# Six in ten parents prioritise emotional well-being over traditional upbringing, survey reveals



In an era marked by rapid societal change, a significant shift in parenting philosophies has emerged, revealing that six in ten parents are moving away from the traditional rulebooks of their own upbringing. A recent survey of 2,000 parents with children aged 0 to 6 indicates that contemporary parenting prioritises modern values, particularly mental and emotional health, which many feel were overlooked in their own childhoods.

The research, conducted by Talker Research on behalf of Lightbridge Academy, highlights that while older generations often focused on education (57%), physical activity (48%), and communication skills (41%), today's parents are placing a stronger emphasis on emotional well-being. Notably, two-thirds of the parents surveyed prioritise mental and emotional health—an area that only 41% of them felt was adequately addressed during their upbringing.

Modern parents indicate that effective communication is paramount, with 74% prioritising this skill, followed closely by education at 69% and physical activity at 65%. This shift underscores a broader trend where parents aim to equip their children with skills essential for robust interpersonal relationships before they even enter the classroom. The survey reveals that over half of parents recognise the importance of fostering listening skills (64%) and communication skills (58%) in their children.

Reflecting a mounting societal concern, many parents report anxiety about their children's mental health, safety, and social interactions. The survey shows that 49% of parents are primarily worried about safety, followed by 38% who are concerned about bullying and 34% about their children's ability to make friends. This perspective aligns with additional findings from other recent surveys, where a majority of parents across the country, such as an Ipsos poll commissioned by the National Alliance on Mental Illness, cite mental health education as a priority within schools, with 87% endorsing its inclusion in curricula.

Gigi Schweikert, CEO of Lightbridge Academy, stated, “We’re witnessing a generational reset in parenting. Today’s parents are prioritising emotional well-being, communication, and confidence just as much as academics or physical activity.” This sentiment seems to resonate widely, as 91% of parents who utilise daycare services recognise the importance of these providers in fostering their children’s development.

As parents engage with their children’s education and development more deliberately, they reveal a desire for supportive communities that share similar values. An astounding 85% articulated the importance of aligning community values with their parenting philosophies. Yet, the journey of modern parenting is fraught with its challenges. Parents confess to making an average of five missteps each week, suggesting a collective struggle with the high stakes of parenting.

Despite these challenges, an overwhelming majority—89%—believe that becoming a parent has transformed them for the better. Interestingly, 59% anticipate learning even more about themselves as their children transition into elementary school, suggesting an ongoing commitment to personal growth. “Parenting isn’t about perfection—it’s about progress,” Schweikert added, highlighting the self-awareness that characterises today’s parents.

Further adding nuance to this understanding, surveys conducted by Action for Healthy Kids reveal that while parents express significant concern about their children's mental well-being (67%), many remain unaware of the mental health resources and support available in school settings. Less than 20% reported being fully informed about these services, underscoring a critical gap in awareness that could impede efforts to address children's mental health effectively.

These findings collectively paint a picture of a new generation of parents striving not only for the academic success of their children but also for a nurturing emotional environment. As concerns such as bullying, safety, and mental health loom large, today’s parents are redefining what it means to prepare their children for the world ahead, nurturing not merely students but well-rounded individuals.

The evolution in parenting strategies signals a broader cultural shift, where emotional wellness is becoming as pivotal as academic success, reflecting a society increasingly aware of the comprehensive needs of its youngest members.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
2. Paragraph 4
3. Paragraph 6
4. Paragraph 6
5. Paragraph 4
6. Paragraph 5
7. Paragraph 6

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://nypost.com/2025/05/12/lifestyle/3-in-5-parents-are-ditching-their-parents-playbook-new-study-shows/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.ipsos.com/en-us/9-10-parents-want-mental-health-education-taught-school> - An Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) reveals that 87% of parents support mental health education in schools. The survey also highlights that 89% of parents prioritize their children's mental well-being over academic performance. Despite these concerns, many parents lack awareness of the mental health resources available in schools, with less than 20% fully informed about the services provided. The poll underscores the need for increased mental health support and education within educational institutions.
3. <https://news.vanderbilt.edu/2024/02/21/education-bullying-mental-health-school-gun-violence-top-list-of-parental-concerns-for-their-children-poll/> - A Vanderbilt University poll indicates that Tennessee parents' top concerns for their children are education and school quality (43%), bullying (39%), mental health and suicide (37%), school gun violence (32%), and drug and alcohol use (23%). Specific worries include children's learning progress (51%) and emotional well-being (50%). The survey also highlights that 38% of parents are concerned about their child's safety at school, with higher concerns among Black parents (48%) and those in West Tennessee (42%).
4. <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/national-survey-parents-top-concern-is-childrens-mental-health-but-many-lack-awareness-and-access-to-resources-and-services-302206774.html> - A national survey by Action for Healthy Kids reveals that 67% of parents are concerned about their child's mental health. However, less than 20% are aware of all the mental health resources and services schools provide. The survey also shows that 76% of parents worry about their child spending too much time on electronic devices, and 70% are concerned about the presence of weapons in schools. These findings highlight the need for increased mental health support and resources in educational settings.
5. <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2023/01/24/parenting-in-america-today/> - A Pew Research Center study reveals that mental health concerns are the top worry for parents, with 89% prioritizing their children's mental well-being over academic performance. The study also finds that 63% of parents believe being a parent is harder than they expected. Additionally, 64% of parents report that their children have experienced anxiety or depression, indicating a significant concern for children's mental health in the U.S.
6. <https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/national-survey-wave2/> - A national survey by Action for Healthy Kids indicates that 67% of parents are concerned about their child's mental health. However, less than 20% are aware of all the mental health resources and services schools provide. The survey also highlights that 76% of parents worry about their child spending too much time on electronic devices, and 70% are concerned about the presence of weapons in schools. These findings underscore the need for increased mental health support and resources in educational settings.
7. <https://www.zerotothree.org/resource/national-parent-survey-overview-and-key-insights//> - The National Parent Survey by ZERO TO THREE reveals that 83% of parents believe good parenting can be learned, and 69% would use positive parenting strategies if they knew more about them. Despite understanding the importance of the first five years of a child's life, 58% of parents find this both motivating and terrifying. The survey also highlights that 90% of dads say being a parent is their greatest joy, and 73% say their lives began when they became a dad.