

# But Why: A Podcast for Curious Kids

## What makes you happy?

**December 29, 2023**

**Jane** 00:21

This is But Why: A Podcast For Curious Kids from Vermont Public. I'm Jane Lindholm. On this show, we take questions from kids like you, and we find interesting people to offer answers. Well, most of the time. This time you're the experts! We asked you to tell us what makes you happy, and boy, did you respond! We heard from almost 200 of you! And yes, we're going to fit all of you into this episode. So sit back, get cozy, maybe grab a hot chocolate or a glass of water; it's going to be a long, joyful journey. Here are a few of your responses to get us started.

**Ryan** 00:58

Hi, my name is Ryan. I'm eight years old and I live in Warrington, Pennsylvania. Something that brings me joy are my foster kittens.

**Bobby** 01:05

Hi, my name is Bobby. I am almost seven years old. And I live in Champlin, Minnesota. The thing that brings me joy is laughter.

**Bo** 01:18

I'm Bo. I'm five years old, from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. And what makes me happy: swimming, butterflies and flowers.

**Sadie** 01:28

My name is Sadie, I live from Australia. I'm 8. What makes me happy: I want to be a superhero in my life.

**Booker** 01:42

My name is Booker. I'm five years old. I live in Silver Spring, Maryland. And the thing that makes me happy is doctors.

**Rohan** 01:56

My name is Rohan and I am eight years old. And I live in Washington, DC. School, making paper airplanes and family--that what makes me happy.

**Corleone** 02:15

My name is Corleone. I am 10 years old. I'm a Filipino. But I live in Oxford, Alabama. What makes me happy is my family.

**Jane** 02:25

Those are some excellent joy-bringers, friends! Now it's making me happy just thinking about foster kittens, flowers and family. In addition to hearing all of the things that bring you joy, we wanted to talk a little bit about what researchers know about happiness. So we called up someone who spends a lot of time thinking about how people can feel good.

**Gretchen Rubin** 02:45

Gretchen Rubin, author and podcast host of Happier with Gretchen Rubin. One day, I was stuck on a crowded city bus in the pouring rain and I was very bored. And because I didn't have anything else to do, I started asking myself a very big question, which is, what do I want from my life? And I thought, well, I want to be happy. But I realized, well, I'm saying I want to be happy. But I don't spend any time thinking about...am I happy? Could I be happier? If a person wanted to be happier, what would they do? Is it even possible to make yourself happier? And, I realized I wanted to know the answers to these questions. And it turns out that the subject of happiness is so huge that I've really been exploring it ever since. I just sort of go deeper and deeper into different aspects of happiness.

**Jane** 03:38

So, when we think about how to be happier, then, are there ways that we can work on finding happiness for ourselves no matter how old we are?

**Gretchen Rubin** 03:49

Mmmhmm, yes. One secret to happiness, and this is something that people thousands of years ago, and also scientists today agree on, which is that we should think about our relationships with other people. So, how you feel about your family, how you feel about your friends, how you feel about your neighbors, whether there are people that you can talk to when you're feeling down, whether they're--if you have a secret, if there are people you can confide in and you know that they will keep your secret, if you feel like you're meeting new people and kind of sharing things that you're interested in with them, these are things that make us happier. And so if you're thinking about, well, your time, your energy, what are you going to do with yourself, if you say to yourself, well, is that something that's probably going to help me meet new friends or be better friends with the people I already have? That's probably something that is going to boost your happiness.

**Jane** 04:42

We actually got a lot of responses from kids who told us, "My family makes me really happy."

**Lucas** 04:47

My name is Lucas. I'm five years old, and I live in Green Bay, Wisconsin. And the thing that brings me joy is when I play games with Mom.

**Jacqueline** 05:03

My name is Jacqueline. I'm nine years old. I live in Austin, Texas. And what makes me happy is my parents.

**Ellis** 05:13

My name is Ellis. I live in Austin, Texas. And what makes me happy is when my brother is nice to me.

**Sophia 05:21**

Hello, my name is Sophia, and I live in Arlington, Virginia. And the thing that makes me happy the most is my family. Especially my little sister, Alicia.

**Bobby 05:32**

Hi, my name's Bobby, and I'm five years old. What makes me happy is when Nanna and I play Kipperland together.

**Cleo 05:41**

My name is Cleo. I'm four and a half years old and I live in New Prague, Minnesota and what brings me joy, is playing with my sister.

**Jordan 05:54**

My name is Jordan. I live in Hong Kong. I'm turning seven this December 12th. And what makes me happy is when my dad plays with me because he always makes me laugh.

**Luna 06:07**

Hi, my name is Luna and I live in Portland, Oregon. This is what makes me happy: friends and family.

**Lila 06:16**

My name is Lila. I'm six years old. I live in Burbank, California. And what makes me happy is a snuggle from my parents.

**Unknown 06:28**

When I get a kiss from Mom I feel very happy.

**Joaquin 06:32**

Hi, my name is Joaquin, and I'm nine years old. I live in Santa Fe, New Mexico. And what brings me joy is being with my family.

**Scarlett 06:41**

My name is Scarlett. I'm 11 years old. I live in Ontario in Canada. I use my eyes to talk on my computer. My family brings me joy. My brother Evan is fun. I also like to watch movies, especially with music.

