

## Children in US safest for two decades

25<sup>th</sup> December, 2014



A report from Duke University in the USA says American children are safer today than at any time in the

past 20 years. The study is based on the annual Child Well-Being Index, which has been compiled by Duke since 1975. It measures and tracks 28 aspects about the quality of life among children across America. Perhaps the most promising figure in the report is that child death rates have gone down by a third since 1975. In addition, suicide rates among teens have declined in the past 20 years. Fewer youngsters are victims of violent crimes today than 20 years ago and teen births are at their lowest level in decades. The report says US kids are also better educated than they were 20 years ago.

The report highlighted a few of the negatives of the past 20 years. In spite of fewer children dying and infant mortality rates decreasing, child health has deteriorated. A major contributory factor to this is the increasing levels of obesity because of poor diet, the abundance of fast food, and less exercise. The latter is due to teens spending much longer indoors using technology. The report suggests that technology may protect kids from physical dangers outdoors but can harm their health indoors. Child poverty still affects millions of children in the USA and has remained largely unchanged in the past 20 years. About 20 per cent of children lived below the poverty line in 2013, which is about the same as it was in 1995.

Sources: *News-Medical.net / Chicago Tribune / duke.edu*

## Writing

It is better to be a child today than it was fifty years ago. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

*report / safer / annual / measures / quality of life / teens / youngsters / violent crimes / negatives / major / obesity / abundance / fast food / physical dangers / poverty line*

## True / False

- The report is from King University in the USA. T / F
- The Child Well-Being Index has been going for over 75 years. T / F
- The child death rate has halved since 1975. T / F
- The report says kids get a better education today than 20 years ago. T / F
- Children's health has got worse in the past two decades. T / F
- The report says obesity causes an abundance of fast food. T / F
- Child poverty still affects millions of kids in the USA. T / F
- The number of kids below the poverty line hasn't changed for 20 years. T / F

## Synonym Match

- |                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. report       | a. schooled     |
| 2. annual       | b. worsened     |
| 3. compiled     | c. encouraging  |
| 4. promising    | d. study        |
| 5. educated     | e. child        |
| 6. infant       | f. put together |
| 7. deteriorated | g. damage       |
| 8. due to       | h. stayed       |
| 9. harm         | i. yearly       |
| 10. remained    | j. because of   |

## Discussion – Student A

- What's the most important thing you learnt as a child?
- What will childhood be like in 50 years from now?
- How can we get kids to exercise more?
- How have things got worse for kids in your country?
- What's the worst thing about childhood?
- How harmful is it for kids to stay indoors?
- Why are children in the USA still living below the poverty line?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

# BreakingNewsEnglish - The Mini Lesson

## Phrase Match

1. safer today than at
  2. based on the annual
  3. the quality
  4. gone down by a
  5. better
  6. The report highlighted a few
  7. infant
  8. physical
  9. Child poverty still affects
  10. about the same
- a. mortality
  - b. any time in the past
  - c. third since 1975
  - d. dangers
  - e. Child Well-Being Index
  - f. millions of children
  - g. as it was in 1995
  - h. educated
  - i. of life
  - j. of the negatives

## Discussion – Student B

- a) How was your childhood?
- b) How are things different for kids nowadays?
- c) Do you think kids are safer today than they were 20 years ago?
- d) How have things improved for kids in your country?
- e) What's the best thing about childhood?
- f) How is education today different from 20 years ago?
- g) What would you like to have changed about your childhood?
- h) Is today's world good for children?

## Spelling

1. the anluna Child Well-Being Index
2. the iluytaq of life
3. the most promising rgifue
4. ucsdiiie rates among teens
5. victims of vtoneli crimes
6. better daedutce
7. a few of the vesitgena
8. infant rotiyklamt
9. increasing levels of sbteyio
10. less erieseecx
11. protect kids from ycsiplah dangers
12. below the erovtpy line

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. d	2. i	3. f	4. c	5. a
6. e	7. b	8. j	9. g	10. h

## Role Play

### Role A – Technology

You think technology is the best thing about being a kid today. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so good for kids. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): travel, shopping or food.

### Role B – Travel

You think travel is the best thing about being a kid today. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so good for kids. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): technology, shopping or food.

### Role C – Shopping

You think shopping is the best thing about being a kid today. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so good for kids. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): travel, technology or food.

### Role D – Food

You think food is the best thing about being a kid today. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so good for kids. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): travel, shopping or technology.

## Speaking – Kids' stuff

Rank these with your partner. Put the things kids love most at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- mobile phone
- siblings
- ice cream
- their bed
- favourite teacher
- gaming
- shopping
- family holidays

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	F	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.