

Chaplin, Lan Nguyen (2009), "Please May I Have a Bike? Better Yet, May I Have a Hug?: An Examination of Children's and Adolescents' Happiness," *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 10 (October), 541-562.

Abstract

Academic research on children's and adolescents' happiness has been slow to develop. This research provides an empirical investigation to answer the question, "What makes children and adolescents happy?" We explore this question in two studies with a total of 300 participants ages 8–18. Study 1 asks participants to answer the open-ended question, "What makes me happy?" There were five emergent themes—"people and pets," "achievements," "material things," "hobbies," and "sports". Study 2 also asks participants to answer the question, "What makes me happy?", but uses two different measures (a semistructured thought listing task and a collage task). Using three different happiness measures, we found consistent age differences in what children perceive to make them happy.

Keywords: Children, adolescents, happiness, life satisfaction, subjective well-being, collage