**Hannah 07:01**

Hi, my name is Hannah. I'm seven years old. I live in Coral Springs, Florida. And what makes me happy is I like traveling with my family and playing with my friends and going to Disneyland.

**Maggie 07:17**

My name is Maggie. I'm five years old. I'm from Victoria, BC. What brings me joy is my mom and my dad.

**Vera** 07:28

Hello, my name is Vera. I'm seven years old and I live in Logroño in the north of Spain. And I'm going to tell you what makes me happy. The first thing is playing with my cousin's cat Phyllis and the second one is being with my cousin Tulia.

**Henley** 07:48

Hi my name is Henry. What brings me joy is being with my family. Six years old. I live in Nova Scotia, Canada.

**Ryder** 07:57

My name is Ryder, in Fairfield Connecticut, and my thing makes me joy is playing with my baby brother.

**Henley** 08:10

Hi, I'm Henry. I live in Stillwater, Minnesota. I'm seven years old. And what makes me happy is my family.

**Alicia** 08:18

I'm Alicia, I'm five years old. I live in Arlington, Virginia. What makes me happy is when I am surrounded by my family.

**Alex** 08:30

My name is Alex. And I am from Cumming, Georgia. I'm 10 years old and something that brings me joy is playing video games or spending time with my family, like playing catch with my dad, or just doing something all together.

**Ronan and Arlo** 08:47

My name is Ronan. I am six years old. My name is Arlo and I am 4 years old. And we live in Longmeadow, Massachusetts. And what brings me joy is playing video games with my family. And what brings me joy is swimming out my family.

**Theo** 09:05

Hi, my name is Theo and I live in England. And what makes me happy is spending time with my mummy.

**Savannah** 09:13

Hello, my name is Savannah. I'm four years old. And where do I live in?

**Savannah's Adult** 09:18

Sacramento California.

**Savannah** 09:19

And live in Sacramento, California, and what me what makes me happy as a great hug for my dad.

**James** 09:26

My name is James. I'm six years old, and I live in Alexandria, Virginia. And what brings me joy is when my mom she goes up into my bed with me and she asks me favorite part of my day and I really like that.

**Sophia** 09:41

Hello, my name is Sophia. I live in Poland. I have six years old and the thing that makes me happy is when Dad made me a house.

**Frankie** 09:55

My name is Frankie and I am six. I live In Melbourne, Australia. What makes me happy is when Dad does crazy stuff.

**Amelia** 10:08

My name is Amelia. I'm four years old. I play with my brother, Jack. My mom plays with me, too.

**Eleanor** 10:21

Hi, my name's Eleanor. I'm six years old. I live in Rochester, New York. And what makes me happy is my family.

**Eleanor** 10:33

Hi But Why. My name is Violet. I'm 10 years old, and I live in Zeeland, Michigan. So one thing that makes me super happy is being able to curl up under a blanket with my family, reading a great book.

**Otto** 10:43

My name is Otto. I'm seven years old. I live in West Des Moines, Iowa. And something that brings me joy is snuggling with my mom and dad.

**Elijah** 10:53

My name is Elijah, and I live in Florida. What makes me happy is hanging out with my family and friends.

**Annie** 11:01

I'm Annie. I'm eight years old. I live in Indianapolis. And it brings me joy when I'm riding my bike with my mom on a warm fall day.

**Charlotte** 11:15

Hi, my name is Charlotte and I'm six years old and I live in Massachusetts. What makes me happy is snuggling with my parents and playing video games with them.

**Quinn** 11:26

My name is Quinn. What makes me happy is Mommy.

**Jane** 11:32

I'm so glad to hear that so many of you enjoy being with your family members. It's really wonderful to share cuddles, laughs and playtime with the people you love. But it's not just family we love. We also love our friends. Lots of you sent us notes about how your friends make you happy.

**Dominic** 11:48

I'm Dominic. I live in Norway. I'm seven years old. I like sledding with my friends.

**Charlie** 11:55

Hi, my name is Charlie. I'm eight years old. And what makes me happy is playing pretend with my friends, and playing with my dog, Indy.

**Eleanor** 12:05

My name is Eleanor, and I'm five years old and I live in Western Australia. I'm happy about making my new friends.

**Oisin** 12:14

My name is Oisin I live in Austin, Texas, I am five and a half. And what brings me joy is being with my friend Ryan.

**Sydney** 12:24

I'm Sydney I'm nine years old and I live in New Lenox, Illinois. And what makes me happy is my friend group; CeCe, Katie, Amelia and Mack. And what also makes me happy is my BFF.

**Leonidas** 12:36

Name is Leonidas. Leon for short. I'm 10 years old. I live in Elwood City, Pennsylvania. What brings me joy is playing games with friends and family.

**Isaac** 12:51

My name is Isaac. I live in Portland, Oregon. I am eight years old. And what makes me happy is playing with friends.

**Rohan** 12:58

My name is Rohan, I'm six and eight-twelfths years old. And I'm from Philadelphia. And my favorite thing to do is play with my best friend, Ben.

**Abby** 13:07

Hi, I'm Abby. I live in Stillwater, Minnesota. I'm nine years old. What makes me happy is my friend Eloise.

**Sam** 13:15

My name is Sam. I'm six years old. I live in Seattle. And what brings me joy is playing with my friends.

