Children's fears, hopes and heroes – Modern Childhood in Australia

A report released in June 2007 by the Australian Childhood Foundation, has shown that Australian children are deeply concerned about the state of the environment and the impact of climate change. The online survey was undertaken by Quantum Market Research on behalf of the Foundation and the National Research Centre for the Prevention of Child Abuse at Monash University.

The survey of 600 10–14-year-olds across Australia, has revealed that:

- 52% are scared that there will not be enough water in the future
- 44% of children are worried about the impact of climate change
- 43% of children are worried about the pollution in the air and water

Summary of key findings

Broader global issues:
The report has also revealed that more than a third of children were anxious about terrorism, were worried about having to go to war and one in four believed that the world will end before they reach adulthood.

- 31% of children are worried they will have to fight in a war one day
- 27% of children fear being a victim of crime one day

Self confidence & body image:

- 46% do not feel confident about themselves
- 57% of children worry about what other people think of them
- 41% of children do not ever feel like they are doing well enough

Peer relationships & bullying:

- 57% of children concerned about being teased
- 54% concerned about not fitting in with friends
- 52% concerned about being bullied

Experiences of adults:

Children are beginning to feel that they are no longer welcome, even in public places, believing that adults have no respect for them.

- 51% feel like children their age aren’t welcome in shops and cafes
- 41% of children believe that adults don’t show respect for young people
- 36% of children believe that adults don’t care about what young people think

Treatment by the media:
Companies and advertising make their money by selling children things that they don’t necessarily need.
- 88% of children feel companies try to sell them things they don’t need
- 85% feel there is a lot of pressure to buy things like games, music and clothes
- 74% of children believe there should be less advertising aimed at children

Source: Media release, 11/06/07: *New study shows children fear environmental disaster.*