

Why I spend my weekends watching Bluey and being a research spy

Want to know what children, young people & their parents are **thinking**?

By Research Director, [Helen Menzies](#)

“You’ve never seen Bluey? Are you joking?” This was our incredulous response when one of our friends recently ‘confessed’ to having never seen the programme we are all obsessed with. This type of reaction is usually reserved for when someone admits they’ve never seen Star Wars, The Godfather or some other piece of cinema considered seminal, but Bluey is a kids’ TV show.

Another friend recently messaged in our WhatsApp group to tell us about her new favourite episode of Bluey. Not her child’s favourite episode – *her* favourite episode. I’m not even sure she was watching it with her kids. We are all in our late 30s and have children aged around 4-8 years old. There’s lots of kids programmes out there, we can’t possibly watch them all (nor would we want to, some are truly awful), so why are we all so obsessed with this one?

For the uninitiated, Bluey is an Australian cartoon about a family of Dogs. Bluey, her sister Bingo, Mum Chilli and Dad Bandit. If you have a child in the region of 3-8 years old and you’ve never seen Bluey, I want you to stop reading this article immediately and go and watch it (you can find it on BBC iPlayer and Disney+).

I’ve been enjoying Bluey with my son for a few years now, since it first landed on CBeebies. It has grown so much in popularity that certain phrases from the show have become part of everyday parenting chat. If, for example, you’re planning a game of Pass the Parcel at your child’s birthday you need to consider if you’ll be playing by Lucky’s Dad’s rules. This means the old-fashioned way you might have grown up with, where the only prize was in the centre and there were no small treats in every single layer. I see parents with Bluey merchandise and a huge live tour is headed for the UK soon.



Bluey manages to speak to children and parents in equal measure, ensuring that both want to sit down and watch it together. Its honest about life as a parent (such as when Chilli and Bandit have a hangover in the 'Whale Watching' episode or when as a Mum you sometimes just need "20 minutes where no one comes near me" as in 'Sheepdog') but the kids still think it's a show for them. It is genuinely funny, often poignant and without being preachy it teaches us all how to be better parents. In one of the episodes, Chilli and Bandit are attempting to assemble some flat-pack furniture and Bandit stubbornly refuses to read the instructions, crying out "I'm not taking advice from a cartoon dog!" This is beautifully ironic because thousands of parents around the world are doing exactly that. Bandit is a fun, supportive and dedicated father to Bluey and Bingo, and a quick Google search reveals the role model he has become and the "dad goals" he represents.

Having a five year old son means that I spend most of my weekends with kids and their parents. I always chat to kids about what they are watching on TV. A bit like a research spy, I'm constantly tapping them up for information on their favourite shows and toys so I can use this insider knowledge in my role as the head of our Children & Young People research team. I'm the same with the parents – the school run and the WhatsApp groups are great for keeping up with parenting trends. Any mention of one of our client brands and my research radar switches on.



It means that when we run a survey or some focus groups, we can take a step back and think does this ring true? Are we hearing this in other research or in our own lives? That gives us greater confidence in the results and can often help to explain the findings to our clients, especially if they don't have young kids themselves.

If you want to know what children, young people and their parents are thinking, or you just want a chat about Bluey, please contact Helen Menzies hmenzies@djsresearch.com