**Simon** 13:23

Hi, my name is Simon. And I live in Ottawa, Canada. I'm seven years old. And what brings me joy is playing with friends and family.

**Martha 13:33**

Hello, I'm Martha. I'm eight years old. I'm from Voronezh, Russia. Some things that make me happy is listening to music, playing with friends and playing video games.

**Daniel 13:45**

Hello, my name is Daniel. I'm from Voronezh, Russia. I'm 13 years old and things that makes me happy are listening to music and walking with friends and hanging out.

**Jack 13:58**

My name is Jack. I'm five years old, and I live in Florida. What makes me happy is playing with my friends.

**Hazel 14:13**

Hi my name is Hazel. I'm four years old. And the thing that makes me happy is playing with my best friend.

**Emmy 14:23**

My name is Emmy. I live in Middlebury, Vermont. I'm five years old. And what makes me happy is playing with my best friend.

**Rafael 14:39**

I am Rafael. I am six. I live in Western, Pennsylvania. And something that brings me joy is playing was my friend Julia.

**Elliot 14:49**

My name is Elliot. I'm seven years old. I live in Langley, BC, Canada, and the thing that makes me happy is when I play with my friend and talk to my friend Isla, who lives in Calgary, on the phone.

**Cass 15:06**

My name is Cass. I'm five years old. I'm from New Mexico. What brings me joy is going to a fun place with some joyful friends.

**Sloane 15:20**

My name is Sloane. I live in San Francisco. I am seven years old. What brings me joy is talking to my friends and family.

**Autumn 15:30**

Hi, my name is Autumn. I live in Arlington, Virginia. I'm eight years old. And what makes me happy, is playing with my little brother and playing with my friends.

**Emma 15:39**

Hi, my name is Emma, I live in New Orleans, and I'm six years old. And what brings me joy is playing with friends and being silly with them.

**Frankie 15:48**

My name is Frankie, I come from Washington, Tacoma. What makes me happy is playing with family and friends.

**Callie 15:55**

I'm Callie and I'm ten years old, and I live in Cleveland, Ohio. Something that makes me happy is being with my friends and family.

**Jane 16:06**

Gretchen Rubin says it makes total sense that being with friends or family members would make you happy. But she also says each of us has to figure out for ourselves what brings us joy.

**Gretchen Rubin 16:16**

Because all of us have to figure out what is the secret of happiness for ourselves. And sometimes people will say, well, there's a right way to do it, or there's a best way to do it. But really all of us have to figure that out for ourselves because we're all different. And so I think all of us have to say, well, what kind of person am I? What makes me happier? Do I love playing with my dog? Do I like poking around in my backyard? Do I love to read? Do I love to make things with my hands? Do I love to cook or bake? There's so many different things that make people happier. But sometimes I think--and this is true for for adults as well--we think, well, if something makes somebody else happy, well, then, of course it will make me happy. But if you think about it, you realize that's not true, because people are very different. Some people love to play their guitar hour after hour after hour. And some people would rather be doing something else with that time. And that's okay. Because people are different. So we want to think about understanding ourselves so that we can shape our lives to reflect what's true about us.

**Jane 17:25**

Sometimes, kids and adults, but especially kids, worry about other people. I think we all do. That's human nature. Certainly the adults in your life are worried about you and your happiness. But sometimes kids worry about their adults' happiness too. Can you affect the happiness of someone else, and is that your responsibility to make your parents or your sibling or your teacher happy?

**Gretchen Rubin 17:49**

You can't make someone happy. And they can't make you happy. Sometimes you wish so much that you could make someone happy. Or they're trying so hard because they're trying to make you happy. But we really can't do that we each have to make our happiness for ourselves. And sometimes that's very painful. But it's also very encouraging. Because you think, well, I can be responsible for what I know makes me happier.

**Jane 18:21**

It's not your job to make your parents happy, for example, but you can choose to be happy in what you have in your life and help that rub off on the other people in your life.

**Gretchen Rubin** 18:31

For most of us, the best thing to do is to think about well, given my own self, what can I do with my own self? Because that will help other people, but indirectly, in a way. There's something that's actually called emotional contagion, because it's like something that we infect each other with, like, we share our emotions with other people. In a flash, like when you're talking to somebody, or if you were talking to them on the phone, or even if you saw their picture, you would start to pick up their emotions. And so this is just something that we're constantly sharing back and forth. And so if you feel like someone's emotions are rubbing off on you, or your emotions are rubbing off on someone else. That's very true. But each of us needs to be responsible for our own happiness.

**Dominic** 19:21

My name is Dominic from Fort Collins, Colorado. What makes me happy is Daddy and everything in the whole wide world.

**Sebastian** 19:32

I'm Sebastian, I'm from Baltimore, Maryland, and I'm six years old. And the three things that make me happy are my two cats, Bo and Poe, and playing soccer.

**Susanna** 19:42

My name is Susanna, I'm 10 years old and I live in North Little Rock, Arkansas. Some things that make me happy are dogs, rollerblading, and music.

**Sophia** 19:51

My name is Sophia, but I live in North Little Rock, Arkansas and what makes me happy is cuddling with my dogs, family movies, gymnastics, soccer, friends and family.

**Jane** 20:04

More happiness coming right up.

