



Growing Up

Together

Insights and impacts from the *Growing Up in Australia* study.

hello

Parent spotlight: Lisa Smithers

Welcome to Issue 3 of our Parent newsletter!

My name is Professor Lisa Smithers and I am thrilled to bring you this update from *Growing Up in Australia: The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children*.

Like many of you, I am a parent participant of the Study. I clearly remember around 20 years ago receiving a letter in the post about my daughter being eligible to participate. I knew I wanted our family to be involved in this important study, but I didn't fully know what that meant at the time.



Since enrolling in the study, I have followed the same journey as many of you, completing home visits, written surveys and more recently, telephone surveys. Along the way, I have guided my daughter through various study visits, measurements and surveys, and when she became old enough to make decisions for herself, I encouraged her to continue our family's commitment to the study.

Professionally, I am a researcher. This allows me to sit on the Study's Scientific Advisory Committee. Through this committee I offer advice about what information to collect and how often. A most wonderful thing is that I have been able to use Study data in my research.

A couple of examples have been looking at how children's temperament affects their school outcomes, and whether social risks (like housing instability, food insecurity, financial strain) predict future health and schooling.

As I write this newsletter, I began to wonder ... are you surprised that the Study team are still interested in our lives and opinions, even after all this time? We (parents) have an immense impact on our children's lives in many ways - and there are no other Australian studies that have followed parents in the same way as us, so we make a particularly special contribution to the Study and to research more globally!

With both my researcher and scientific adviser hats on, I want to thank you all for continuing to support the *Growing Up in Australia* study and encouraging your young person's participation. You may not always see the benefits of your contributions, but together we are making a positive change.

My very best wishes

Lisa

The impact of your participation on early childhood research

Remember completing your *Growing Up in Australia* survey when your child was little? Did you know that findings from data collected then continue to contribute to Australia's future today? Read on to find out how.

Researchers from Australia and beyond have published research articles on early childhood (0-5 years) using our *Growing Up in Australia* data ...



... we reviewed 133 of these articles to understand how to support young people and their families to get the best start in life.



70 articles

gave insight on how early mental and physical health is best supported.



63 articles

gave insight on how child education is fostered during the early years.

The findings from these articles are used to inform policy and practice, such as the government's new Early Years Strategy (2024-2034).



To read more about the Australian Government's Early Years Strategy (2024-2034), head to www.dss.gov.au/families-and-children-programs-services-early-years-strategy/early-years-strategy-2024-2034



'From the studies we reviewed, it is clear that the *Growing Up in Australia* data is an asset to the research community that has helped advance knowledge and inform policy and practice. Without support from parents, guardians, carers and their young people, we wouldn't have these important insights on childhood in Australia.'

- Dr Karlee O'Donnell

Thank you!

Thank you for completing your telephone survey in our most recent fieldwork activity. While the focus of *Growing Up in Australia* has always been on your children's (and now young people's) development, as parents and guardians you play a vital role in the Study, both through your ongoing participation as well as the encouragement of your children's participation.

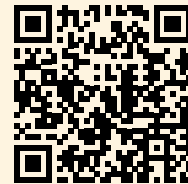
You are a huge part of ensuring the Study remains a leading source of information for researchers and policy makers and continues to make a difference.

3 easy ways to update your contact details

You can make changes to your address, phone number or preferred email address by:



Scanning the QR code or visiting growingupinaustralia.gov.au/update-your-details to go directly to our secure online form.



Emailing the *Growing Up in Australia* team directly at info@growingupinaustralia.gov.au



Calling our friendly team on **1800 005 508** between 9am and 5pm AEST Monday–Sunday.

Acknowledgement of Country

The Australian Institute of Family Studies acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to lands and waters. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to Elders past and present.

