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**HIGHLIGHTS EXPLORES THE INFLUENCES AND WORRIES OF A GENERATION
INCLINED TO STAND UP FOR WHAT'S RIGHT
IN 10TH ANNUAL STATE OF THE KID™ SURVEY**

*The Influence of Teachers and Celebrities Grows as Kids' Worries
Increase and Extend into New Territories*

October 2, 2018 (Columbus, OH)—According to the 10th annual State of the Kid survey released today by Highlights, kids have a lot on their minds and they aren't afraid to speak up. This year's survey delved into topics that included who and what influences kids' ideas and thoughts, and whether kids feel empowered to create a better, kinder world. The results, garnered on the heels of a number of significant events that saw kids standing up and speaking out like never before, are reflective of their demands for change, which made 2018 a critically important year for listening to children. To celebrate the survey's anniversary, noteworthy questions from prior years were also revisited, yielding a unique glimpse of how kids' thoughts and opinions have evolved over the last decade. Key takeaways follow, with complete results, supporting video, infographics, and more available at [Highlights.com/StateOfTheKid](https://www.highlights.com/StateOfTheKid).



Teachers lead an expanding circle of influence in kids’ lives, and the role of celebrities increased significantly during the last decade. But kids still turn to their parents first with a problem or something to say.

- When asked to name someone they admire or respect other than their parents, 25 percent of kids said their teachers—up from 17 percent in 2009.
- 15 percent of kids said they admire a celebrity—a noteworthy increase from only 4 percent in 2009.
- 72 percent of kids still turn to their parents first when they need help or have something important to say.

Childhood today can be hard, having its own share of worries, which are increasingly shaded by the impact of violence.

- 31 percent said being a kid is “hard/not easy.”
- 79 percent of kids worry. For 16 percent of kids, it’s family, friends, and loved ones that lead their concerns. But 11 percent of kids cite concerns about violence/safety, with 35 percent of those kids citing school gun violence specifically.
- With these more serious concerns top of mind, the number of kids who worry about school and academic performance has fallen this year to 12 percent (from 23 percent in 2009). This may indicate that kids are dealing with more “grown-up” worries than ever before.

But at the same time, we are raising a generation of upstanders who believe adults and the world at large care about what they have to say, and who take action when they see the need for justice.

- 90 percent of kids believe grown-ups care about what they have to say, and 59 percent say the world at large cares.



- When kids see someone doing or saying something mean, 93 percent would take action—with 23 percent attempting to stop it on their own.
- And when asked what one “superpower” they would most want to have, 17 percent of kids said they would use their superpower to help others.

The attributes that girls and boys like most about themselves illustrate clear gender differences, and several significant shifts for girls during the last eight years.

- 19 percent of girls most value their own physical appearance (10 percent for boys).
- 26 percent of boys most value their own intelligence (17 percent for girls).
- The number of girls who most value being “caring, nice, and kind” jumped 6 percentage points from 11 percent in 2008 to 17 percent this year.
- The number of girls who most value being “creative and artistic” jumped 10 percentage points from 8 percent in 2008 to 18 percent this year.

A team of experts at Highlights, led by the brand’s editor in chief, Christine French Cully, created this year’s survey of mostly open-ended questions, and reviewed the data along with third-party experts including Jennifer Miller, M.Ed., child development thought leader and founder of *confidentparentsconfidentkids.org*. Cully and Miller recently sat down at the Highlights editorial headquarters in Honesdale, PA, to discuss this year’s survey and its most actionable takeaways for parents and teachers. Video from this session is available at [Highlights.com/StateOfTheKid](https://www.highlights.com/StateOfTheKid) and on the Highlights [Facebook](#) page.

“Once again, our State of the Kid results are a powerful reminder of the importance of actively listening to kids. While this year’s survey suggests that external influencers are playing an



increasing role in the lives of children, our findings offer positive feedback for parents because kids tell us they feel heard, supported, empowered, and loved. Our research also indicates that kids are paying attention to some worrying societal issues, but kids, even at a young age, believe they can use their voice and take action to change the world for the better,” said Christine French Cully.

Child development expert Jennifer Miller adds, “This survey also revealed some very real issues impacting young children today that are important for both parents and educators to note. Influencers outside the family are becoming a more powerful force, and adult problems are increasingly becoming childhood worries. Today, it’s more important than ever that parents and educators keep an ongoing and open dialogue with children, staying close to the impact these influences can have in affecting their social and emotional development.”

The complete 2018 State of the Kid report, including additional data, verbatim responses from kids, infographics, and video can be found at [Highlights.com/StateOfTheKid](https://highlights.com/StateOfTheKid). Kids can also listen to their peers share what it’s like to be a kid today, talk about the people they admire as role models, and discuss how they are inspired to do good in the world in the October *Highlights Hangout* podcast. Go to [Highlights.com/podcast](https://highlights.com/podcast).

Survey Methodology

Highlights surveyed 2,000 boys and girls across the country, ages 6 to 12, between March 31 and June 8, 2018, and in partnership with C+ R Research. The mostly open-ended survey was



taken online, both at home and in the classroom. Gender and age of children were matched to U.S. Census statistics to ensure that results are from a representative sample of children.

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About Highlights

Highlights is a beloved global media brand dedicated to helping children become *curious, creative, caring, and confident™* through engaging content and experiences that are focused on nurturing and developing the whole child. Through stories, poems, puzzles, jokes/riddles, science experiments, art activities, and more, kids are encouraged to think, problem solve, and build their literacy skills, all while having fun. Highlights reaches children 0–12 with their most popular magazines (*Highlights Hello*, *Highlights High Five*, *Highlights High Five Bilingüe* [English/Spanish], and *Highlights*), digital apps, books, toys/games, and a podcast incorporating classic favorites like Hidden Pictures® puzzles, Goofus and Gallant®, Dear Highlights letters, and more. Because Highlights offerings may be print or digital, purchased through subscriptions or retail, kids can engage with Highlights anytime, anywhere. To learn more and connect with Highlights, visit [Highlights.com](https://www.Highlights.com), [HighlightsKids.com](https://www.HighlightsKids.com), [Highlights.com/podcast](https://www.Highlights.com/podcast), [Facebook.com/HighlightsForChildren](https://www.Facebook.com/HighlightsForChildren), [Twitter.com/Highlights](https://www.Twitter.com/Highlights), [Pinterest.com/FunWithAPurpose](https://www.Pinterest.com/FunWithAPurpose), and [Instagram.com/HighlightsForChildren](https://www.Instagram.com/HighlightsForChildren)