



## *Footprints in Time:* The Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children (LSIC)



### Overview

The Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children (LSIC) follows the development of around 1,700 Indigenous children and their families across urban, regional and remote Australia.

The study provides a data resource that can be drawn on by government, researchers, service providers, parents and communities.

It is one of the largest longitudinal studies of Indigenous people worldwide.

### Purpose of the study

LSIC aims to improve the understanding of, and policy response to the diverse circumstances faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, their families and communities.

### Key research questions

The key research questions, formulated under the guidance of the LSIC Steering Committee, chaired by Professor Mick Dodson AM, are:

- *What do Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children need to have the best start in life to grow up strong?*
- *What helps Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children stay on track or become healthier, more positive and strong?*
- *How are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children raised?*
- *What is the importance of family, extended family and community in the early years of life and when growing up?*

### Survey methodology

Planning for the study started in 2004, and annual data collection started in 2008, building on two years of consultation with Indigenous communities and two years of trials and pilots.

Information is collected annually by Indigenous interviewers from parents and carers, the study children themselves and their school teachers.

LSIC follows two groups of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children who were aged 6 to 18 months (B cohort) and 3½ - 5 years (K cohort) when the study began.

Qualitative responses are collected about a range of aspects of the child's life including study children's aspirations, role models and cultural strengths.

Data is linked with the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN).

### Footprints in Time locations

The LSIC sample is not nationally representative. However, it does broadly reflect the distribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged between 0 and 5 years (at the study's commencement in 2008) among urban, regional and remote areas.

**More information on the survey is available at**  
<https://www.dss.gov.au/lxic>

Stay connected

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# Study Content Overview

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## Household

- Dwelling type and street traffic
- Household demographics: sex, age, Indigenous status, relationship to parent, relationship to Study Child

## Child's general development

- Global physical health
- Height, weight, BMI

## Housing

- Relocating
- Number of bedrooms
- Housing quality

## Child's learning and cognition outcomes

- Language development
- Matrix reasoning
- School readiness
- Reading
- Writing
- Numeracy

## Child's social and emotional outcomes

- Behaviour
- Emotional development
- Social development
- Temperament

## Child health status

- Global health
- Disability
- Medical conditions
- Oral health
- Injuries
- Hospital stays & health visits
- Sleeping problems
- Nutrition

## Parental Health

- Ongoing health conditions
- Personal social and cultural resilience
- Social and emotional wellbeing
- Smoking habits and child exposure
- Alcohol habits

## Parenting

- Parental warmth, monitoring, discipline
- Parental involvement
- Parental self- efficacy

## Parent living elsewhere

- Child support
- Contact with child
- Quality of relationship with other parent

## Relationships

- Couple relationships
- Family cohesion
- Family violence indicators

## Major life events for close family & friends

- Including: pregnancy, illness, funerals, money worries, humbergging, housing issues, alcohol or drug problems, robbed or assaulted, child upset or scared, family split up

## Language, culture

- Parent, child & household languages & proficiency
- Household Aboriginal English use
- Indigenous cultural events, practices, arts
- Connection to country
- Connection to tribe, language group or clan
- Racism, discrimination, prejudice

## Parent & partner education & employment

- Highest school year & qualification
- Labour force status
- Hours & conditions of work
- Job duties and responsibilities
- Leave entitlements

## Education

- School type
- School liking & avoidance
- School belonging
- Education choice
- Absenteeism
- Teacher relationship
- Parent engagement
- Cultural safety at school

## Finances

- Financial stress
- Government benefits
- Income management
- Money management

## Infant health and development

- Maternal health and care, alcohol; tobacco and substance use in pregnancy; birth, birth weight post natal depression
- Early diet and feeding

## Community

- Community/neighbourhood liveability/ facilities
- Neighbourhood safety

## Early education & care

- Formal/informal care
- Time in care
- Playgroup

## Child's home environment

- Activities at home & away
- Activities with family
- Education expectations
- Internet use
- TV, computer and electronic games use

## Education (asked of teacher)

- Child characteristics
- Class characteristics
- Teacher characteristics: including Indigenous status, Indigenous education, training & experience
- School characteristics: including Indigenous cultural approach

## Other

- Life satisfaction
- Caring responsibilities
- Gambling
- Stolen generations

## Free text questions

- What is it about being Indigenous that helps your child grow up strong?
- How do/will you teach study child how to deal with racism?

## Future topics

- Family history & connection to country
- Living away from home for school