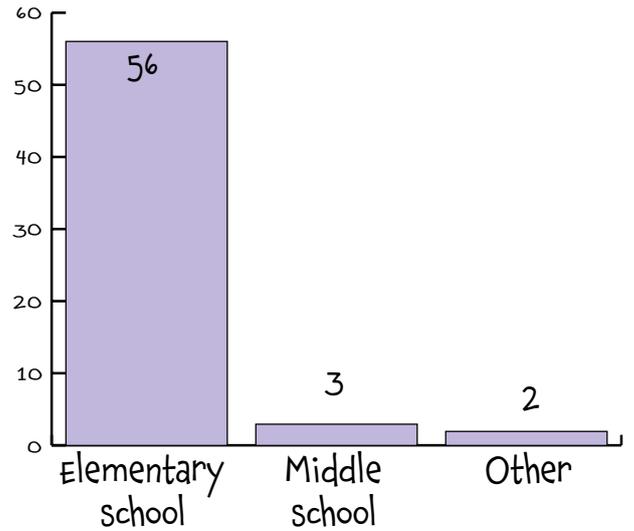
Have you heard of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and children's rights before?

345 children replied to this question.



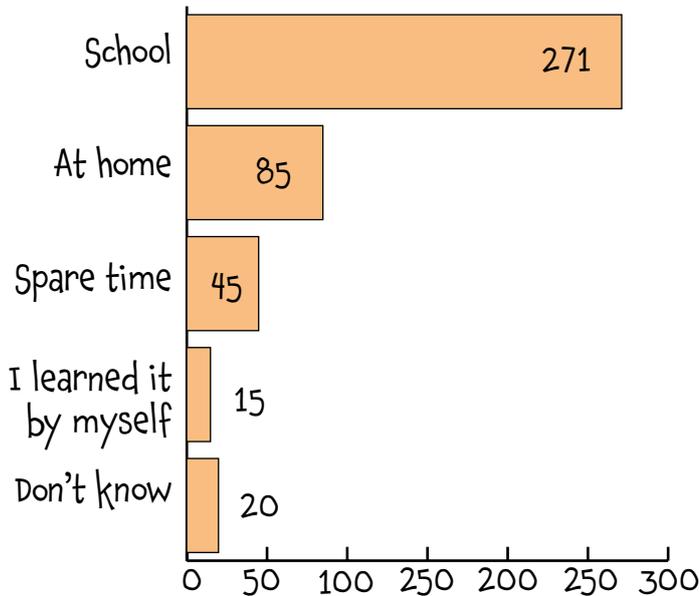
Of those who answered no, almost all (92%) go to elementary school

61 children replied that they had not heard of the Convention on the Rights of the Child before:



Where have you heard about the Convention on the Rights of the Child or children's rights?

310 children replied to this question. All were allowed to choose several alternatives.

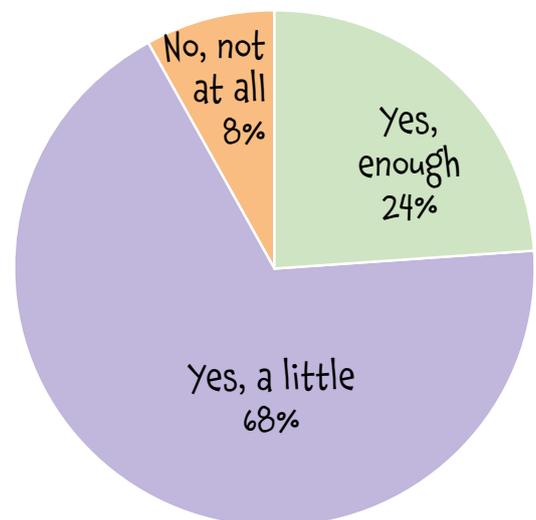


Other:

- Kindergarten
- At my friend's house
- At my grandmother's
- From dad
- The library
- I've been listening to a podcast
- YouTube
- You just can it
- They do not teach human rights in my school

Are you talking about the Convention on the Rights of the Child or children's rights at school?

344 children replied to this question.



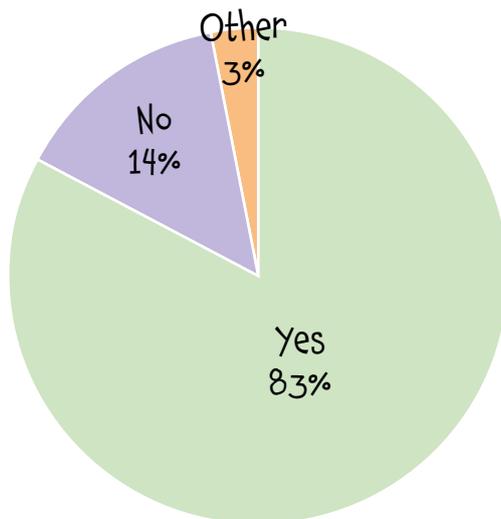


Children's participation

Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that: The child has the right to say what he or she wants. Adults should listen to children.

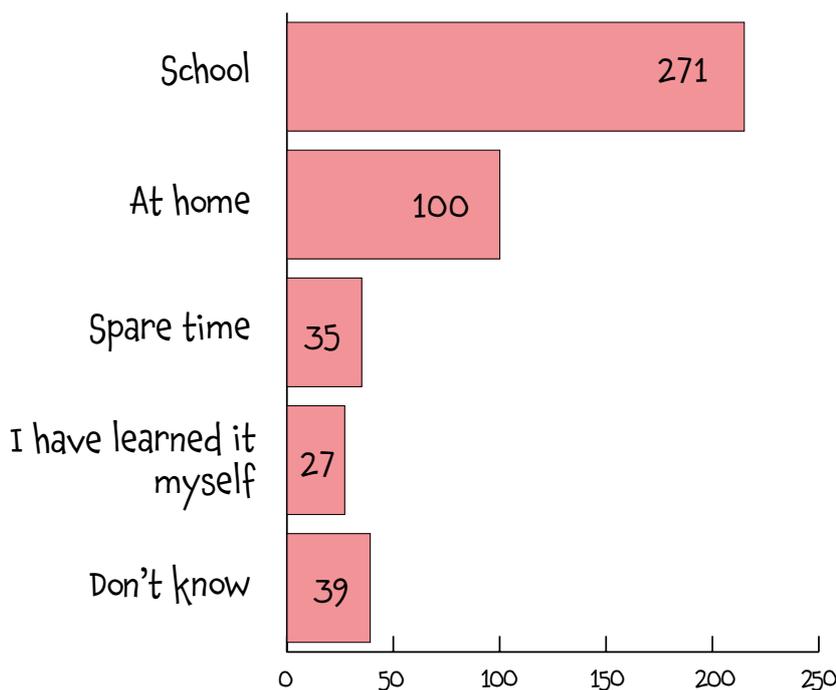
Did you know that you have the right to say how you want it in all matters that concern you?

344 children replied to this question.



Where did you hear about this?

301 children replied to this question. All were allowed to choose several alternatives.



90% of children who know that adults should listen to children have found out about it in school.

Other:

- I just found out this moment
- From dad
- What?
- From granny
- Don't remember
- Here
- My mum told me so.
- Everywhere

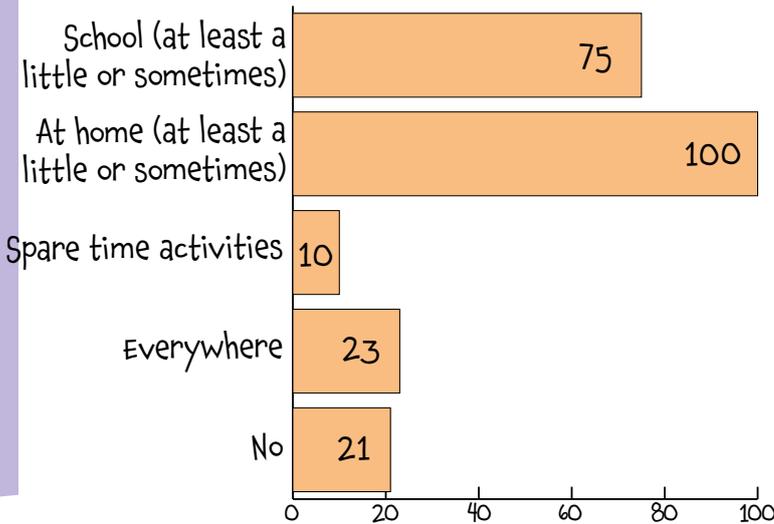


Children's participation

You have the right to say what you think in all matters that concern you.

Do you feel that you really have this right? In that case, where?

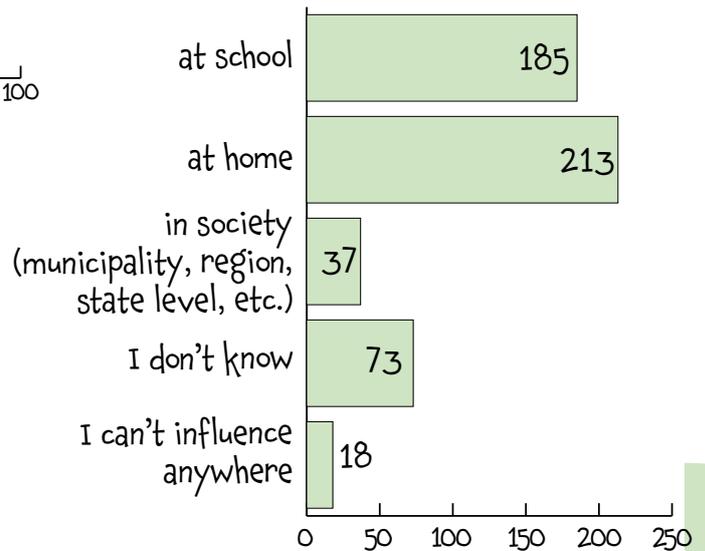
254 children replied to this question. Everyone was allowed to write free text.



More than half of the children (56%) feel that they can have their say in school.

