

Helping Kids! Identities

Spring 2021



QUEEN'S
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BELFAST

Aims & Overview

The *Helping Kids!* research team is currently completing a two-phase project in Northern Ireland to understand how children in different European settings understand peace.

The Drawing Study

The first phase of the project was delivered over Summer and Autumn 2020. During this Drawing Study, 31 children ages 5 to 11 drew pictures about and discuss their ideas of peace. This child-friendly approach helps young people express themselves in their own words. These drawings and the way that children talk about peace, were important in developing the second phase of the project. They also coloured in maps of Europe and Northern Ireland and shared their thoughts on several images of European icons.

The Identity Study

In the second phase, which is now ongoing, children are asked to rate the importance of their national and religious identities, as well as answer questions about their experiences with peers from a different background. We will then ask them about opportunities to participate in Shared Education with peers from different backgrounds where they can learn and play games together.

Meet the Team!

Laura K Taylor
Jocelyn Dautel
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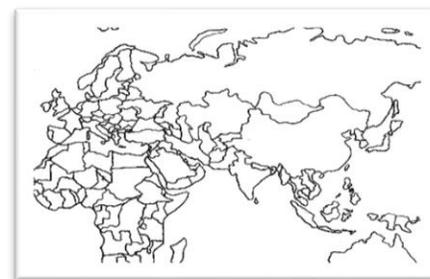
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Drawing of a child and their favorite comic book character walking, chatting, and getting along with each other.

Mapping Europe and Northern Ireland

During the Mapping tasks, children were given blank maps and asked to colour in just the parts of Europe and Northern Ireland. The focus was not on 'correct' geography skills, but rather the child's perception of these regions mean to them. While thinking about their relationships to Europe and Northern Ireland, children were invited to draw and discuss what peace looks like and what people can do to create more peace in their communities.

Drawing Peace

During these interviews about peace, we asked children specifically about their understanding of how people in Northern Ireland get along. Children generally felt that peace is present in Northern Ireland and suggested that more peace could be encouraged by spending time with people from the community.



Drawing of a child and their friend playing outside, smelling flowers, and being 'at peace' in the sunshine.

European Icons

We also wanted to learn more about children's knowledge of European symbols. Children were shown pictures of flags and money from different countries and asked what thoughts these symbols brought up, if any. When the images were unfamiliar, children often noted unique features, such as colours on the flags or icons on the money to help identify the symbol.



Thoughts on Flags

Children used their personal experiences and relationships to think about different flags. Children may have recognized a flag because they know someone from that country or because they had seen it at a football match in Ireland. One child commented on the difference between flags that represented sports and those that represent countries saying, "...they can be unique flags for special things."



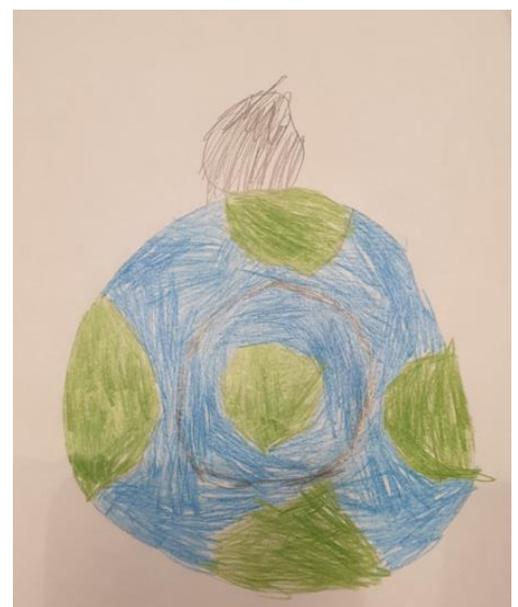
Thoughts on Money

Many children related their recognition of money to a previous experience of or a desire to spend or use it and recognised different languages to decide if the money could be from a place familiar to them. For example, some children shared that they recognized the Chinese Yen because they knew Chinese does not have the same characters as English. Some children expressed an interest in donating the money rather than spending it themselves because, "...my heart will feel very nice."

THANK YOU!

On behalf of the *Helping Kids!* team and Queen's University Belfast, we would like to thank everyone who supported this project.

We especially would like to thank parents and children for their cooperation and patience with remote testing. We appreciate your enthusiasm and continued participation in our research.



The Earth and moon with a circle highlighting the child's view of Europe and the EU.