**BREAK** 20:06

BREAK

**Jane** 20:07

This is But Why: A Podcast for Curious Kids. I'm Jane Lindholm. For our final episode of 2023, you're telling us what makes you happy. And you know what? Hearing all of you share the things that bring you joy in your own voices is putting a huge smile on my face! We're also drilling down on some of the research surrounding happiness that author and podcaster Gretchen Rubin has discovered in her many years learning about the art and science of wellbeing. I have to admit, we're blushing a little bit right now because some of you took the opportunity to tell us that you like...well...us.

**Stephanie** 20:44

My name is Stephanie and I'm eight years old, and I live in Branford, Connecticut. What gives me joy is listening to But Why, all the episodes. My favorite one is the dinosaur episode.

**Bernadette 20:58**

My name is Bernadette. I'm nine years old, and I live in Buffalo Grove, Illinois. And what brings me joy is meeting new people and listening to But Why.

**Savannah 21:09**

My name is Savannah. I am seven years old. I live in Cranston, Rhode Island in America. What makes me happy is spending time with my family and listen to your guys's podcast.

**Judah 21:23**

My name is Judah and I'm nine years old. And I live in Canton, Massachusetts. And what makes me happy is having my favorite snack and listening to But Why.

**Jane 21:32**

Awww, thanks, everyone. As I said, it makes us so happy to hear from you. And Melody, Kianna and I get great joy out of researching the questions you send to us. Now a lot of you wrote in about animals.

**Mike 21:44**

My name is Mike. I live in Tasmania in Australia. I'm seven years old and what makes me happy is being with pets.

**Zaya 21:55**

Hi, my name is Zaya and I'm seven years old and I live in Oregon. And something that makes me really, really, really, really, really, really, really, really, really happy is kittens and the song Watermelon Meow Meow.

**Iris 22:15**

Hi, my name is Iris and I live in Silverton, Oregon, and something that makes me happy is kittens.

**Musa 22:23**

I'm Musa. I live in Warren, Michigan. And the thing that makes me happy are my cats.

**Jane 22:30**

Hi, my name is Jane. I live in Los Osos, California. I'm seven years old and the thing that makes me happy is playing with my neighbor's cat, Bookie.

**Ethan 22:38**

My name is Ethan from Connecticut and birds make me happy.

**Hunter 22:42**

My name is Hunter. I'm nine years old. I live in Kewaskum, Wisconsin, US, and what makes me happy is climbing trees and playing with my hamster.

**Rafael 22:53**

Hi, my name is Rafael. I am six years old. I live in Norway. I like to play with my cat inside the house.

**Elizabeth** 23:03

Hello, my name is Elizabeth. And I am eight years old and I'm from Toronto, Canada. What makes me feel happy is snuggling and playing with my kittens.

**Maggie** 23:14

My name is Maggie. I'm six years old. I live in Saint Albans, Vermont. I feel joy when I see my cats running around. So crazy.

**James** 23:26

Hi, my name is James and I live in Calgary, Alberta. I am eight years old and what makes me happy is my dog, Stewie.

**Caroline** 23:37

My name is Caroline, I live in Diamondale, Michigan. And catching ladybugs bring me joy.

**Henley** 23:47

My name is Henry, I'm seven years old. I live in Ferndale, Michigan, and catching spiders brings me joy.

**Neomi** 24:00

My name is Neomi. I'm seven years old. I live in Everett, Washington. And what makes me happy is playing and hanging out with my puppy, Stella.

**Maya** 24:09

My name is Maya and I live in London. And what brings me joy is dogs.

**Harvey** 24:15

My name is Harvey. I'm seven years old. I live in Brantford, Ontario, Canada. And what brings me joy is playing with my dog.

**Audrey** 24:26

I'm Audrey and I'm seven years old, and I live in Blacksburg, Virginia. And what makes me happy is playing with my grandma and grandpa's dog.

**Oliver** 24:35

Hey, But Why, my name is Oliver. I'm eight years old I live in Goldbern, Australia. And my puppy, Doug, makes me happy.

**Ronnie** 24:44

I am Ronnie. I am four years old and what do we bring me joy is to hug my doggy.

**Zelda** 24:55

My name is Zelda. I'm six years old. I live in Norwalk, Connecticut. What makes me happy is my dog, Cappy.

**Adelaide** 25:06

Hi, my name is Adelaide. I live in BC, Canada. And what makes me happy is my flamingos.

**Sloane** 25:14

Hi, my name is Sloane. I'm five years old. I live in British Columbia, Canada. And what brings me joy is chasing my friends chickens.

**Hannah** 25:26

My name is Hannah, I am five years old. And I am from Gainesville, Florida. I like snuggling with dogs.

**Teddy** 25:35

My name is Teddy. And I'm six years old. I live in Chicago. And what brings me joy is playing with my pet cat, Kiltie. And playing with my friend Adeline.

**Riley** 25:53

I'm from Missouri, Springfield, and I'm five years old, and my name is Riley. And what brings me joy is my leopard gecko, Lonnie.

**Talon** 26:02

My name is Talon. I live in Ontario, Canada. And what makes me happy is when my dogs cuddle with me.

**Jane** 26:08

We got another--we got actually more than one kid who wrote about sandwiches!

**Ananke** 26:14

My name is Ananke. I live in Manhattan, New York, I'm six years old. And the thing that makes me happy is when my dad makes me a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

**Rowen** 26:30

Hi, my name is Rowen. And I live in San Antonio, Texas. And I'm nine years old. And my favorite things about my family is my family and the sandwich my dad always makes.