I feel that I can have influence:

328 children replied to this question. All were allowed to choose several alternatives.



A few open answers:

- No, I do not think that right is fulfilled. For example. in school you do not have much say about anything. For example. If you do not like your teacher at school and think s/he behaves badly towards you, then the school does not take you very seriously.
- There are many who have no say in a situation with e.g. separated parents. Where you want to live etc.
- Yes, I can say how I want it at home but not so much at school or in society because I (in my opinion) am considered too young and unwise and that it's hard to get someone to take me seriously.
- Yes everywhere. But people usually have opinions about what you answer.
- Yes if, for example, I say I do not want to go to one of my hobbies.
- Yes, in the student council, for example
- I can always say what I think, but mom and dad decide many things with them. For example, when I have to go to bed and when I have to hand in my phone etc.

- I think so, but sometimes it does not happen because my father has an illness. At home.
- I think it feels better for the parents to decide.
- Do not really know but I know that not everyone dares to express their opinions and that is a shame. (Has happened to myself.)
- 50% no 50% yes
- From a legal perspective yes but from a moral point of view no



Bullying and racism

Have you experienced bullying on Åland?

352 children replied to this question. Everyone was allowed to choose several alternatives and determine themselves what it is that bullying is.

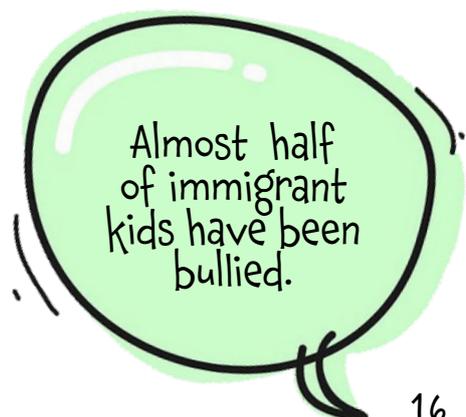
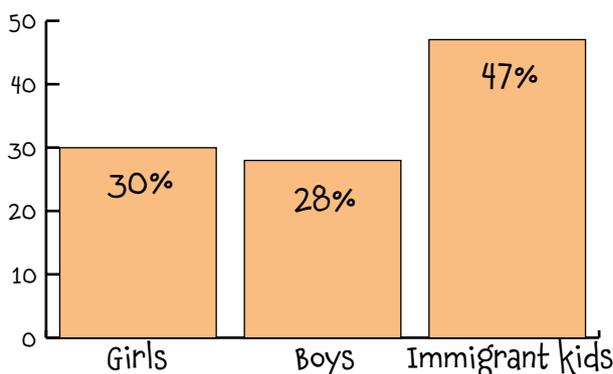


Other:

- Sometimes my friends walk away from me when I want to be with them
- Several years ago, I bullied
- Once upon a time I was not so kind in a group, but it worked out and I regret it a lot
- I've just been teased
- I have seen people being teased but not directly bullied
- I was a little mean towards some people but didn't bully
- Sometimes on TV I see people being bullied and in reality
- Yes, my siblings have been bullied at school and I tried to help.
- Yes, I have seen people being bullied and tried to help and it worked
- I have been bullied by my brother, but that was a long time ago
- A little in the 1st grade
- it depends, I have bullied people who bully others, and then discussed with them why it is wrong
- I have tried to help with quarrels but have not really been involved in bullying
- I saved my friend from being bullied!
- I have heard people say that they have been bullied
- Slightly grey area

How many girls, boys and immigrant children have been bullied?

170 girls answered the question and 51 of them answered that they had been bullied. 162 boys answered the question and 46 of them answered that they had been bullied. 64 children who have moved to Åland answered the question and 30 of them answered that they had been bullied.

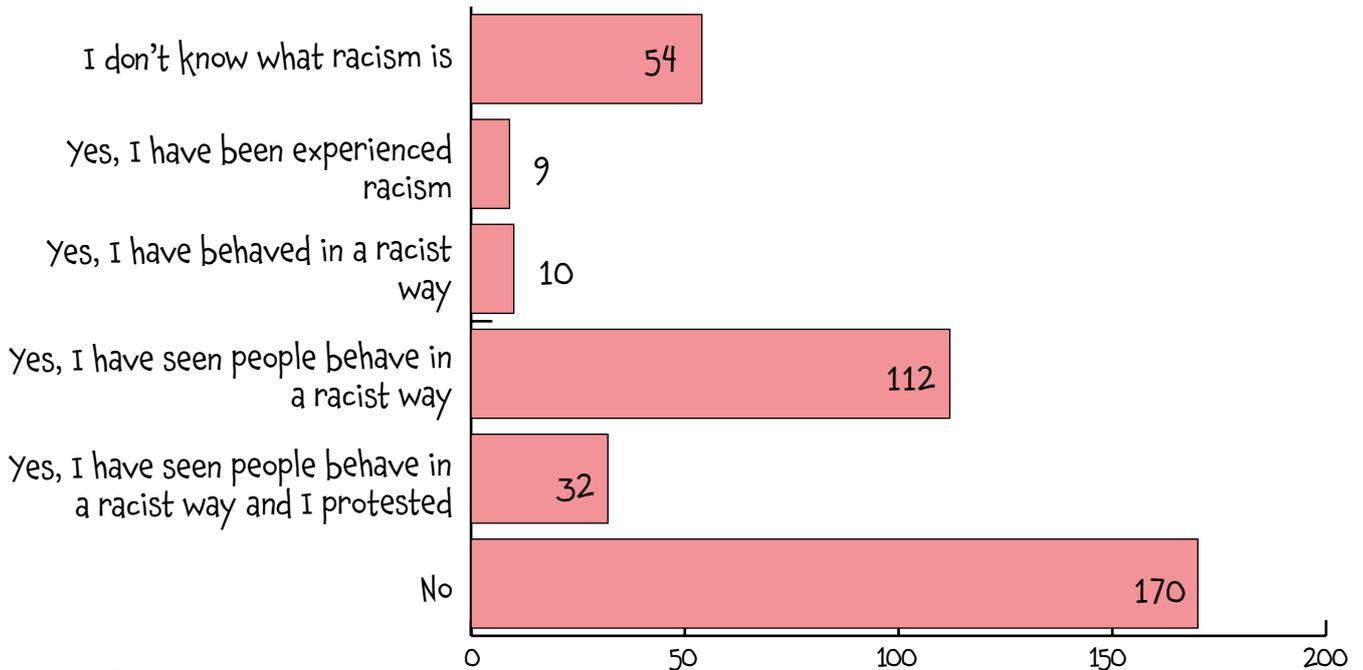




Bullying and racism

Have you experienced racism on Åland?

342 children replied to this question. Everyone could choose several options and decide for themselves whether someone behaved in a racist way.



Other:

- I know what racism is about, but I have never been exposed directly.
- I have heard about that
- People in my school behave racist but not towards me.
- My father has told me that even though Finland is such a “good” country, he has experienced racism against certain people.
- My classmate has been targeted by another classmate
- Yes, at school
- I do not remember
- My sister says that whites are not allowed to take part in other people’s cultures
- I have not done it before but now when I changed school outside Mariehamn there have been quite a few racist children.
- I have heard in games that someone has said that you are not as worthy because you have darker skin colour, and I told the person off who said it, but it did not help, but I reported.
- I have heard my big brother talk about a person who behaved racist and seen it online.
- I’ve seen it online.
- Yes, I’ve seen it online.
- I’ve seen people online.
- Yes. I’ve seen it online.
- Online and TV.
- Yes, I have seen it online

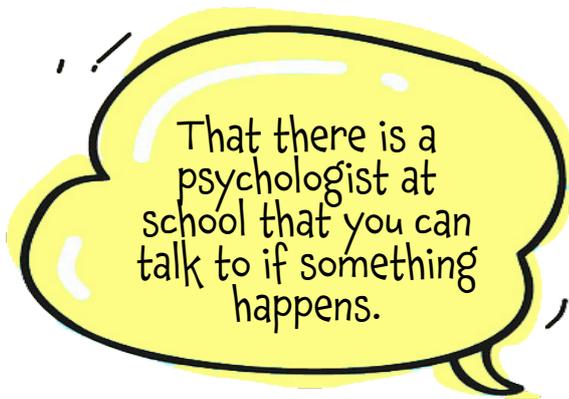




What can the school, parents and other adults do to make you feel safe?

6-9-year-olds

- Make sure others are kind to me
- That they make sure that no one is bullied
- No bullying no quarrel
- That they watch and watch so that neither I nor someone else is teased
- If someone bullies, I tell the teacher and the teacher says stop
- An adult is there when you need to talk about something
- An adult to talk to
- That an adult always is near



- Feeling safe
- It is good.
- I feel good at school
- I do not know because I am already safe, and it is so fun to go to school and I love to do it
- I do not know exactly. I'm safe
- Nothing because I'm safe already.
- I have not been afraid

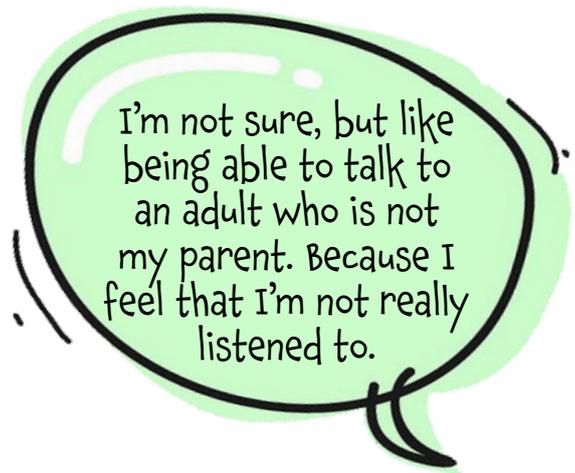
- Say that everything will be fine and stuff
- Help
- Help me when I need help
- That they help
- Protect me
- Tell me to stop
- Help me
- Be kind
- Be friendly.
- Be with me
- Be with me
- Be near
- They say it
- Be helpful
- Be friends
- Always be with someone and have supporting friends
- Listen to me when I talk
- Mom asks how it is and dad too when he gets home
- They should say things
- Stop guarding me
- Something
- To have sweets
- That they take care of me and say that there are ghosts



