

Policy recommendations

More children and young people take part in leisure activities

Over the past eight years, more children and young people have been taking part in leisure activities. In 2020, more than 90 per cent of the respondents said they had a leisure activity. However, not everyone is necessarily taking part in a leisure activity of their own choice; instead, it may be at the parents' request.

- Municipalities must enable all children and young people to have equal access to an enjoyable leisure activity regardless of the financial situation of the family, for example by means of a 'hobby voucher'.
- Secondary school students should also be brought within the scope of the Finnish model for leisure activities.
- Municipalities need to actively encourage children and young people who have dropped out of their leisure activities during the COVID-19 epidemic to return to their activities.

Restrictions imposed due to the COVID-19 epidemic on children and young people should be among the first ones to be lifted

Friendships are particularly important in the life of young people. Friendship repeatedly ranks high in various surveys related to the assessment of values. The restrictions imposed due to COVID-19 have made it more difficult to meet up with friends.

- Children and young people have the right to spend time with friends.
- Places where children and young people can meet up and spend time with friends must be made available free of charge.

Versatile cultural pursuits are linked to the wellbeing of young people. Young people who engage in diverse cultural pursuits feel that their wellbeing is better than that of those who have fewer cultural pursuits.

- The important role that culture plays in promoting wellbeing must be recognised.
- Let us make sure that young people have equal opportunities to engage in culture and, let us support especially those cultural pursuits in which young people participate.

Digital media plays a key role in today's society

Life has become digitalised rapidly, and many everyday matters can be handled through various electronic media. The media is used to keep in touch with friends and to obtain information, but it is not considered particularly important as a means of exerting influence in society.

- The opportunities for young people to participate in civic participation on digital platforms will be developed; young people will be encouraged and supported in making themselves heard, and ways to use digital consultation will be strengthened. Digital platforms will be developed together with young people.

Inappropriate treatment must be tackled

Inappropriate treatment is not unknown in leisure activities in the culture, art and media sectors. Young people belonging to minorities experience more inappropriate treatment than those who do not belong to a minority. Inappropriate treatment must not be permitted.

- Bullying must be prevented in leisure activities and inappropriate behaviour and activities must be intervened in.
- One of the criteria for public funding must be the promotion of equality and non-discrimination.

