

Children in the News:  
UNICEF report ranks well being of British, U.S. Children as last in the industrialized world

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(2007, February 14). *International Herald Tribune*.

A report from UNICEF ranked the U.S. and Britain as 20th (U.S.) and 21<sup>st</sup> (Britain) in a U.N. survey concerning child welfare. Twenty-one industrialized countries were chosen for the survey with six categories used for ranking purposes. These six categories include the material well-being of children, health and safety, education, family and peer relationships, risks and behaviors, and a young person's sense of well-being. The Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland ranked at the top of the study.

Jonathan Bradshaw, one of the researchers in the study, claimed that the reason U.S. and British children fared worse than in other countries was due to greater economical inequalities, and poor levels of public family support. Bradshaw discovered that the high levels of inequality and poverty among children were what the U.S. and Britain have in common, which makes their ranking lower.

Other contributing factors for the U.S. and Britain low rankings are the high percentage of single-parent families or step-families found within both countries. Additionally, high incidences of risky behaviors among children, such as sexual activity and the use of drugs and alcohol, also contributed. Consequently, these factors combined gave the U.S. and Britain the two lowest rankings of the twenty-one industrialized countries surveyed.