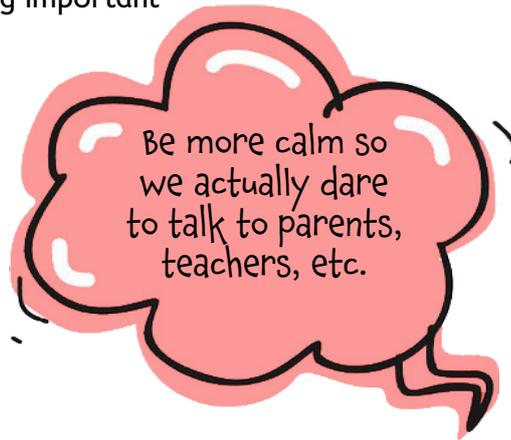


10-13-year-olds

- That you should be allowed to talk to adults if there is something
- Be honest and say if something has happened or something bad is going to happen.
- Be honest and be yourself
- That you are kind
- To listen if I'm sad or so
- They comfort me when I'm sad
- I am safe when I have company and am not alone.
- Be close in the same room you do not have to stand right next to it but only nearby.
- Listen / see me / be there
- Listen more
- Listen to us a little better
- That they should listen to my opinions and try to understand my situation.
- I do not know, to listen when I have something important to tell and to help if I need help.
- Ask how er are and stuff
- Listen when I want something
- Help me
- Help me with things and be kind
- Help
- Support me
- Protect me
- Be there on my side
- Talk to me in a nice tone of voice
- Take care of me
- Help and try to make things better
- Get down to business and make things stop at once
- Ask how we are doing and if something is up
- They can ask how I'm doing
- Talk about important things and go to martial arts!
- Talk to me
- Talk to me and similar things
- Be kind and ask if they can help
- Accept me
- Talk
- Talk, be kind to one another
- Make me able to trust them
- Make me able to trust them
- Don't know. Maybe be kind and happy.
- Do fun things
- More grown ups



- I never feel safe, lol
- I do not know, never feel really safe, because there are people who are weird and disgust me



- Wear a face mask at certain occasions
- Wear a face mask sometimes
- As long as I can be with my rabbits, I'm calm
- When I get to be with my best friend who is like all I have...
- Friends and mother
- I will be safe if I get good food
- I feel safe among the adults I am with and in school as well so I do not know what the school and adults can do more.

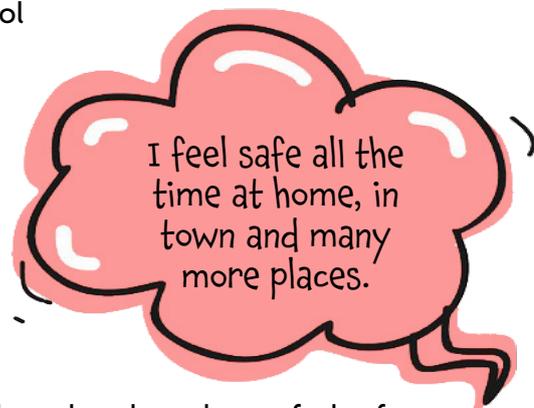
What can the school, parents and other adults do to make you feel safe?



- Make sure I do not get hurt
- Keep an eye that no one is messing with me
- Be my friend
- Have a safe home / school
- Because you always have a recess custodian at school, they can tell if someone is bullying
- Be aware of bullying.
- Keep a closer eye on whether someone is being bullied or so.
- Talk to the bully
- Talk to the bullies, and involve parents and the school more, help the bullied, I got no help from the school I went to, so I had to change schools
- In school, all teachers can walk around the school and not stand in the same place all the time.
- Teachers should not favour them; they should not just blame the same child all the time
- That everyone should be kind to each other both at home, at school and in other places
- That you can come and talk to an adult if you need help
- Talk to me about what has happened at school and then say what I should do the next day when the bully comes and tries to bully me
- If you e.g. bullied, you should talk to an adult or someone close to you, and then that person can talk to the principal or the teacher and bring up with this person who is being bullied
- When I was bullied in the first and second grade, I told my teacher and she took and talked to me and the girl who bullied me and she finally stopped. At home, my parents have said that it is absolutely not okay to bully, and they comforted me when I was bullied
- Reduce homework in school. Adults who listen if you want to talk certain things or talk about a friend or so
- They can show it. They can check how it is with someone if they see that you feel bad or are treated badly. The adults in the school could sit down with the students individually and just talk to it. Just so that you feel that you have an adult you trust. That you have someone you can turn to when you cannot talk to your parents.
- You can find other groups in order not to hang out with the bully
- Get the children suspended for 2 weeks and if they do it again twice as much
- Don't know but stop bad things happening at school
- Home schooling
- Home schooling



- I feel safe and I don't need any help
- I feel safe and well-liked
- I think I'm safe
- I feel safe.
- I feel safe.
- I do not know. Feeling pretty safe already
- I do not know; I am already feeling safe



- They already make me feel safe
- Do the same as now
- I'm safe already
- Don't know. I feel safe enough.
- I always feel safe
- I already feel safe.



14-17-year-olds



- Let me do what feels good to me.
- Let me be with friends in my free time, and able to go out all alone when I feel really stressed.
- Be by my side :)
- Listening and respecting one goes a long way
- Be there
- Just be there
- Listen to us and hear what we feel
- Investigate
- Listen to me and accept me
- Help and get between them
- Do not really know, maybe check your eyesight more because the adults are so blind so they do not notice anything :)

- Try to make it feel better in school, for example
- Be more aware of what is happening, at least the teachers in the school
- To keep track of breaks in school.
- Talk to me and those at school. Have better supervision at school, ask more often how the children are doing
- Be calm in conversations and let mistakes happen



- I feel safe

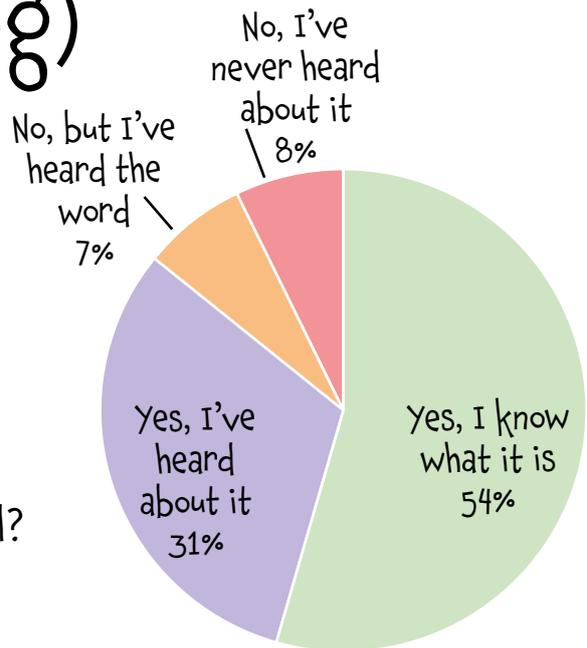
- Acquire EPA tractors to Åland so we don't get killed by cars
- They can give me Sibylla sausages
- Military help
- S market



KiVa (A national campaign against bullying)

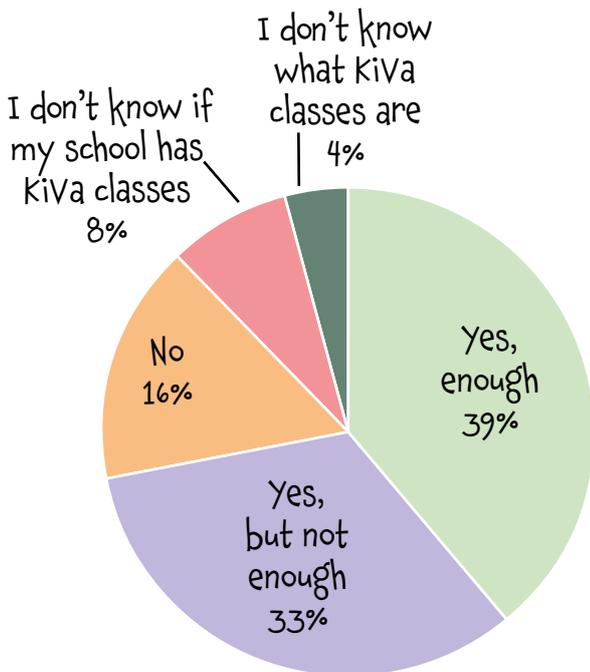
Do you know what KiVa is?

347 answered this question.



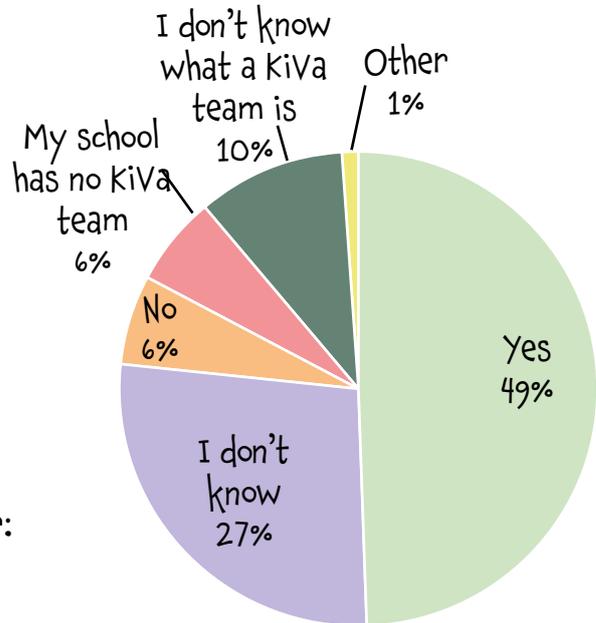
Have you got KiVa classes in your school?

347 children answered this question.



Do you think that the KiVa team works well at your school?

343 children answered this question.



