

Pursuit of success harms children, finds childhood inquiry

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Family discord, excessive competition and "unacceptable" inequality are among the challenges facing children today, according to the findings of the three-year Good Childhood inquiry.

The [inquiry](#), commissioned by the Children's Society, has found the greatest threat to children is the aggressive pursuit of personal success, which has led to problems including a high rate of family break-up, unprincipled advertising and acceptance of inequality.

Recommendations for teachers, parents, the government and media include the need for a civil birth ceremony where vows are made to care for a child, a significantly higher wage for teachers working in deprived areas and the abolishment of school league tables and SATs.

Lord Richard Layard, the report's author, said: "Our evidence showed clearly how stressful life has become for many children in all social classes.

"We identified a common thread in these problems, which is excessive individualism in our culture.

"This needs to be reversed and children need to learn that being of use to others is ultimately more satisfying than an endless struggle for status."