**Jane** 26:47

Is there something about having somebody else make you some food that you love that just makes you feel so excited?

**Gretchen Rubin** 26:53

Oh, absolutely. I think that's one of the things that most people, even if they didn't write in, would say, "Oh, it's the special kind of toasts that my grandmother makes." Or it's like, "Our family holiday cookies

that we always bake." There's something about that connection between, you know, somebody making a special thing for you and a warm, happy feeling that's really fun to think about.

**Jane 27:15**

Here are a few more delicious things that give you the giggles.

**Libby 27:19**

My name is Libby. I live in St. Albans, Vermont. I'm three years old. I'm joyful when I eat my favorite food: soup.

**Cece 27:29**

Hi, my name is Cece. And I'm seven years old. And I live in Thailand. And the thing that brings me happiness is when I get some snacks and food and when I get books and stuff. And I am also happy when I go to [unknown] and I get some [unknown].

**Elsie 27:58**

My name is Elsie, and I live in Portland, Oregon. I'm five years old and what brings me joy is playing with my friends and eating cupcakes.

**Matt 28:09**

My name is Matt, and I'm from Cincinnati, Ohio. What makes me happy is reading books, eating watermelon, eating sweets and eating pizza.

**Malcolm 28:20**

My name is Malcolm. I'm six years old and I'm from Arkansas. And my favorite thing to do is when people make me my favorite snack.

**Addison 28:36**

My name is Addison and I'm six years old and I live in Canada. What makes me happy is making gingerbread cookies.

**Jane 28:45**

A lot of you told us hugs give you the warm fuzzies.

**Evie 28:48**

My name is Evie and I am seven years old. And I live in Kewaskum, Wisconsin. And what makes me happy is giving a hug to my mom.

**Clayton 29:00**

My name is Clayton, and I'm six years old and I'm in kindergarten. What makes me happy is my mom and dad hugging.

**Kayla 29:10**

Hi my name is Kayla. I am nine years old. I am from Miami, Florida. What makes me happy is to hug and play with my friends.

**Evan 29:23**

Hi my name is Evan. I am from Cedar Rapids, Iowa and I'm five years old and what makes me happy is my mom and dad hugging me.

**Ivy 29:34**

My name is Ivy. I'm 10 years old. I live in China. I feel happy when my mommy hugs me.

**Chrisman 29:43**

Hi, my name is Chrisman. I'm six years old. I live in Louisville, Kentucky. And what makes me happy is when I give Mommy hugs.

**Elisa 29:57**

Hi, my name is Elisa. I'm six and a half years old. I live in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and makes me happy when I hug my friends.

**Luke 30:09**

My name is Luke. I am from Virginia. I am six years old. So, what makes me happy is when I get to hug my mom and dad.

**Elliot 30:21**

My name is Elliot. I am six years old. I live in Calgary, Alberta. And what makes me happy is when I give my mom a hug.

**Nicole 30:31**

My name is Nicole. I'm six years old. I'm from Canada. What I like is hugs from my mom.

**Ivy 30:38**

Hi, I'm Ivy and I'm eight. And I come from Melbourne, Australia. And what makes me happy is when I get a cuddle from my favorite toy.

**Saveet 30:46**

My name is Saveet. And I'm from Israel, and I'm seven years old. And what brings me joy is hugging my teddy bear.

**Jane 30:56**

Sometimes you might not want a hug but physical touch, somebody holding your hand or giving you a pat on the back when that's something that you're welcoming, how does actually touching someone contribute to our feelings of joy and calmness and safety?

**Gretchen Rubin 31:11**

The feeling of touch, like having a warm social touch from someone else when you want it is a great way to help yourself feel comforted and calmed. We know this, as you say, from hugs. Or if you're trying to fall asleep, maybe if someone pats your back or strokes your hair, it's very calming. This is one of the reasons it's fun to pet a dog or a cat.

**Jane** 31:32

And it's okay to say "I don't want to be touched right now."

**Gretchen Rubin** 31:34

Sure.

**Jane** 31:34

Or, "I don't like to be tickled. But I really like to have my back rubbed."

**Gretchen Rubin** 31:39

Yeah.

**Jane** 31:40

"That feels good to me."

**Gretchen Rubin** 31:41

Right. Absolutely, because people are very different in what they like. And some people don't--hey want to hold on to like a plush toy, like they have a favorite toy.

**Jane** 31:49

We also got a lot of people who talked to us about learning new things and the sense of happiness that it gave them to be able to do something. Like Logan wrote in and said:

**Logan** 32:01

I live in Atlanta. I am nine years old. And something that makes me happy is learning how to tie my shoe. Why? Because it is fun to do. And you won't have to ask your mom to do it.

**Jane** 32:19

What is it about getting something, like, learning something and feeling that pride that makes us happy, too?

**Gretchen Rubin** 32:24

This is absolutely true. I'm very impressed that he identified this because this is something that can make us happier. When we feel like we're growing, when we feel like we're learning, when we feel like we're mastering a skill like tying our shoe, when we're teaching, like teaching a dog to do all kinds of special tricks, when we're making things better, this is a big source of happiness for us.