Other:

- Just fine
- Both yes and no
- I would not say that it is the best, but it works.
- I know that my school has a KiVa team, but I have never been in contact with them
- It's the higher classes who have it
- We have not had so many maybe 1 or 2
- They did it but stopped
- There isn't so much bullying here, so I do not know





We want Åland to be the best place in the world to grow up. How can Åland get better for children?

Everyone should be able to afford to have a good life!

- That everyone should have a family
- Everyone has access to family relatives and homes
- That there are more schools and kindergartens and that children who come here from other countries can get help and feel good. They may not have gone to school and get to do it here.
- To be able to go to school
- Everybody should have a good life

6-9-year-olds



10-13-year-olds

- Everyone should have somewhere to live, and no one should be poor.
- That everyone gets food and a home.
- That the poor children should get a chance to make money
- Åland can be a better place to grow up if we made sure that all children have what they need, such as food, clean clothes, and a roof over their head.
- I think we should help so that all children can go to a sports activity. Some may not be able to afford that and that's what I want people to try to change.
- Everyone who wants should have leisure activities that they like. Some things are very expensive although it would be fun to attend them.



All children should feel safe!

- Everybody behaves well and help others and are friendly <3
- All should be kind
- No wars
- No wars

6-9-year-olds

- That everyone is safe, that there is a home for everyone, that everyone has food and a mother and a father
- Not to bully
- That no one bullies
- That everyone should be safe
- To stop teasing

We want Åland to be the best place in the world to grow up. How can Åland get better for children?



Do not scold the children but just tell them how to do it instead and explain it in a kind voice.

- Eliminate bullying
- Stop racism and bullying
- Save more children
- Everyone should have equal value
- Nobody should be exposed to racism
- To stop bullying
- Try to stop bullying. and drugs e.g.
- No bullying in schools
- By stopping bullying
- Less bullying and racism
- That everyone should be treated in the same way
- That no one should bully and that everyone should be kind
- That all children feel equally well at home and at school
- I would feel safe with home schooling
- If you told children who say nasty things that they should stop so that other children do not have to put up with it
- We should not have racists here on Åland because if it comes a girl or boy who is black to (my) school or another school, another student who is white can only say ugly things about their skin to the other person in that situation. The children may be sad and never come to school again because they do not want it to happen again.

Be able to grow up in an environment that is safe and be able to believe in themselves.

10-13-year-olds

- If we can live freely
- That there should be peace, haha
- It can be better for those who are small to grow up here if the police go around and check in playgrounds so that there is no rape.
- More lights out because sometimes it's a little scary to go home where there are lots of trees and stuff. It is brighter in some places and then it does not feel as scary.
- That everyone should feel safe here on Åland.
- That everyone should feel safe.

Make sure that schools become better kiva-schools

- That all parents should be kind to their children.
- More rules on how parents should treat their children and how they should raise them.
- I would like the children to be more right
- Not to hurt the children
- I want everyone to be treated equally well all the time.
- That everyone should be treated in the right way and have a good overall
- To protect children and listen to them

14-17-year-olds

- More field assistants.
- Keep a closer eye on the city and what the young people do in the city, for example
- Children want to be safe, have people to hang out with and just have fun



We want Åland to be the best place in the world to grow up. How can Åland get better for children?

More activities for children!

10-13-year-olds

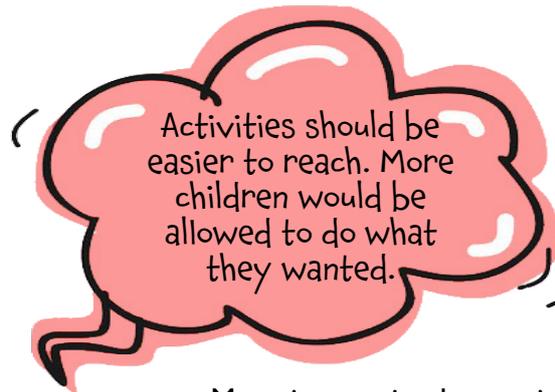
- Activities that are not so far away and that do not cost so that anyone can join in and have fun after school.
- If all hobbies should be for free
- Have more places for children to play.
- A few more stores
- More activities and more fun things for children
- A playland
- That there are more bicycles and walkways that you repaint the pedestrian crossings in the countryside
- I think that Åland would need more playgrounds so that children are close to play
- That there are more fun parks.
- It is already the best place to live in the world, but you could make more playgrounds
- Yes, they have more sports and stuff
- I can develop well with an gaming room and a better screen and an gaming PC and not a console
- More leisure places on Åland
- More floorball teams
- Safer school routes, more to do in leisure time and fun things for children, better school meals and snacks, the opportunity to have a Finnish group to practice languages in
- I do not know but maybe children could be involved in more things.
- Several activity choices, for example, there is no painting and drawing course, etc.
- Give them more activities
- More playgrounds
- More amusement parks

14-17-year-olds

- More recreation centres and activities.
- More leisure activities and other children
- Maybe provide a little more fun stuff children and young people can do OUTSIDE, maybe get a new cafe such as Subway or something
- Build up Starbucks. All the young people would go there every day, and there would be a lot of tourists:
- More activities like mountain bike things we don't have here.
- Bring EPA to Åland
- Make EPA tractors legal
- More spare time

6-9-year-olds

- More fast-food restaurants.
- That they should not sand the roads, so it is possible to go sledding on the road.
- A zoo
- That you can ride horses more
- That there should be more fun activities to do
- More shops and new clothes that cost less.
- A candy-house
- The island should get bigger
- That we had more park activities and have fun



- More interesting happenings
- One could ensure that children who cannot afford to go on leisure interests could do so. Children under the age of fifteen should be allowed to use public transport free of charge. You should have a security guard on the bus. It is often very lively and a lot of MOVEMENT in the bus. It would then feel safer and more secure to take a bus. A lot of bullying occurs on the buses. All school transport should make sure that they arrive at school on time! Often many students get 5-15 minutes late to school. Just because the driver can't be bothered to go a few minutes earlier to their job. Their sleeping in is more important than their future leaders. Because we children will someday take over their work. So, anyone who wants their business to continue after they retire should set a good example and do their best to attract people to their jobs.



We want Åland to be the best place in the world to grow up. How can Åland get better for children?

All children should feel good!

10-13-year-olds

- Put less pressure and stress from school, they are a reason why many feel bad.
- I want children / young people to stop drinking as much energy drink, beer, and smoking.
- Protect children from drugs
- Sell less alcohol and tobacco
- Be better at and ask how people feel and give as the therapy they need. Have more body positivity and remove all drugs and tobacco and stuff from here young people
- Good food
- Less homework so that you can be with friends because sometimes almost all your free time goes to homework and tests
- Everyone should be allowed to be a child longer without all the demands from school

14-17-year-olds

- that other children spend time with each other
- there are a lot of cigs and alcohol among the children and impatient behaviour
- I think there are too many screens, unfortunately, but there is not much to do, I also think that teenagers can behave incredibly horribly. I think that teachers should act more when there is bullying, etc. I also think that schools (principals, etc.) should take on criticism and think of the student's best interests. There have been so unbelievably many things regarding me that the teachers do not care about, etc.
- Remove mobile-free school because you also want to write with friends who live in other parts of the world and if, for example, you must fill in a questionnaire about your job in your free time, practice something, write to your parents when you need to. Mobile-free school has affected everyone in bad ways but also good ways.

10-13-year-olds

- That we should take more care of nature
- No littering or contamination. I do not want to grow up in a "wasteland" (a polluted place). I want there to be an arcade and for everyone to be happy! :D

6-9-year-olds

- I want that no one falls ill



- Children's hospital and a children's home
- That parents should not be divorced (mine have not divorced fortunately but I know many in my school who have parents who divorced)
- That it should be good on Åland
- I do not know but in every way possible.
- Less school, more spare time
- Less tax on food
- Free period protection



Take care of nature!

6-9-year-olds

- No littering in nature



10-13-year-olds **Grown-ups should listen to children!**

- To dare to talk to adults
- That children also could vote
- That adults should help children make their voices heard. For example. That they should keep in mind that children are as important as adults.
- That adults listen to children. That children can be involved in deciding and choosing.
- Adults should listen more to their children
- That the parents can ask how things have gone at school or something similar.
- That the adults listen to the children more.
- That all children should have the right to express their opinions
- There are a lot of children who want to make their voice heard and that you can still listen and ask your children sometimes if they are okay and make children's voices heard so that they can say what they think and feel.

6-9-year-olds



Letting children decide for themselves a bit more, such as what we'll have for dinner, for example.



Get advice from children and young people. Do not think too much in an adult way and too much about rules.

14-17-year-olds

- Listen to us more and take our opinions seriously, make us feel like a valuable and important part of society
- That the children should be allowed to take a stand and be heard in questions about the child
- Make sure that everyone is well and happy, try to come up with solutions to why it is not good and focus on what is good.

Other:

10-13-year-olds

- That there is cola at school
- More schools specialising in different languages
- Do not have grades 1-3 with grades 4-6 in the same school
- Larger shops in the archipelago
- Cheaper things

14-17-year-olds

- More capitalism
- More women who have better taste (who like me)
- Tunnel to Föglö only :)
- That you can decide everything yourself from the age of 15

We want Åland to be the best place in the world to grow up. How can Åland get better for children?



