

Understanding Society

Wave 10

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WAVE 10

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Case study 1 – Boomerangers

How is my information used?

We asked Who you are living with and how many generations live in your house?



The research

Researchers from the University of Southampton used the data to show what shapes young people's decision to move home to mum and dad.

What the research found

- Finishing full-time education is the most common reason for returning to the parental home.
- Relationship break-ups and being unemployed also increase the need for parental support.
- Men remain more likely to be living in the parental home than women, although the gender gap is narrowing.

Newspaper headlines

- “It’s Official: The Boomerang Kids Won’t Leave”
New York Times 20th June 2014
- Why young adults return to parental home
Science Daily 11th November 2013

Questions this raises for policy makers

- More young people choose to go to university.
Is this a good or bad thing?
- What does the future hold for parents who now
need to support their children for longer?
- Will parents need to dig deeper into pensions &
savings?

Case study 2 - First daughter

How is my information used?

We asked 10-15 year olds about their plans to attend further education



The research

Feifei Bu at the University of Essex used the data to investigate if brothers or sisters were more or less ambitious, depending on whether they were the first, second or youngest child.

What the research found

- Girls are 13% more ambitious than boys
- “Firstborns” are 16% more likely to attend further education than their younger siblings
- Girls are 4% more likely to have further education qualifications

In the news

- **First born and female? Why being the eldest girl means you are more likely to succeed**
Daily Mail 27th April 2014
- **Firstborn children really do excel, reveals groundbreaking study** The Guardian 26th April 2014
- **Born winners: the women who grew up in first place** The Times 28th April 2014

Questions this raises for policy makers

- Schools can look at whether they need to support boys or younger siblings more?
- Why is aspiration important?
- What might parents do to ensure all their children are equally ambitious?

Case study 3 - Grandparents

How is my information used?

We asked about childcare arrangements in the family home.



The research

Charities Age UK and Grandparents Plus used the data to reveal the important role that grandparents play in supporting parents with childcare.

What the research found

- Half of all mothers rely on grandparents to provide childcare when they return to work after maternity leave
- 63% of all grandparents with a grandchild under 16 look after their grandchildren.
- 19% of grandmothers provide at least 10 hours of childcare a week.

Newspaper headlines

- The babysitting grandparents who save families £7billion a year: Study shows older generation cares for 1.6million UK children
Daily Mail 30th May 2013
- Childcare: Are grandparents entitled to flexible hours? BBC News 30th May 2013
- 'Hidden army' of grandparents helping families priced out of childcare
Guardian 8th July 2014

Questions this raises for policy makers

- Older people work for longer now and cannot look after children as often.
- Pension age is rising – what impact will this have?
- Would cheaper childcare help?

Case study 4 – Wellbeing

How is my information used?

We asked 10-15 year olds about their wellbeing



The research

The Office for National Statistics used this data to report on children's wellbeing, relating to their relationships, health and education.

What the research found

- 79% of boys and 68% of girls reported being relatively happy with their looks.
- The proportion of children in England aged 2 to 15 who were overweight, including obese, was 28% in 2012.
- 12% of children reported being frequently bullied physically, in other ways, or both.

Newspaper headlines

- Children 'satisfied, yet fear of bullying remains'
BBC News 8th October 2014
- Want your children to be happy? Try talking to them... Daily Mail 8th October 2014
- Girls twice as likely to worry about their appearance as boys The Telegraph 8th October 2014

Why is this research important?

- This sort of research can help local authorities improve children's services including social care, education and public health.

Case study 5 – Teenagers

How is my information used and how does it make a difference?



We asked 10- to 15-year-olds how often they use screen-based appliances, e.g. mobiles, tablets & games consoles and questions about their wellbeing.

The research

Researchers at the University of Essex looked at the link between social networking sites and children's happiness levels.

What the research found

- 10- to 15-year-olds chatting lots on social networking websites and using games consoles heavily were associated with higher chances of social problems such as being withdrawn.
- The research also showed that heavy use of smartphones, tablets and games consoles was also associated with lower levels of happiness among adolescents.

What the researcher says

"If children are using social media in substitute for physical activity that has major public health implications. We already have large parts of the population who have health problems because they are not physically active." Dr Cara Booker, University of Essex

Newspaper headlines

- **Tech companies urged to protect young from dangers of excessive screen time**
The Guardian, 10th October 2015
- **Do children have too much screen time and does it matter how much time they spend on iPads, smartphones and laptops?**
East Anglian Daily Times, 17th October 2015
- **Excessive social media use harms children's mental health**
The Telegraph, 20th October 2015

Why does this research make a difference?

This research can help inform parents' and the government's decisions about the recommended amount of screen time young people should have.

Case study 6 - Daily commute

How is my information used and how does it make a difference?



We asked adults about how they travel to their place of work.

The research

Researchers at the University of East Anglia wanted to find out how people's daily commutes can affect their health.

What the research found

- People who switched to either walking or cycling reported improvements in their well-being.
- People felt that they were able to concentrate more at work and were under less strain when they didn't travel by car.
- The study shows that the longer people spend commuting in cars, the worse their psychological well-being.

What the researcher says

"This research shows that if new projects such as London's proposed segregated cycleways, or public transport schemes such as Crossrail, were to encourage commuters to walk or cycle more regularly, then there could be noticeable mental health benefits."

Adam Martin, UEA's Norwich Medical School

Newspaper headlines

- **Walking or cycling to work 'improves well-being'**
BBC News, 14th September 2014
- **Walking or biking to work may make you happier**
Fox News, 14th September 2014
- **The case for walking or cycling (or taking the train) to work**
The Washington Post, 15th September 2014

Why does this research make a difference?