**Silas** 32:49

My name is Silas, and I'm from Brooklyn, New York. What makes me happy is learning about space, especially black holes and alien life.

**Maverick 33:03**

My name is Maverick I am seven years old. I live in Yuma, Arizona. My favorite thing is getting a brand new book.

**Sancha 33:11**

My name is Sancha and I live in Switzerland. What makes me happy is reading chapter books.

**Maggie 33:17**

My name is Maggie. I'm nine years old. I live in Carlisle, Massachusetts. I feel happy when I am reading a good book, like Harry Potter or Wings of Fire.

**Evan 33:29**

Hi, my name is Evan. I am seven years old. And I live in Brazil, Florianópolis. What makes me happy is reading, going to school to learn and having hugs from my friends and family.

**Moana 33:46**

Hi, my name is Moana. I am seven years old. I live in Apex, North Carolina. What makes me happy is learning animal facts and when my friends ask me questions about animals, I know the right answer.

**Alejandro 34:05**

Hello, my name is Alejandro. I'm four years old. I'm from Berkeley and I live in Toronto. And my teachers make me happy.

**Theo 34:16**

My name is Theo. I am from Fort Collins, Colorado. And what makes me happy is books, so that I can read books.

**Lucy 34:28**

My name is Lucy and I'm five years old. I live in Springs, Virginia. What makes me happy is learning.

**Louisa 34:39**

My name is Louisa. I'm seven years old. I live in St. Paul, Minnesota. What brings me joy is reading.

**Lorde 34:47**

My name is Lorde. And I am six years old. One thing that brings me joy is learning to be smart.

**Henley 34:57**

My name is Henry. I live in California. The thing that brings me joy is reading a good book.

**Penelope 35:05**

Hi, my name is Penelope. I'm 11 years old, and I live in Toronto, Ontario. Something that brings me joy is when my gymnastics coach tells me I can move on to a harder skill because I did a move really well. It makes me happy to see her proud and it also makes me proud.

**Gretchen Rubin** 35:20

But here's the tricky part: sometimes when you're learning to do a new thing, it can be really frustrating. Sometimes it's it doesn't make us happy right away. Because when you're learning to tie your shoe, or you're learning to read, or you're learning to play the violin, there's a lot of time when you're frustrated; you feel like you can't do what you want, you have to practice, you're not as good as you want to be, you have an idea in your head of like how a picture should look but then you can't make it look the way you want. And that can be frustrating. But when we move past that, when we remember, okay, this is the hard part, but it's going to feel really great when I master this skill or this task, or I do something the way that I want, it gives us such a big boost. So it's very helpful to remember that sometimes it takes a while to get to the happy part. Um, but it's coming if you stick with it.

**Jane** 36:16

This episode is coming out in the last few days of the year. So almost all of you have celebrated a birthday already. And that makes you pretty happy.

**Daniel** 36:26

My name is Daniel. I'm nearly seven and what makes me happy is that my birthday is on the twenty-five December.

**Maddy** 36:40

I am Maddy. I am from Jackson, Tennessee. I'm about to turn five. And what brings me joy is my birthday.

**Prasanna** 36:49

Hi, my name is Prasanna. I just turned 11 and I live in Cupertino, California. What makes me happy is my birthday and when my brother makes me fried tofu with soy sauce.

**Kirsten** 37:02

My name is Kirsten and I am almost eight years old. Something that brings me joy is my birthday because I get to hug my friends.

**West** 37:09

Hi, my name is West. I am nine years old. I live in Silverton, Oregon, something that makes me happy, is going skiing and having a birthday party.

**Jane** 37:20

And a few of you mentioned a certain holiday celebrated by many people in December.

**Kiera** 37:25

Hi, my name is Kiera. I'm five years old. I live in Fayetteville, Arkansas. And my Christmas tree makes me happy because it's beautiful.

**George 37:34**

My name is George and I live in Atlanta, Georgia. And I am five and a half years old. I feel joy to get presents on Christmas.

**Lincoln 37:51**

Hi, my name is Lincoln. I'm seven years old. I live in Queensbury, New York. Time with my family on Christmas brings me joy.

**Nava 37:59**

Hi, my name is Nava. I am six years old. I live in Riverdam. This is what makes me happy: getting presents.

**Grayson 38:08**

My name is Grayson, and I'm from Georgia, Vermont. And lacrosse brings me joy.

**Charlie 38:14**

Hi, my name is Charlie.

**Ron 38:16**

My name is Ron. We are twins.

**Charlie 38:19**

And we are seven years old.

**Ron 38:22**

We come from Ireland. And we live in Geneva, Switzerland.

**Charlie 38:27**

And the thing that makes me happy is to tobogganing with my brother.

**Ron 38:31**

And the thing that makes me happy is to have Christmas with my family.

**Jane 38:37**

Okay, those are events that can definitely make someone smile. But our happiness podcaster and author Gretchen Rubin told us that one of the best ways people can be happy is to figure out what you like to do. And then just do that thing.

**Gretchen Rubin 38:52**

One thing I hear from adults a lot is they don't know how to have fun. They don't remember how to have fun. And what I often say to them is, "Well, what did you do for fun when you were 10 years old?"