6-9-year-olds

- It's fine
- Fine as it is
- Åland is smashing
- Can't think of anything
- I feel that Åland is safe
- Åland is fine as it is
- I think it's good the way it is
- Don't know, it's best already



14-17-year-olds

- It's fine the way it is
- It's good



We're fine already! 10-13-year-olds

- It's fine
- I like Åland as it is :)
- ÅLAND IS PERFECT.
- Don't know, I think all is pretty good already
- Åland is already good, I think.
- I think Åland is as good as it can get
- Åland is already good, I think.
- Åland is PERFECT! it feels very safe and nice
- I do not think of anything that is bad
- Nothing I think Åland is a nice place to grow up in.
- It is the best country
- It is already good
- Nothing because it is already perfect! :)
- It's okay here :D
- It is already good.
- I think it's pretty good here on Åland. and a very good place to grow up on
- I already think that Åland is the best place to grow up
- I think Åland is a really good place
- It's already good
- It's good already
- It's the best because in swearing they just shoot
- I think it's good as it is and Åland will always stay safe!
- I think that Åland is a really good place to grow up because there are many ways to have vacations at home and if you do you can go to our super nice archipelago. I also think it is good that there is only one town on Åland because then it is like a centre where everything is
- I think it's good here on Åland already!
- I think we are doing pretty well!
- I think Åland is already good
- Everything is fine in Åland it cannot get better
- I think everything is fine

Thanks!!



2. Immigrant children on Åland

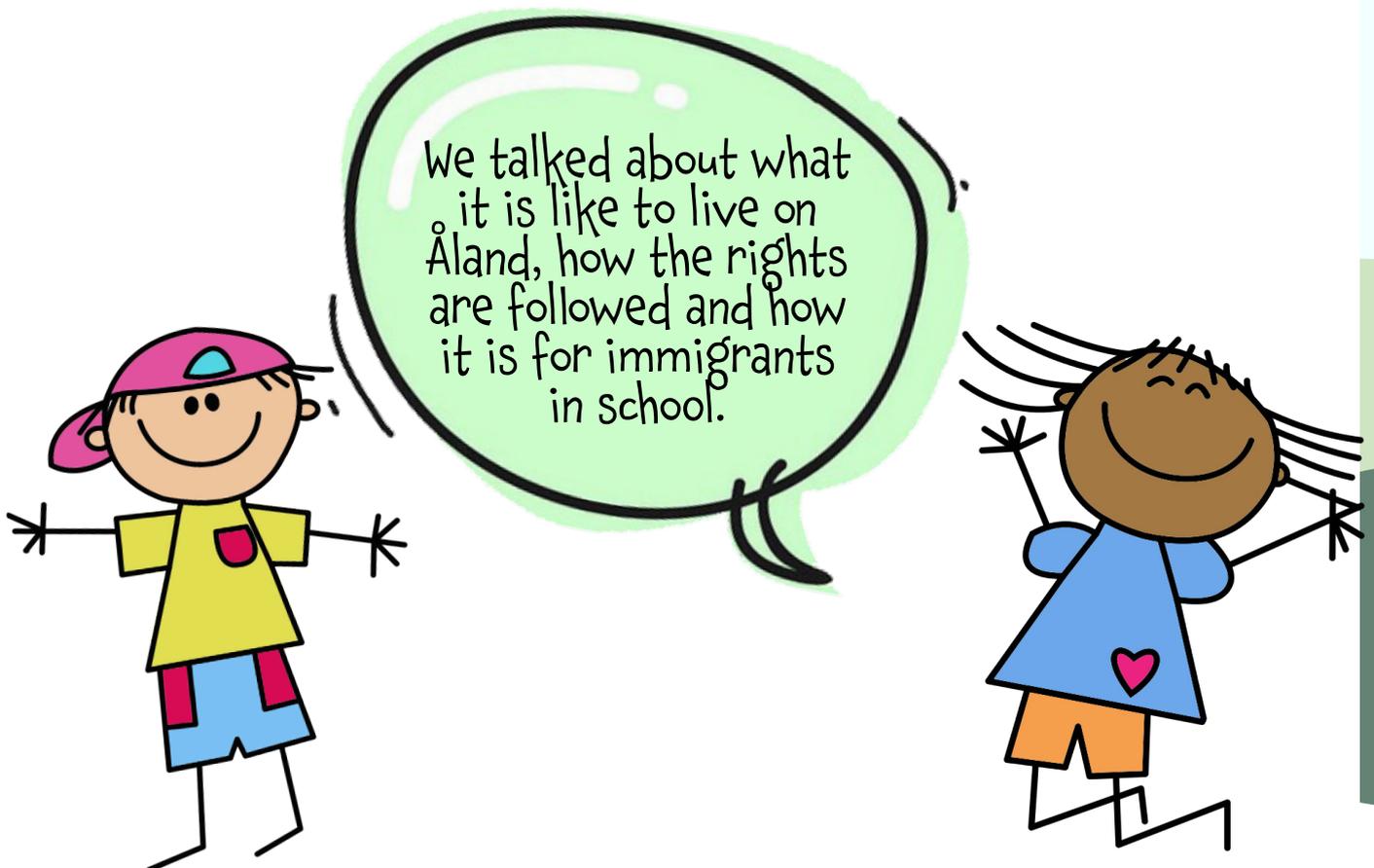
Introduction

30.6.2020 we organised a youth café for immigrant children. Everything went super well! We had decorated nicely, and we had arranged multicultural coffee. People came from different countries.

To begin with, everyone got to introduce themselves. After that we had prepared a PowerPoint with questions that we all answered. The discussions were interesting and long! We also had a game where we chose 10 rights / articles from the Convention on the Rights of the Child and they had to make a pyramid in small groups and choose which right Åland is best to follow = at the top, and then the bottom = articles that Åland may not be so good at following!

Then we continued with our questions and discussed more. Everyone got to tell a little about their lives, how they miss their homeland and what it is like to live on Åland. We also talked about how rights are followed and how it is for immigrants in school / at work and how it feels. We also noticed that there is a difference in age, as to how they learn Swedish and the difference between living in Sweden or living on Åland.

We had a person who documented the discussion, here are the notes.



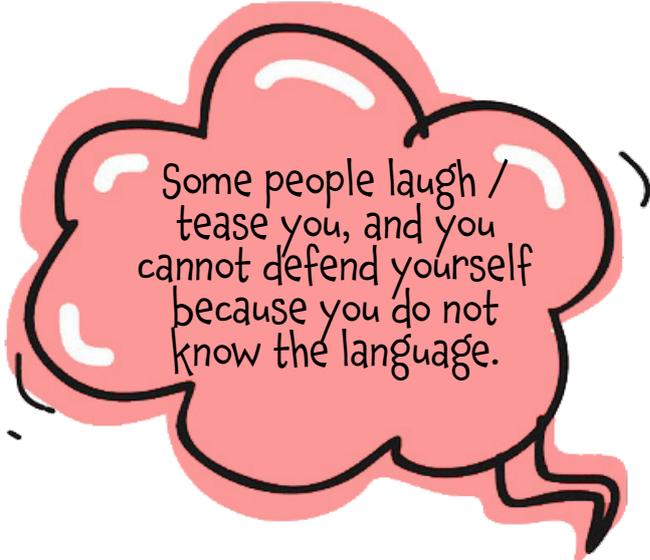


What is it like to be a child who has moved to Åland?

The people who participated in the youth coffee, expressed their views on what it was like to be a newcomer.

Here's what they said:

- **“It was shocking”**
- **“Hard to get used to a small town/so few people”**
- **“Hard to learn the language”**
- **“I was afraid to make mistakes when I talked”**
- **“Some people laugh / tease you, and you cannot defend yourself because you do not know the language”**



Some people laugh / tease you, and you cannot defend yourself because you do not know the language.

What can be done to make it better for all children who have moved to Åland?

We thought it would have been good if there were camps for immigrant children, more shops, more people and more activities just for us, so that we have somewhere where we can feel a sense of belonging.

Since Åland is so small rumours spread quickly. There are also very few people who have moved here so that when you arrive here you immediately feel the xenophobia, i.e. unpleasant glances. It's probably because people who were born here aren't used to people from other countries living here.



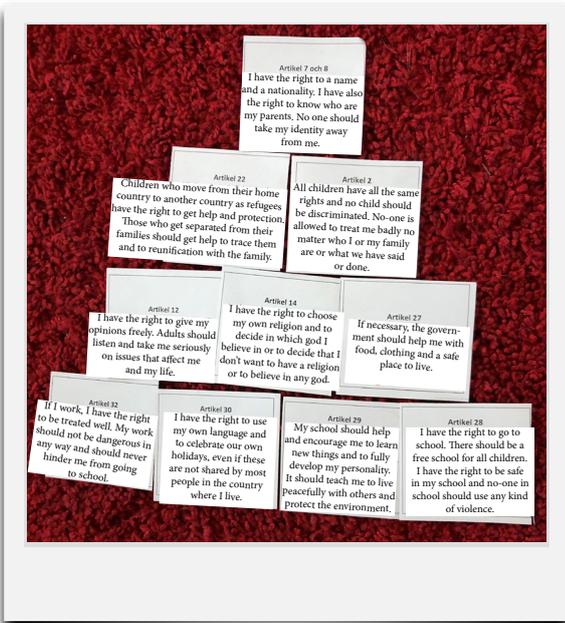
We want more activities just for us, so that we have somewhere where we can feel a sense of belonging.



Exercise

We had selected 10 rights. The task was to rank the rights based on which Åland follows best (and in this way bring about discussion).

- Four groups worked, and the different pyramids are pictured. The right that the group thinks Åland follows best is at the top.





Discussions arose during the presentation about how the different groups ranked / built the pyramid:

Article 28: Children have the right to education

- Everything is fine with the school, free school for everyone. In many countries, it is a problem for parents to be able to afford to send their children to school. There is bullying in school.
- Bullying exists against everyone - not just immigrants.

Article 30: Children have the right to their language, their culture, and their religion

- Difficult to speak Swedish with friends who speak my mother tongue. It can be perceived as excluding. A teacher said that we are not allowed to speak our language at school and: "What if you say bad things about us Ålanders?"

Article 29: School must help the child to develop and teach the child about human rights

- We do not talk much about what it is like to be an immigrant in school. For me it is very important, and I would love to do it.

Article 12: Children have the right to express their opinions

- I do not know what it is like for Ålanders, but I have a hard time saying things to my parents. The respect for the parents is great. They are stricter towards girls.
- There is a lot to say but not everyone dares.
- Children can affect many things but not as much as adults.

