

What do children want?

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Who are Children's Parliament?

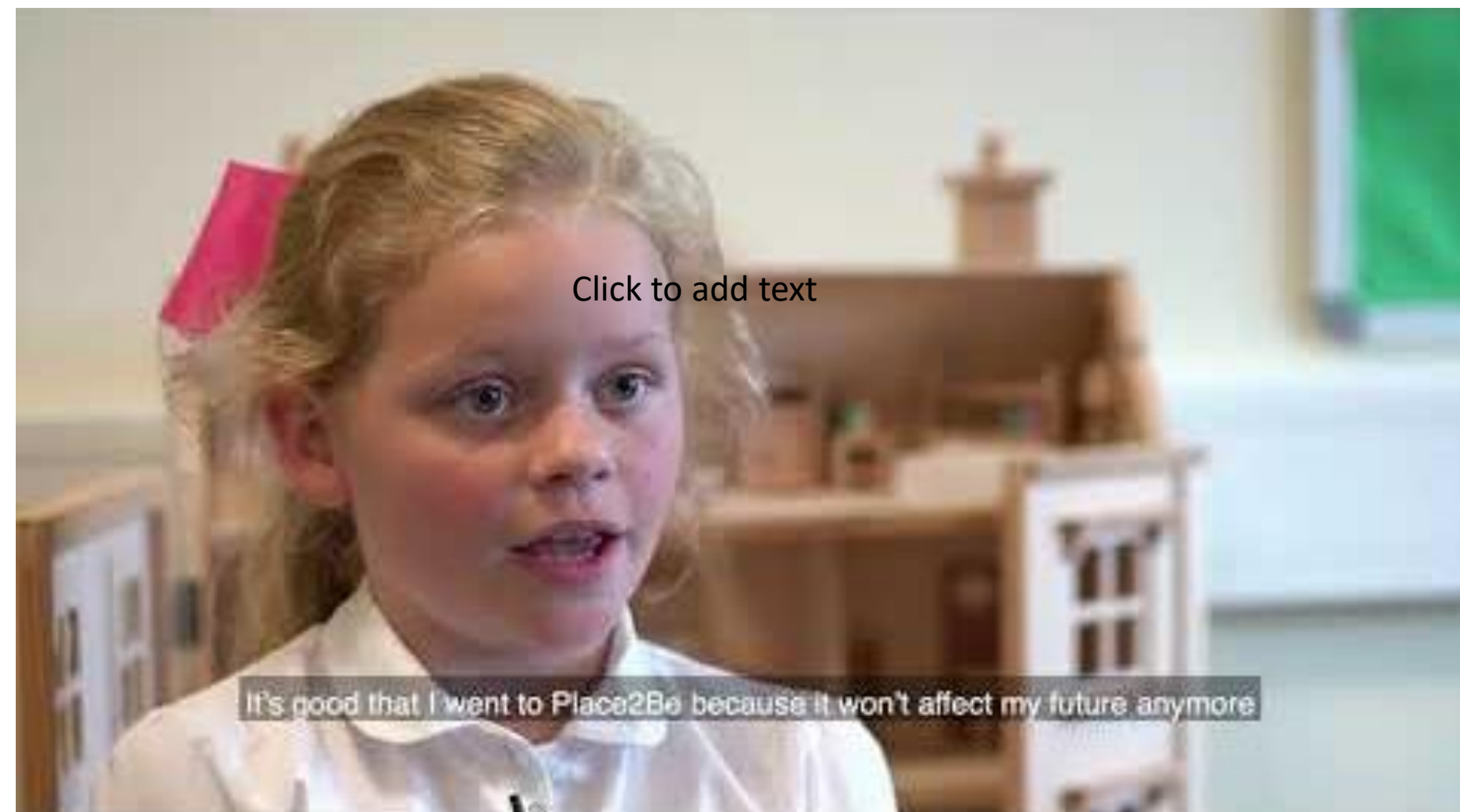
Established in 1996, Children's Parliament is Scotland's centre of excellence for children's participation and engagement.