Because what you did for fun when you were 10 years old is probably something that you would enjoy as an adult. But then sometimes kids say, "I don't know what I want to do for fun, because I feel like I'm always racing around doing what everybody's telling me to do. I don't know what I would do for fun." And I would say it's really important to know what is fun for you. Not what everybody else is telling you is fun, not what you think should be fun, not what your friends tell you is fun, not what's assigned to you. But if you really had a magical day where you could do anything you wanted to do, what would you do? And really try to do that. Try to make time for that. Because play is the work of childhood. But then often that play has very big implications for what we do when we grow up. And so it's really matters more than you think to know what is fun for you.

**Jane** 40:02

Need some inspiration? Here are a lot of you telling us what you do for fun.

**Mims** 40:09

My name is Mims and I'm eight and a half years old and I live in Atlanta, Georgia and I feel joy when I jump in leaf piles in the fall.

**Everette** 40:18

My name is Everette and I am four years old and I am from Egypt but we we will live in India. And my favorite thing is to ride my balance bike.

**Michael** 40:35

I'm Michael from the UP. And something that makes me happy is biking.

**Ken** 40:42

My name is Ken. I'm five years old. I live in California. I'm happy when I ride a bike.

**Milo** 40:53

My name is Milo. I am seven years old. And I live in Gilbert, Arizona. And what makes me happy is playing soccer.

**Jackie** 41:03

My name is Jackie. I'm nine years old. I live in Taipei, Taiwan. Skateboarding, drawing, doing sports makes me happy.

**Andrew** 41:13

My name is Andrew. I'm from Mississippi and I like to catch the football with my dad and play with a friend.

**Cameron** 41:22

My name is Cameron. I'm 10 years old. And I'm from Toronto, Ontario. And something that brings me joy is when I score a goal in a soccer game.

**Timothy** 41:33

So my name is Timothy. I'm five years old. I live in Paris. And what makes me happy is doing sports like basketball, rugby, tennis, swimming and football. All kinds of sports makes me happy.

**Amir** 41:58

Hi, my name is Amir. I'm five and a half years old. I live in Bristol, England. When I am riding my scooter, it makes me so happy.

**Liv** 42:11

Hello, I am Liv. I'm 10 years old and I'm from Taiwan. I would say when I play badminton, it will make me happy because I really love love the sport.

**Jane** 42:24

I also find playing sports really fun. It makes me really happy to go outside for a long run or to go for a hike in the woods and I love playing basketball with my son.

**Thomas** 42:33

My name is Thomas. I live in, Waterloo, Ontario. And what makes me happy is when I get to build Lego.

**Benson** 42:43

My name is Benson and I am seven years old. I am from Houston, Texas. What makes me happy is building any Lego sets because I like the way they look when they are finished.

**Aura** 43:04

I'm Aura. I'm eight years old. I'm from Shanghai, China. And the thing that makes me happy is when mums buys me a new toy.

**Clara** 43:14

My name is Clara. I live in New Prague, Minnesota and what brings me joy is arts and crafts.

**Violetta** 43:24

I'm Violetta. I'm Ashland, Oregon, and I am five years old. And what makes me happy is crafting.

**Laura** 43:30

My name is Laura. I'm 10 years old. I live in Winter Garden, Florida. And I feel happy whenever I draw.

**Lily** 43:40

Hi, my name is Lily. I am seven years old. I live in Nashville, Tennessee. And something that brings me joy is arts and crafts.

**Jane** 43:49

Doing arts and crafts or Lego can be a really great way to focus on one task and kind of block out everything else.

**Charlotte** 43:57

My name is Charlotte. I'm five years old. I live in Edina, Minnesota. And what makes me happy is the color red.

**Tejas** 44:07

Hello, my name is Tejas and I'm 12 years old. I live in Canberra, Australia. Some things that make me happy are aircraft and the drums. [drumbeats and cymbal smash]

**Laurel** 44:16

My name is Laurel. I'm five years old. And I live in New Castle, Washington state. And what makes me happy is playing with my baby doll.

**Anderson** 44:29

Hi, my name is Anderson. I live in Seattle, Washington. I am seven years old. And what makes me happy is playing Minecraft and Monopoly and being with my friends.

**Lucas** 44:45

My name is Lucas and I live in Green Bay, Wisconsin. And the thing that brings me joy is when I play games with Mom.

**Mika** 44:58

My name is Mika. I'm five years old, I live in Oregon. What makes me happy is playing with my friends, being outside, camping in the fresh air, doing art and running around at school.

**Spencer** 45:15

My name is Spencer. I'm nine years old. I live in Studio City, California. And what makes me happy is when I play Roblox on my iPad, Roblox doors, it's my favorite game. And when I get a brand new Lego set because I love to build Legos.

**Julian** 45:35

I'm Julian. I am six years old. I live Milan and what makes me happy is play with my neighbor's dog and going swimming.

**Carlotta** 45:47

Hi, my name is Carlotta. I'm nine years old. I live in Unteriberg, Switzerland. And what makes me happy is doing gymnastics.

**Evelyn** 45:58

My name is I'm Evelyn. I'm seven years old. I live in Springfield, Virginia. And what makes me happy is going on new adventures.

**Jack** 46:09

Hi, I'm Jack. And I am seven.

**Oli** 46:12

And hi I'm Oli and I'm 10 and we live in York, England.

**Jack** 46:16

What makes me happy is Christmas.

**Oli** 46:19

And what makes me happy is sitting in front of the fire watching movies with my dog.