Article 14: Children have the right to practice whatever religion they want, or none at all

- There are not many different types of churches here. School has a lot of focus on Christianity. Very Christian. Like everyone SHOULD be confirmed in church. Expectations in society - everyone asks: Have you been confirmed? Are you going to be confirmed?

Article 22: Children who are refugees have the right to protection and assistance and Article 27: Children have the right to a reasonable standard of living, such as housing, clothing, and food.

- Åland handles this well. Provides food to those who need it, such as the Food Bank.
- The municipality helps and the employment office provides support.



Did you get a lot of help at school?

- In the language course, we young people read Swedish together with older people. We thought it was strange to gather everyone who could not speak Swedish. We got to do a few other things and look around the city. Courses with music, art and sports.
- I got my own teacher in English. Those who studied Swedish as a second language got own teachers.
- I got help with the language. When I moved here, I had to rehearse year 7 (first year 7 in my home country and then year 7 on Åland).
- Mathematics is easier on Åland than, for example, in my home country. It is easier here with other subjects that are not language subjects.
- The teacher who taught us Swedish (Swedish for immigrants), she helps us. She knows everything and she can talk to us, she's like our mother. I do not really know what it is that makes her able, but she has taken many courses and learned. Once, all teachers had the opportunity to take a course in Sweden for teachers to learn about teaching to immigrants. From my school, only two teachers went - she and another teacher.
- In the vocational upper secondary school, there is not the same support as in middle school when it comes to support for the language. Not everyone understands that you need help. Here there is only one teacher who can help.
- There are many who do not understand what it is like to move here and cope, not knowing the language, and understand things that you knew previously in your home country. I do not know what can be done to increase that understanding.

There are many who do not understand what it is like to move here, not knowing the language.

Have you experienced some kind of racism?

- Yes, yes. There were many who were from other countries in my class. Others joked about our country.
- In my class, there are some "real Ålanders" who joke about my country.
- A guy in the class asked me "Do you know how to fit in? - Well move away from here."
- The class has a group on Snapchat and there they send memes with stupid posts.
- Immigrants in general experience this "joking".
- People from the Middle East are equal to terrorist like.
- One thing I dislike is if an Ålander has heard rumours about, for example, a Romanian, then everyone thinks that it applies to all Romanians.
- When we fled our country and came here, we were called terrorists. We fled here to get away from terrorists.
- I think they only believe in things they see on TV.
- After 9.11 very bad for people from the Middle East.
- One thing I have heard is that Strandnäs school is called a ghetto because there are many immigrants there. I reply by asking: What do you mean?



Is there anything you can say or do so that this changes?

- In my class we have said that it is not fun. Even the teacher. But they do not listen. It is difficult. They kind of refuse to listen.
- In my class there has been a kind of quarrel. We went to the class teacher, and he talked to them. Then they became angrier with us, and it led to more racism.
- The same for me. It only got worse. The desire was to be treated like everyone else, but it only got worse.
- When a child was new, they disliked him a lot. He could not speak English or Swedish. He could not answer and then it just made him even more vulnerable.

What can teachers do?

- It is difficult. What can they do?
- They can explain how the students can do and be towards the new student so that they understand why a person is moving.
- Teachers and adults think better than children. They do not behave racist against children. Children cannot understand what it was like to move and start over. What is it like to go to a shop where someone speaks Swedish? And I would like to speak my language or meet an acquaintance. Then when you try to speak Swedish, you will be corrected in a bad way. I want to be corrected to be able to learn the language, but not laughed at.
- In vocational high school, everyone was more open than in middle school and I could start speaking more Swedish.
- The mother tongue is important to be able to talk to people in their country.
- I want classes where we talk about what it is like to be an immigrant. No one has asked me what it is like to have moved here. No one has asked me. I would like, for example, a substitute teacher to ask the question of what it was like to move here.

When you try to speak Swedish, you are corrected in a bad way. I want to be corrected to be able to learn the language, but not laughed at.

I want classes where we talk about what it is like to be an immigrant.



Was it easy to become accepted in the group? In school?

- It was hard. I did not know English; I did not know Swedish so I could not say anything.
- At first, I did not know that I could speak English with the others, but then I realized that I could speak English. Then it went a little easier.
- We mixed languages, English, Swedish, the body - everything.

Have you interpreted for your parents?

- Yes, in slightly different contexts.
- During a parent/teacher meeting at school, my father was asked if he wanted an interpreter with him, so he got to have an interpreter with him.
- A child has interpreted a few difficult words during a parent/teacher meeting.
- I interpret invoices for my parents.

Do you plan to stay on Åland?

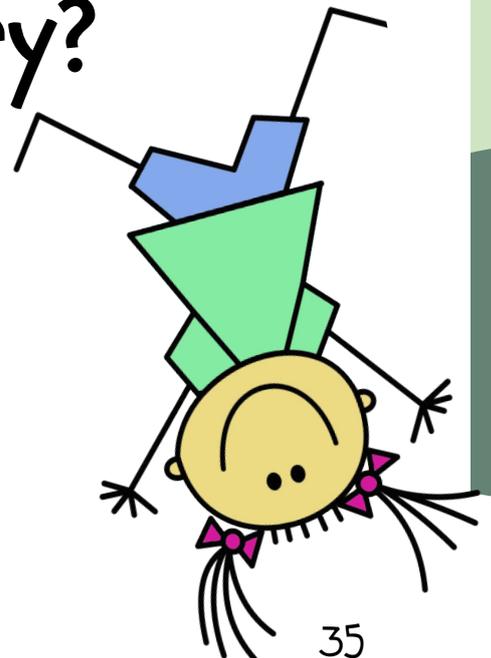
- I would like to move to Sweden.
- Maybe when we get older.
- My parents are here to give me a better future. I wonder if they will stay on Åland.

Would you like to move back to your home country?

- Well... Different answers here. Some want to visit on holidays.

Remember!

- We all here are very smart because we know several languages. We know home languages (love my home country and I want everyone to know that, and I am proud), Swedish and English, so many languages. It is a "point" that we have that not everyone has.
- One thing to remember. We learn several languages.





What can be improved on Åland?

- More people. There are not that many people on the streets. It feels a little strange. Even in the summer, there are a few people out. In Sweden, for example, there are people in the forest who you can ask if you get lost or so. Once I got lost and it took 30 minutes before I met someone to ask.
- Maybe more big stores (but there are no people).
- Trains that run around the whole of Åland.
- Youth evening for immigrants. Not just for kids, for adults as well. Parties that you have in your home country. In Sweden there are such parties.
- This racism thing is because people are unfamiliar. They wonder why they speak another language, other clothes, etc. It is about unfamiliarity. What can be done is that there will be more immigrants on Åland. Here, everyone knows each other. Everyone is related to each other. More immigrants in each class so you are used to it.
- There are few immigrants in the archipelago.
- People are so prejudiced. It would be a good thing to take up this in schools, like working against stereotypes, not judging so much.
- I feel good when I hang out with people from other countries because then I will not be judged. Yes, when we hang out with other cultures, we talk about things we celebrate, things we have in common with food and music.
- There is a reluctance to new things. Example: Helicopter flights in the summer.
- For me, it's always fun to talk to people from other countries. How has it been for me here and what could society do?
- Maybe it's difficult with the law. When we moved here, we did not know the law. If we did something wrong, people call the town's housing company.
- Legislation is not taken up in school, I have learned it from my parents.
- It is more difficult for adults to learn the language. I have heard from my father that he is questioned when people ask: "why can you not speak the language better?". There are many who do not understand that it is more difficult the older you are. Many say that "Now you have come to Åland so now YOU should be able to speak Swedish."
- There ought to be Swedish lessons or special Swedish as a second language class for immigrants who go to high school
- Schools should offer more training, invest mostly in upper secondary school
- Camps for immigrants - would be great. Like, get to know Åland by surviving!
- Camps for only immigrants means that you can talk about difficulties in coming here. They have a hard time understanding that it was a problem to move here. In Sweden, there is a university in Kristianstad for only immigrants.
- When I was a little and moved here, someone said that there are many different camps and so on. I did not want to attend camps with Ålanders as a child. I have no one to join, I will not understand.
- I want to read my mother tongue, but that possibility is lacking. It is difficult.
- In Sweden, there are immigrant teachers, immigrant youth leaders.
- Everyone recommended us to study to become assistant nurses. What do they think of us? That we can't do better? I want to study at a university. This means that people move on to the mainland.
- The way to be friends is different. After we've met four times we're kind of friends. BUT here, even if you have met 100 times, it is still distance.
- We are different when we play. We talk loudly and they think we are arguing. We have a wedding for three days, a bit like here, but bigger.
- Here you work early and then manage yourself after 18 years.
- For example, Christmas is so nice in my home country. I miss the way to celebrate holidays. It would be fun to do this on Åland.



3. Children with separated parents

Introduction

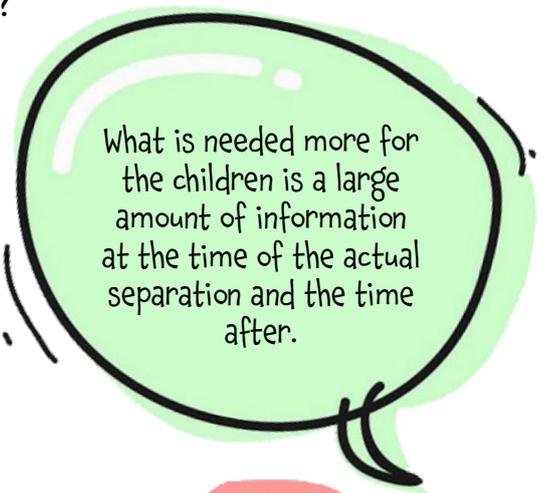
We asked 64 children with divorced parents: Has your parents' separation affected how you feel? We who asked are young people themselves with divorced parents. The survey was part of our summer job at Save the Children Åland in 2020.

We chose the theme and approach ourselves. We decided to do a survey aimed at children between 13 and 20 years and then create some spicy posters that were to be available where children are. The questionnaire was distributed on social media and some schools on Åland. We received a total of 64 responses.

