

Highlights

The
State
of the
Kid™

10TH ANNIVERSARY

3 Research-Based Strategies for Helping Your Students Find Their Voice

Highlights' 2018 annual **State of the Kid** survey of 2,000 boys and girls ages 6–12 revealed who and what influences kids today and do kids feel heard and empowered. In partnership with Jennifer Miller, M.Ed., author of *Confident Parents, Confident Kids*, here are some great tips for helping your students find their voice.



1. Give students something to care about

What we heard: *We are raising a generation of upstanders. 93% of kids said they would take action if they saw someone doing or saying something mean.*

Kids want to make the world a better place. Help your students feel empowered by giving them the tools and the responsibility to act on those feelings. For example, give them something specific to care about. Do your students love dogs? Learn about, visit, and volunteer at a local animal shelter. Lead by example, showing them how they can make an impact in a positive way, and let them make decisions, as well as learn how to deal with consequences.



2. Build community with a daily morning meeting

What we heard: *79% of kids say they worry and 11% say they worry about violence/safety.*

Today, kids are inundated with negative news. How can you help kids manage this information? A morning meeting establishes a safe space for you to share any news and the day's priorities, and for students to share their thoughts and feelings. If you use that time to make personal connections between students and build a sense of classroom community, students will feel less worried and anxious, and more prepared to learn. It also creates a culture of respect and trust.

If a tragedy should strike, you already have a vehicle established for coming together, so kids will be reassured. Include discussions about specific, small ways students can contribute to creating a safer, more caring school community and make plans to take action together.



3. Embrace what students love

What we heard: *There are many outside influences that impact kids' choices. Increasingly, celebrities are influencing our kids' lives. 15% of kids cited admiring celebrities – up from 4% in 2009.*

Rather than discourage the role celebrities play in kids' lives, embrace what your students are excited about and use it to leverage learning. Most kids love gaming, so why not engage them by imitating the gamers on YouTube? On a smartboard, have a student "expert" who is good at, say, math games, demonstrate to others how to play and win. Together, map out learning about problem-solving and memory strategies. Students will pick up on the player's skills and want to practice their own. For inspiration, search for what YouTubers call "playthroughs" or "watch me play."

In partnership with C+R Research

To see the full **Highlights State of the Kid** report with other insights, visit [Highlights.com/StateOfTheKid](https://www.highlights.com/StateOfTheKid).