**Jane** 46:24

These are all so great.

**Jonah** 46:26

Hi, my name is Jonah. I live in Fairfield, Connecticut. And what brings me joy is being able to play outside with fresh air.

**Neha** 46:37

My name is Neha. I'm from China. I am six years old. And what makes me happy is making friends and taking buses. Taking buses make me happy because I go to the second floor. It feels like I'm driving double decker bus.

**Morgan** 47:01

What makes me happy is me by my family, having my toys having my electronics having my stuffies.

**Theo** 47:12

My name is Theo. I am four years old and the thing makes me happy is my mom and going to Lake [unclear].

**Will** 47:25

My name is Will. I live in Flagstaff. And I'm five years old and what makes me happy is playing tag and going to the ocean.

**Kai** 47:36

My name is Kai. I am 11 years old. And I live in Columbus, Ohio. What makes me happy is seeing model trains and playing with toy trains.

**Libby** 47:54

My name's Libby and I am from North Carolina and I'm six. What makes me happy by puppy, Booth. My family, my friends, and art.

**Dru** 48:06

I'm Dru. I am five years old. I live in the Canary Islands. I like being with Papa and Mama, going skateboard and going to shore.

**Quin 48:21**

My name is Quin. I'm seven years old and I live in Halifax, Nova Scotia. What makes me happy is watching movies.

**Eesa 48:28**

My name is Eesa and I live in Olney, Maryland. And the thing that makes me happy is hugs.

**Musa 48:35**

My name is Musa. I'm five years old. I live in Olney, Maryland and the thing that makes me happy is jumping on the trampoline.

**Jonah 48:45**

My name is Jonah. I am eight years old.

**Clara 48:51**

My name is Clara. I'm five years old.

**Jonah 48:54**

We live in Saigon in Vietnam. And what makes me happy is when a friend plays with me.

**Clara 49:02**

When I go to the playground that makes me happy.

**Julia 49:06**

My name is Julia. I'm eight years old. And I come from Warsaw, Poland. I'm happy when I can draw or meet with my friends or listen to audiobooks and watch television.

**Eileen 49:22**

My name is Eileen. I am six and a half years old. I live in Houston, Texas. And what makes me happy is scooting with my mommy and daddy.

**Charlotte 49:38**

What makes me happy is [unclear]. My name is Charlotte. I'm nine years old and I live in Florida.

**Sebastian 49:44**

My name is Sebastian. I'm six years old a year in California and I get really happy when I get to study rocks with my dad.

**Rowan 49:57**

Hello my name is Rowan. I am five years old. I live in New Westminster, British Columbia, Canada. And what makes me happy is biking.

**Richard 50:11**

My name is Richard and I'm seven years old as I live in London, England. One of the many things that makes me happy is honestly going to my neighbor's house and playing games for three hours.

**Joanna 50:23**

My name is Joanna, I'm eight years old. I live in North Lanarkshire, Scotland. And what makes me happy is performing in front of a big audience.

**Charlotte 50:32**

Hi, my name is Charlotte and I am from North Carolina and I am five years old and what makes me happy is going to the zoo to see animals and riding my bike.

**Avery 50:41**

Hi, my name is Avery. I'm eight years old and I live in St. John's, Michigan. One of the things that makes me happy is playing basketball.

**Eliana 50:49**

Hello I'm Eliana and I'm five years old. I live in Michigan. And what makes me happy is going to Glen Arbor with my family.

**Sawyer 50:57**

My name is Sawyer and I am five. I live in St. Louis, Missouri. And what makes me happy is trying new foods and going to new places. Also trying new things like riding my bike for the first time.

**Adiah 51:14**

Hi, my name is Adiah. I live in New York. And this is how I get happy: playing with my best friend.

**Molly 51:24**

My name is Molly. I'm 13. I live in Pennsylvania and something that makes me happy is shelving books at my library.

**Lincoln 51:31**

Lincoln from New England. And what makes me excited is decorating my room and riding my bike. Lincoln out!

**Jane 51:39**

This is such an awesome list. What makes you, listening right now, YOU, happy? What do you do that's the most fun? And how are you going to keep that sense of fun as you get older? And adults, what about you? What do you do that's fun? How do you bring joy to your life? Before we go, here's one more question from Evie.

**Evie 52:02**

Hello, But Why. My name's Evie and I'm nine years old, and I live in Eastbourne, UK. What makes me happy is when I'm playing with my best friend and snuggling with my mummy. What makes you happy?

**Jane** 52:17

Thanks for asking, Evie! I mentioned a minute ago that I really like hiking and running. Being outside in the woods alone--well, alone with my dog, is really something that brings me a lot of joy. And when I'm out in the woods, I especially like finding new mushrooms and trying to identify what kind they are. Actually, a lot of the things you talked about today in this episode make me happy too. And I try to make a mental note of one small moment each day that fills me with joy and THAT has really helped me feel like a happier person overall. Well, that's it for this episode. We really hope everyone has a happy and safe 2024. But Why's team includes Melody Bodette, Kianna Haskin and me, Jane Lindholm. Making this show and hearing from you makes all three of us happy. We produce this program at Vermont Public and it's distributed by PRX. Our theme music is by Luke Reynolds. We'll be back in two weeks with an all new episode. Until then, stay curious!