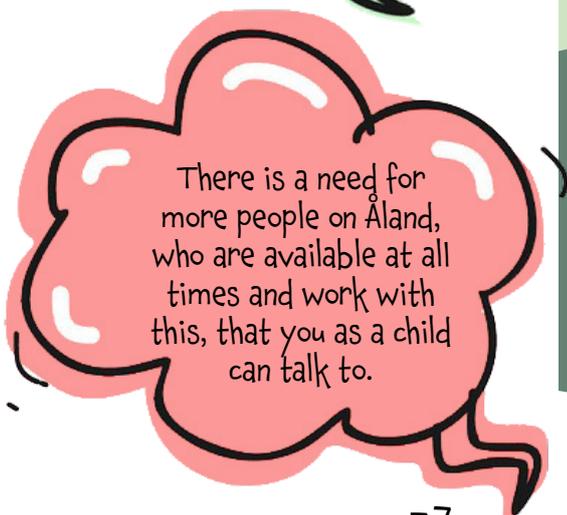
We have also talked to friends, other children with separated parents, separated adults who have children and professionals. In general, children are well because they have access to a good standard of living such as food, house and usually love. What is needed more is a large amount of information at the actual separation and the time after for the children. Another shortcoming is that children are not always allowed to be heard on issues that concern them. Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states: "Children have the right to express their opinion and to be heard in all matters concerning the child." This is something that Åland must work on. We also think it is needed several people on Åland who are available all the time, that children can talk to because there is a shortage of such. Maybe a support person or someone trained?

Remember!

- You're not alone
- You always have the right to talk to someone if you feel sad, e.g. a school health nurse, Folkhälsan (Public Health Association) or Save the Children
- It is not your fault that you are in this situation
- It is not your parents who decide what is a secret
- If the parents have any questions about the ex-partner, they should talk to each other, not to you
- There are many children who get / have a stomach-ache when they change parents / residences
- It is important that you are allowed to tell what you think is right, even if it does not happen
- There are both good and bad things about having a bonus family
- Do not worry about money, it is ALWAYS the adults who will take care of it
- It will be OK <3



What is needed more for the children is a large amount of information at the time of the actual separation and the time after.



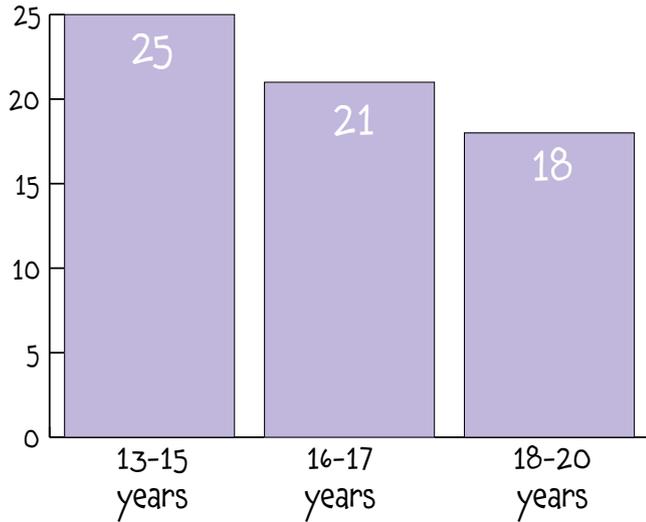
There is a need for more people on Åland, who are available at all times and work with this, that you as a child can talk to.



Info about us who responded to the survey

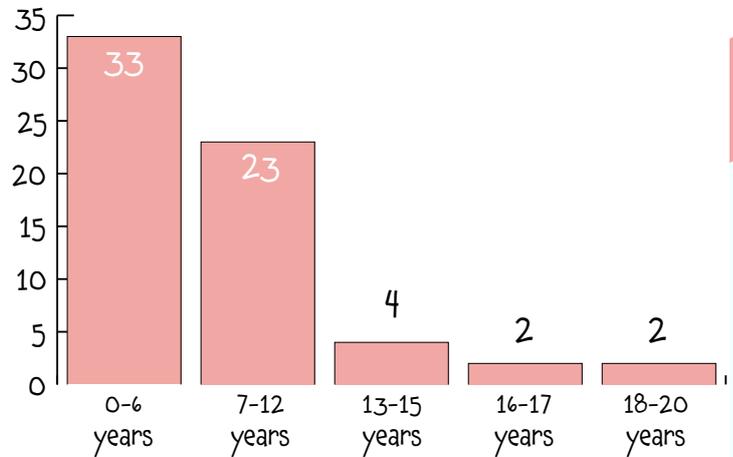
How old are you?

64 youths answered this question.



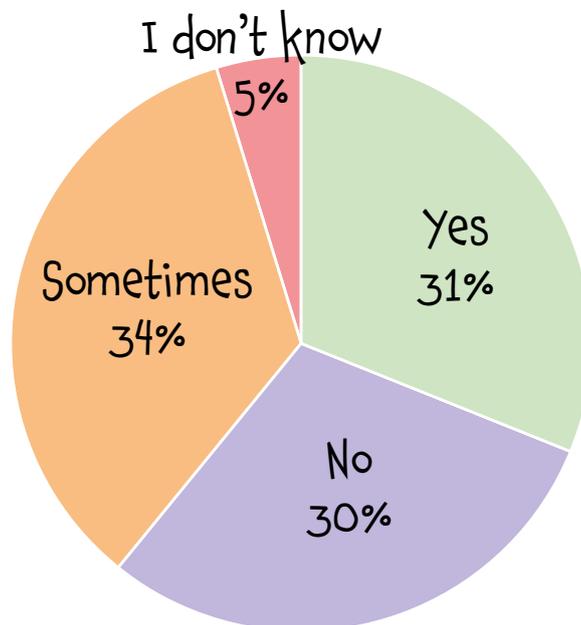
How old were you when your parents separated/divorced?

64 youths answered this question.



Can your parents cooperate well?

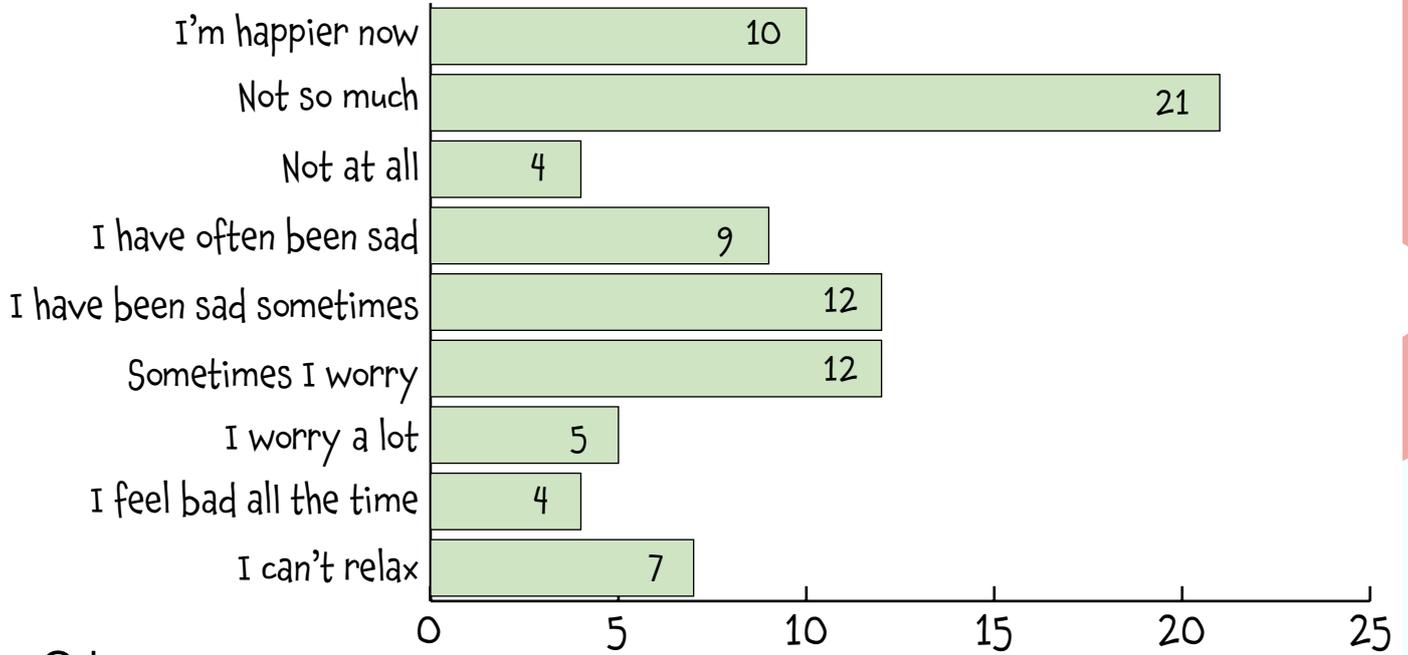
64 youths answered this question.





Has your parents' separation affected how you feel?

64 youths answered this question. All were allowed to select as many alternatives as they liked.

