

Children and their parents around the world

Have you ever wondered how other children live and what rules they need to follow? Here are some examples of what parents and schools ask them to do in different English-speaking countries.



Australia

- Since Australia can be a dangerous country, children and their parents are usually very careful. For example, because of the strong sun, school uniforms include sun hats, and there is a rule that says, “No hat, No play!”
- In some cities and in the countryside, parents carry sticks when they go outside, as do older children, too. This is because animals can be a problem, and children need to be protected from birds, snakes and kangaroos.
- As most people live on the coast where there are large waves, children learn to swim at a very young age. They usually start swimming lessons when they are six months old.



England

- More than 90% of English children wear school uniforms. People think that they help with discipline and focus. They also show which social class a child belongs to.
- English parents don't talk a lot about their children's talents or accomplishments. They think it is rude. Therefore, children learn from a very young age that bragging is not a good thing.



New Zealand

- Both children and adults go around barefoot a lot of the time, even in restaurants, shops, or at the doctor's office. It doesn't matter what season it is: people do not wear shoes even in winter. Children must arrive to and leave from school with shoes, but they don't have to wear them in class.
- They have community toys, or boxes full of toys that people leave for children to play with in shops, banks and cafés. There are even vans which drive around and bring fun things to do for children around the cities.
- Children as young as three years old can go bungee jumping, because it is the country where this sport originated.



The USA

- American parents are famous for being very worried about doing everything right. From a young age, children are looked after every minute of the day; they can rarely play without grown-ups. However, most adults will not correct other people's children, or even come close to them.
- Children start school early, around the age of 4 or 5. It is very important which school they go to, and sometimes they wait for years to get into the one their parents like.
- Because their schedules can be busy, children go to bed no later than 7 or 8 pm.



Wales

- Children are outside most of the time, either in the fields, streets or playgrounds. Usually they are on their own, so they can be as loud as they like.
- Art is important so every year schools hold an 'Eisteddfod' – a celebration of music, performance and Welsh culture. Children wear traditional costumes, and everyone writes a poem. There is a big ceremony at which the author of the best poem receives a flower crown. Children also usually sing in a choir or play an instrument, and most days attend an assembly where they sing.

Questions and tasks:

- 1) What is life like for children in Croatia? What rules do you have to follow at home and school?
- 2) How is your life different from children in the countries mentioned? How is it similar?
- 3) Is there anything you would like to have more of in Croatia?
- 4) If you could change one rule in your life, what would it be?
- 5) Find out about how children live differently in Japan, Scandinavia, Brazil, India, Mexico, Germany, China, Cuba, Kenya, Iceland – or a country of your choice.