Our dream is that children grow up in a world of love, happiness and understanding. Our mission is to inspire greater awareness and understanding of the power of children's human rights and to support implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) across Scotland.

What is Place2Be?



Place2Be is ...



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Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Western Isles

This summer, Children's Parliament worked with 140 children across 4 primary schools in the Western Isles - in partnership with the Western Isles Council- to discuss how they could improve children's mental health and wellbeing services.

We then worked with 15 Investigators to pull together their peers' calls to action.

Calls to Action

Gathering all the views and ideas shared by the wider group of children, the 15 MCP Investigators developed the following **Calls to Action**. The children hope that Comhairle nan Eilean Siar will take these actions forward in its work to improve children's mental health and wellbeing services across the Western Isles.

1 Bullying is a serious problem for many children and has a damaging impact on mental health and wellbeing. Children want adults to support them to build relationships with their peers and to tackle bullying and cyberbullying. Children feel that awareness-raising and training for adults about bullying and its impact on children's mental health and wellbeing could help.

2 Children want access to a trusted adult and time to talk when feeling upset or anxious.

3 Children want specialist teachers in each school providing creative subjects, especially the arts and physical education. Children believe that these active, creative educational opportunities will support mental health and wellbeing.

4 Children want to find out more about art, music, outdoor sports and sport clubs that are available to them. They also want to know what services and groups are available that support children's mental health and wellbeing.

5 Recognising that children have the right to a healthy, clean environment, children want to see more bins and recycling facilities, and education for children and adults on how to use them properly. Children want there to be places in every community where families can access support, food and clean water, if they are struggling with money. Children welcome the Council's commitment to change the school meal plan to provide healthier options and wish to be involved in its design.

6 Many children recognise the positive impact nature and being active outdoors has on their mental health and wellbeing. At school, they would like more outdoor learning and more spaces to play, run around and be active. Children recognise the negative impact vandalism and broken equipment in playparks and public facilities has on their safety, mental health and wellbeing. Children want to be involved in the repair and redesign of these spaces.

7 During this investigation children raised their concerns that there are not sufficient clubs and activities or community events available for them. Often numbers are limited, so all children interested cannot participate. Many clubs or centres have long waiting lists. Children talked about how that can leave a child feeling excluded or bored, especially over the summer holidays or after school, and particularly in winter when, due to weather conditions, it is harder to meet with friends outdoors.

8 Children want to be involved and work together with adults to improve their lives at home, in school and in the community. This requires adults to recognise their responsibilities as duty bearers in fulfilling and promoting children's human rights, and to actively involve children in decisions that will impact their lives.

1. Help children put a stop to bullying, cyberbullying and feelings of exclusion

2. Make sure every school and community has a safe, private space where children can talk to an adult if they are worried, upset or having a difficult time

3. Have specialist art and PE teachers for every school and nursery

4. Create child-friendly information and knowledge on what activities, services and support children are able to access, the benefits of it and how to get involved

5. Make sure our communities are healthy, clean environments where everyone has access to clean water and healthy food - especially those with little money

6. Create, repair and improve play and outdoor spaces - and more learning outdoors!

7. Create more activities, clubs and places where children can go to hang out, play, learn new skills and make new friends

8. Make a commitment to involving children in decisions that affect them

Although these are the children's final messages and Calls to Action, it is their hope that this is the beginning of their journey working together with Comhairle nan Eilean Siar. As stated at the beginning of this report:

Tha sinn a' coimead air adhart ris na beachdan againh a chluinntinn.

We look forward to hearing your views.

MCP Investigators

Working Together

Place2Be and Children's Parliament will be working together to take the views of children and young people around mental health and using them to produce training tools informed by their voices.

Your Turn!

We would like you to draw what you had to support your mental health and wellbeing when you were a child, and what you would have liked.

You have 5mins to do this, and then we will share our thoughts.
No artistic skill is required!

Get ready, get set... Go!

Discussion

What did you draw and why?

What do we need to do to support children with their mental health in school settings?