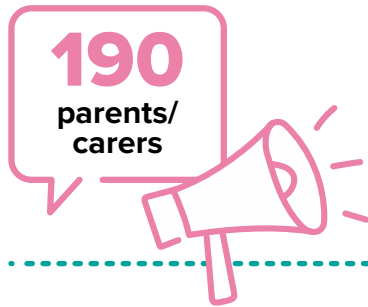




# The Big Conversation

## 2025 Findings



**190**  
parents/  
carers

During the summer of 2025 **'Parents Connect Wales'** carried out a Big Conversation with parents/carers across Wales. The topics discussed were decided by a **pre-poll with parents**.

**190 parents/carers** from across the whole of Wales shared their views through an **online survey**.

### Physical wellbeing

**77%**

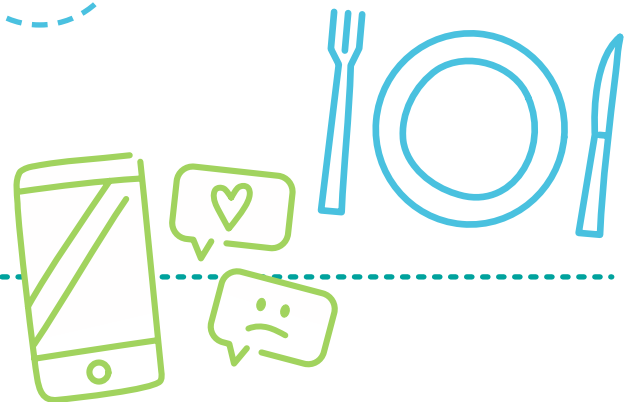
said that they were able to afford healthy food

**75%**

said that their children ate fruit and vegetables every day

**55%**

said that their children took part in physical activity every day



### Screen time and social media

**79%**

said their children spent between 1-4 hours a day on screens

**35%**

had concerns about their child's screen time

**68%**

of parents had limits/rules around screen time at home

**16%**

said that their child used social media

### Concerns about children's screen time and social media use:

**Behaviour and emotional impact**

**Lack of alternative activities**

**Screen addiction**

**Monitoring challenges**

**Exposure to inappropriate content**

**Digital safety concerns**

"It encourages instant gratification, short attention span and addiction to the dopamine hit of 'likes'."

"I wish I put rules in but I'm so busy I find it hard to monitor or even remember."

"Bullying, abuse and access to age-inappropriate content."

## Behaviour

51%

felt they didn't have enough support with their children's behaviour at home

### Top areas of child development parents would like help with

- Social skills
- Mental Health
- School transition
- Communication Skills

"Apart from the health visitor who comes to my home, I don't know and I'm not sure where I could get support if needed."



## Support with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

24%

of parents had a child who had been assessed for or diagnosed with ALN

57%

of these parents found the assessment/diagnosis process 'difficult' or 'very difficult'

### Parents shared more about their experiences:

Lack of support and help

Confusing

Slow process

A battle

Extremely long waiting list

Stressful Isolating

"We had to go private for one and fight the school for another..... very stressful and felt bullied by the school."

"For professionals to listen to the parents.... having a child with ALN is really hard and not to be listened to...really affects well-being."

"The wait is long with little to no support."

## School and education

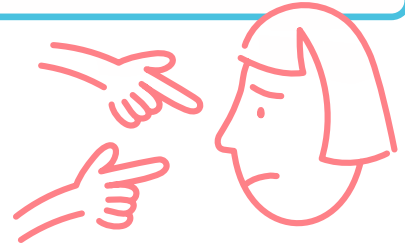
34%

said that their child had been affected by behaviour related issues at school, with bullying being the biggest issue

40%

said their child had experienced stress or anxiety related to school and exams

"My son is often bullied.....most schools deny having a bullying issue instead of acting on it."



## Causes of children's stress and anxiety:

Large workload and pressures to complete work **Bullying**

**Unmet needs of neurodiverse children** **Unsupportive school environment**

**Too many class tests and exams**

### Mental health support parents would like to see in schools

- More training for teachers
- A quiet space to calm down
- Someone to talk to in schools

### Life skills parents would like children to be taught

- Emotional wellbeing
- Digital skills
- Money management skills

## Financial support for families

29%

said that their financial situation was 'struggling' or 'in crisis'

95%

want to see a Child Payment introduced in Wales or want to know more

65%

felt there was not enough support from the Government for families like theirs

"Any financial support to families, especially those hit by the child benefit cap, would benefit children in poverty."

"We should be ashamed at the gap between rich and poor in a developed nation like ours."

"We have a duty to give every child equal opportunities to meet their basic needs and their rights."



## Children's rights

95%

felt it was 'very important' or 'important' for children to be aware of their rights

However

41%

had not heard of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

"Helping children understand their rights and respecting these rights day to day."

"A child has a right to have a voice and to use that voice, but also needs guidance."

### Parents saw their role in supporting their child's rights as:

- Advocating for their children
- Educating children about their rights
- Keeping children happy, healthy and safe
- Offering support and guidance
- Empowering children's voices and upholding rights

## Our Ideas

Parents shared ideas to help their family's wellbeing

### Financial support

- Affordable housing and food
- Remove two child benefit cap
- Raise threshold for support
- Benefit uplift to meet rising cost of living
- More help for single parent families.



### Childcare

- Longer paid maternity leave
- Better work-life balance
- Introduce free childcare hours
- Flexible childcare allowance



### ALN Support

- Better understanding of neurodiverse children's needs
- Improve ALN support
- Faster diagnostic processes
- Greater inclusion within schools



### Wellbeing

- More local clubs, sports and outdoor fun to keep kids happy
- Reduce the cost of fruit and vegetables and healthy food
- Universal free school meals



### Mental Health

- Easier access to mental health support for children and parents