This research can help town planners, employers and commuters to find ways to make travelling to work healthier.

Case study 7 - Volunteering

How do the questions I am asked make a difference?



We ask you questions about what you do in your spare time, including some questions about volunteering.

The research

Researchers from the University of Southampton wanted to find out how volunteering later on in life affects mental health and wellbeing.

What the research found

- Around one in five participants said they had done some formal volunteering. Women were more likely to volunteer than men.
- There were links between volunteering and good mental health among those aged over 40.
- People who had never volunteered had lower levels of emotional wellbeing.

What the researcher says

“Voluntary action might provide over 40s with greater opportunities for beneficial activities and social contacts, which in turn may have protective effects on health status.”

Dr Faiza Tabassum, University of Southampton.

Newspaper headlines

- **Volunteering is not beneficial until you hit 40, study finds**
The Telegraph, 9th August 2016
- **Why over 40s are happy to volunteer: Giving up time for charity work found to boost mental wellbeing as people get older**
The Daily Mail, 9th August 2016
- **Volunteering Isn't All That Beneficial — Until You Hit THIS Age**
The Huffington Post, 9th August 2016

How will this research make a difference?

This research will help volunteering organisations open up more opportunities for people to engage in volunteering.

Case study 8 - Young people's wellbeing

How do the questions I am asked make a difference?



We asked young people about many activities. These include visiting art galleries, talking about books at home, the number of evenings spent doing homework, relationship with siblings and quarrelling with parents.

The research

Dr Dimitra Hartas at the University of Warwick wanted to find out how young people's home lives influence their hopes for the future. She wanted to look at different aspects of young people's lives, like interest in culture, how much parents were involved in school life, and relationships.

What the research found

- Teenagers who spend quality time with their parents are more likely to want to continue their studies.
- Those who did not feel emotionally close to their parents were two times higher to consider GCSEs unimportant
- Young people who had a close relationship with their parents were more positive about continuing their education after their GCSEs.

What the researcher says

"These findings have significant implications for family and educational policy, especially with regard to 'raising aspirations' and reducing early school leaving." Dr Dimitra Hartas, University of Warwick

Newspaper headlines

- **Teenagers who spend quality time with their parents are more likely to want to go to university**
Somerset Live, 10th April 2016
- **This Is the Top Predictor of Whether You'll Want to Go to College**
Teen Vogue, 12th April 2016
- **Children Who Spend More Quality Time With Parents Have Better Academic Aspirations, Study Says**
The Parent Herald, 20th April 2016

Why does this research make a difference?

This research can help teachers and education specialists understand how home life can raise young people's aspirations. It can help them find new ways to strengthen that relationship.

WAVE 10

Other Leaflets

GB Info Leaflet

NI Info Leaflet

AP2296 GB Info Leaflet



Understanding Society: Information for Participants



KANTAR PUBLIC

NatCen
Social Research that works for society



USOC/GB information leaflet/W9-139140&W10-413158



Understanding Society...

is a very special study that follows the lives of tens of thousands of people who live in the UK, collecting information about the events and people that affect them.

This information is used by social scientists, policy makers and economists to help make better decisions about things that affect people's lives. In the past, studies like this have contributed to changes in the law, given insights into human psychology, and helped doctors treat illnesses more effectively.

You are important to us

Households were chosen to take part in this study to represent thousands of other people living in the UK. If you live in one of those households, or with someone who has taken part in *Understanding Society* before, you can take part in the study.

By taking part, you are helping to create a record of how life in the UK is changing and what impact those changes have on you and the other people you live with, for example, how a new job or baby affects your health and well-being, your financial circumstances and personal relationships a year or two years later.

What do I have to do?

To join in, all you have to do is answer some questions about your life and your opinions. If you are already a member of the study you will be familiar with most aspects of the interview. The interview will take approximately 45 minutes to an hour, depending on your circumstances. It will cover some of the key areas of your life such as health, employment, retirement, personal relationships, friends and family, childcare, and leisure activities.

Do you just want to talk to me?

We would like to talk to everyone aged 16 and over who lives in your home. With parents' consent, we would also like young people aged 10-15 to fill in a short questionnaire.

Are you new to this household?

You are being asked to take part because you are now living in the household of someone who has previously taken part in the study.

Without your input, we won't be able to gain a complete understanding of how household and family circumstances may be changing.

What do I get out of it?

Each person in the household who takes part will receive a High Street voucher that can be used at a range of retailers. Young people aged 10-15 who complete a self-completion questionnaire will receive a £5 High Street voucher. As a member of *Understanding Society* you will also have access to study findings and research updates.

Is the study confidential?

Yes, we always take great care to protect the confidentiality of the information you give us, in accordance with the Data Protection Act. The results of the study will be used for research purposes only. You can ask to see your details at any time or to have them removed from our database. The data is and will remain anonymous – it will be impossible for anyone to identify you or your household from the study's results.

Who is doing the research?

Researchers at the University of Essex are running *Understanding Society* together with Kantar Public. Funding has been provided by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC).

How do I find out more?

If you'd like some more information on the study: visit www.understandingsociety.ac.uk, email contact@understandingsociety.ac.uk, call the University of Essex on Freephone 0800 252 853 or write to FREEPOST RRRX-KEKJ-JGKS, Understanding Society, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3SQ. We'll be really pleased to hear from you.

AP2297 NI Info Leaflet



Understanding Society: Information for Participants



KANTAR MILLWARD BROWN





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