

LV= Reveals That Today's Kids Have Less Freedom Than Previous Generation



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Author: [LV=](#)

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According to new research from LV= Streetwise, a charity which educates children about safety, today's parents don't allow their kids the same liberties as they enjoyed when they were growing up.

24% of children aged 15 and under said they aren't allowed to sleep over at a friend's house, 60% are forbidden to use public transport on their own, and 43% can't visit their closest park without a parent by their side. In contrast, just 4% of adults were banned from sleeping-over, 2% were forbidden to use public transport or go out on their own in familiar surroundings, like their local town or park.

The restriction on children's outside activities appears to be a direct result of parents' growing fears and anxieties. 65% of mums and 63% of dads believe the world is more dangerous now than it was when they were growing up. 'Stranger danger' is the biggest worry for 54% of parents, followed by bullying (47%), mugging (47%) and road danger (34%).

On average, children today can look forward to walking to school on their own by the age of 11, use public transport on their own at 12, and babysit their brother or sister by the time they're 14, compared with the respective 9, 11 and 12 years of age of their parents generation. However many parents know they're being tougher on their children with 36% feeling uneasy that their kids don't get the same opportunities as they did to experience freedom as a youngster.

The new research findings mark the launch of the unique [LV= Streetwise](#) safety roadshow, which helps to educate children about safety in the home and outdoors using a converted 'bendy bus' featuring a life-size kitchen, lounge, and road and rail hazard simulators. The roadshow will be travelling round county fairs and other outdoor events across the UK this summer.

Mike Rogers, LV= group chief executive, said: "It's difficult for parents to know when is the right time to step back and allow children to experience things on their own, and this report shows just how much things have changed over the last generation.

Parents have a key role in helping their children to become more risk-aware and better at spotting everyday dangers in the world around them.

Alison Shelton, LV= Streetwise safety expert, said: "LV= Streetwise aims to reduce accidents among children by highlighting to them the dangers in the home and on the road, and educating them to make responsible choices. With thousands of children killed or injured in preventable accidents every year, we aim to give young people a head start in their safety education, supporting parents and schools in providing them with essential skills for life."

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Note to editors
Online survey undertaken by ICM Research 19-28th March 2010 involving 6,099 adults. 1,464 were parents of children under the age of 18. Online research for children was undertaken 23rd March-7th April 2010 amongst 1,000 children aged 5-15. ICM is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules.

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LV= PR contact:

Sally Silver
LV=
County Gates
Bournemouth
BH1 2NF
0208 256 6896
www.lv.com

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