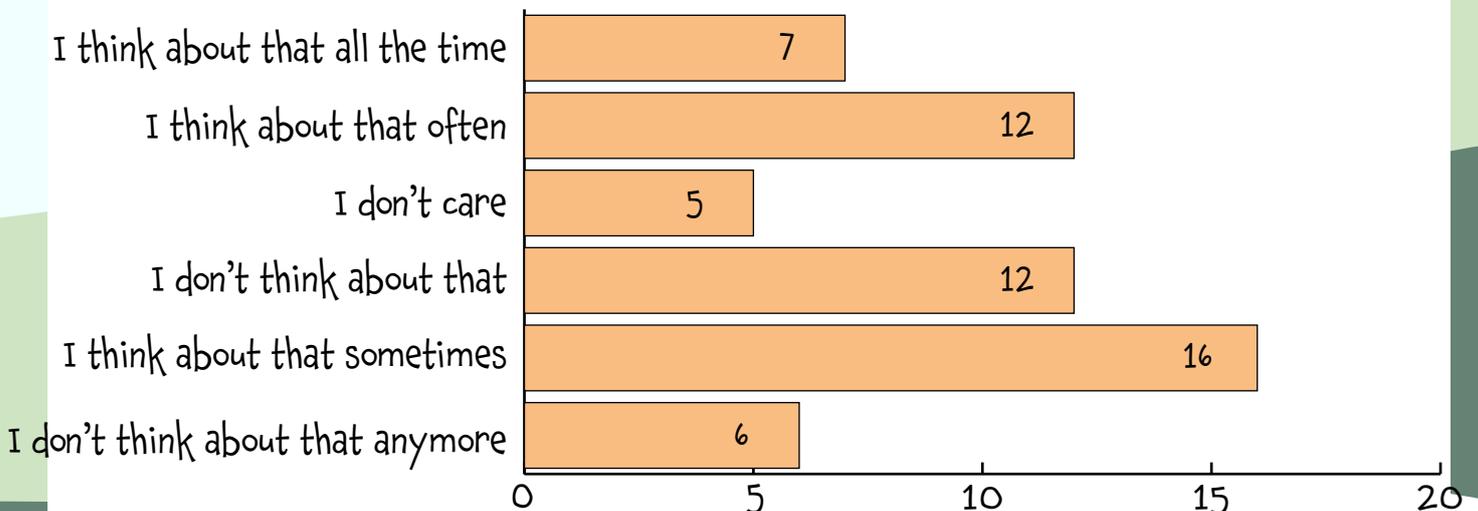


Other:

- I can't remember the time before they divorced. It just feel strange. Vague.

Is money an issue with divorced parents?

64 youths answered this question. All were allowed to select as many alternatives as they liked.



Other:

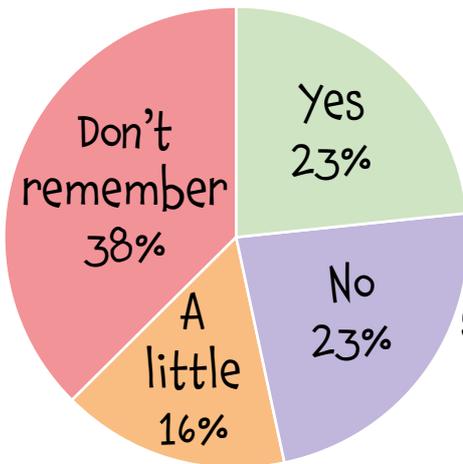
- No, mum has the whole custody. No. No, my parents handle this well.
My dad is no longer part of my life.



You as a child have the right to information so you can understand what is happening.

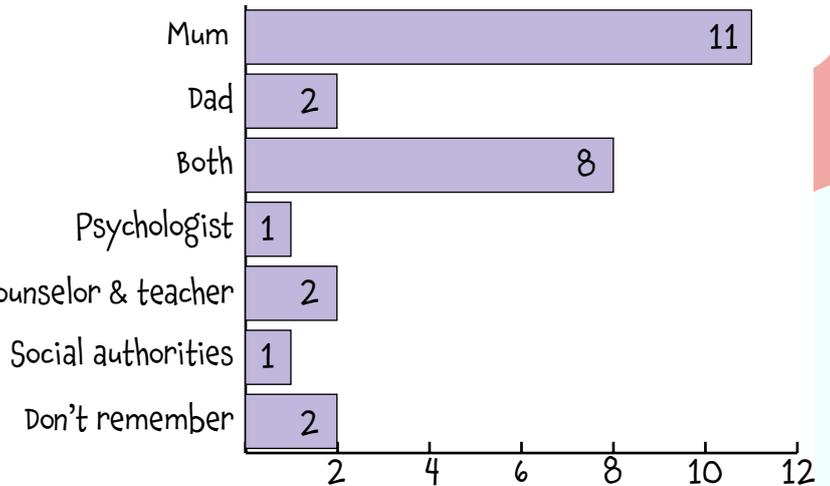
Did any grown-up person talk to you about the divorce and your situation?

64 youths answered this question.



Which grown-up talked to you?

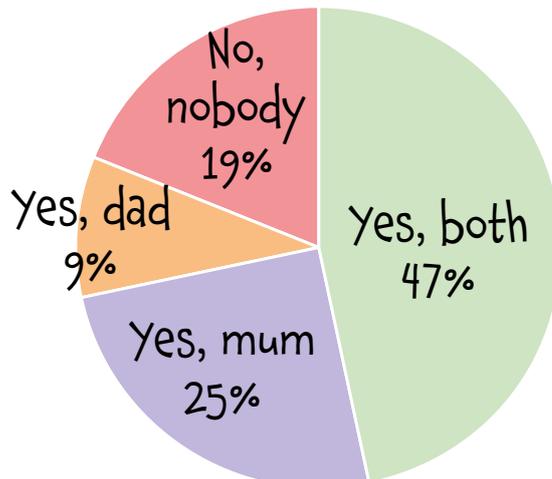
26 youths answered this question. All were allowed to write freely.



As a child, you have the right to be involved and decide on issues that concern yourself

Do you feel that your parents listen to you?

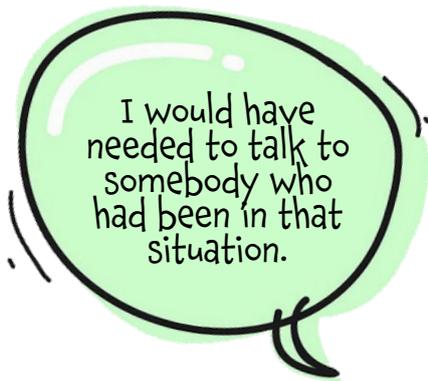
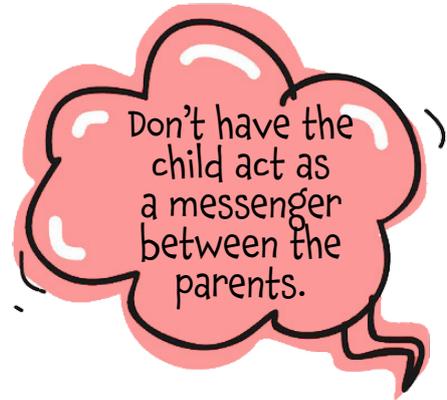
64 youths answered this question.





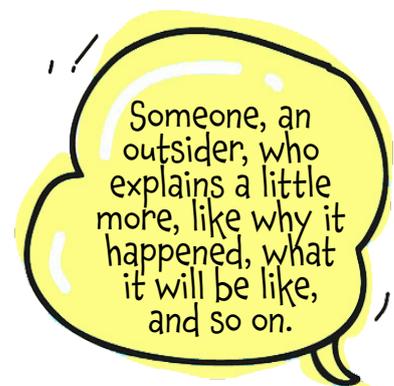
Do you have any tips on how it could be better for children on Åland with divorced parents? What would you have needed?

- Do not say bad things about each other in front of the children
- Prioritize the children in the first place. Cooperate. Let them speak. Show that you are there for each other
- Spend some time with the “old” family mix, such as a holiday, even if the adults hate each other
- Clarity between both separate families
- Another adult to talk to



- Therapy
- A support person
- Somebody who could explain better what is going on.
- Talk to someone you can trust.
- That the parents talk to the children and that the children ask if they have any questions.
- Some kind of organisation that could have helped, without costing so damn much money because that's where the problem lies.

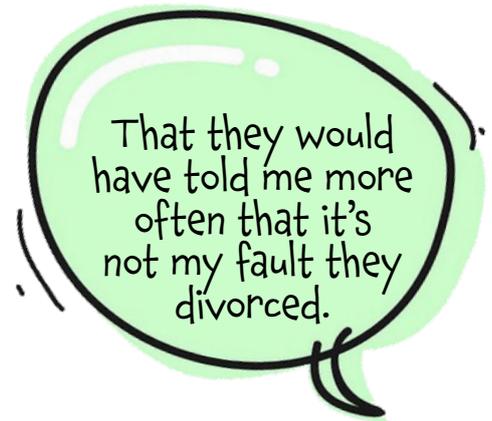
- A survey for parents who die when they are young, my father died, they never divorced. Count me out of the answers to this questionnaire if you will, but I think it is more traumatic to lose a parent in a death than in a divorce, after all, I can never see my father again. Yet it is always only about divorced parents that people talk and care about. I still feel very bad to this day, even though it's been 11 years since he died this year. It's a permanent life change for the worse, especially when they die suddenly. I was not even allowed to start school before I got lost a parent. Still, people just feel sorry for those who can meet both parents and have a steady income from both. Correct me if I'm wrong, I can accept it. So far, all the support for children who lost a parent in childhood has passed me by. Take care.





Do you have any tips on how it could be better for children on Åland with divorced parents? What would you have needed?

- A person to talk to
- That my parents listen, and then money
- Support, someone who cares
- That you still have both parents who are in your life and contact you if you are, for example, every other week or so, etc
- I would have needed information from my parents why it happened. I lived for a long time with the feeling that they divorced unnecessarily and that it only affected me, without the need for them to divorce. I wish I had been told, when I got older that it was the best thing they could do
- Okay, buy a nice moped for them
- I know that some of my friends who have divorced parents have problems with finances. And I know that they would appreciate if some activities were free or cheaper. I would not have needed it as I already go to floorball.



- School transport from both parents' homes, even if they live in different municipalities. When the school receives information that the parents are separating, via, for example, a change of address in contact information, a mandatory meeting / contact information should be introduced for the guardian of the child. And follow-up after 6 months / 1 year, when the child may be more receptive. Also, that schools receive information about how ugly a divorce can go and how long it can continue to be ugly. I experience that especially teachers on Åland are usually very ignorant. That the children in some way would receive information about their rights, such as choosing who to live with after x age and where to turn if those rights are not fulfilled. That papers for instance, that require both parents' signatures must have a submission period of at least 1.5 weeks, so that a change has time to take place and the child avoids the stress that may arise from having to contact the parent with whom it is not "with".



Thank
you!

