## Appendix C—Wave 5 content and demographics

While there is a set of core questions that are asked on an annual basis, each wave of data includes new questions as dictated by the appropriateness of the children’s age. In Wave 5, children in the younger cohort were asked the questions that were only asked of the older cohort in Wave 2.

In Wave 5 children in the younger cohort completed the Renfrew Language Scales: Word Finding Vocabulary Test for the second time. The older cohort completed the Matrix Reasoning Test and the Progressive Achievement Test in Reading, also both for the second time. In Wave 5, the reading test included level 2 in addition to levels P and 1.[[1]](#footnote-1) As they get older, the older cohort is also being asked more questions about their own views, which in Wave 5 included questions about their own social and emotional wellbeing and who they would go to for help in various situations.

New topics about which primary carers were asked include confidence in their parenting skills, major problems with the house in which they lived, what they think about the study child’s friendship group, and satisfaction with various aspects of life.

There are also a number of new questions relevant within the Indigenous communities, including whether anyone in their family had been raised in an institution, the sorts of activities the study child does to learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and how many times a week the study child spends time with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander leaders or elders in the community.

**Wave 5 response rates and non-response bias**

Interviewing in Wave 5 was conducted between March and December 2012. Interviews were conducted by DSS’s Research Administration Officers (RAOs), who are all Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders. Ideally participants are interviewed at 12 month intervals. The average length of time between Wave 4 and Wave 5 interviews was 11 months with 58.7 per cent of the interviews conducted between 10 and 14 months.

**Table 58: Footprints in Time sample size and retention**

| **Sample size** | **Sample retention (per cent)** |
| --- | --- |
| Wave | P1 | P2/Dads | SC | Teacher or carer | Previous Wave  | Wave 1 sample |
| Wave 1 | 1,671 | 257 | 1,469 | 45 | – | 100.0 |
| Wave 2 | 1,523 | 268 | 1,472 | 163 | 85.9 | 85.9 |
| Wave 3 | 1,404 | – | 1,394 | 329 | 86.1 | 79.8 |
| Wave 4 | 1,283 | 213 | 1,269 | 442 | 81.9 | 72.8 |
| Wave 5 | 1,258 | 180 | 1,244 | 473 | 85.5 | 71.8 |
| Note: Sample retention is based on primary carer responses.  |

The original Wave 1 sample included 1,671 families. A further 88 new entrant families were added to the study in Wave 2. A total of 1,759 families have participated in one or more waves of *Footprints in Time*. Of this sample, 909 families (51.7 per cent) have participated in all five waves of the study; 387 families (22.0 per cent) have participated in four waves; 229 families (13.0 per cent) have participated in three; 125 families (7.1 per cent) have participated in two; and 109 (6.2 per cent) have participated in one wave.

If the characteristics of families who drop out of the study are different from the characteristics of families who continue to participate, attrition (dropout) may become a problem. Table 59 reports the percentages of children whose primary carers participated in all five waves of *Footprints in Time* and percentages of children whose primary carers participated in Wave 5, by various Wave 1 characteristics. There were 88 families who entered the study in Wave 2 and these are excluded from these figures.

**Table 59: Percentage of Wave 1 respondents re-interviewed by selected sample characteristics**

| **Wave 1 characteristics** | **Number in Wave 1** | **All waves** | **Wave 5** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level of relative isolation (LORI) |
| Urban | 432 | 67.1 | 81.5 |
| Low | 825 | 54.8 | 71.4 |
| Moderate | 259 | 42.5 | 61.8 |
| High/extreme | 155 | 36.8 | 63.9 |
| Index of Relative Indigenous Socioeconomic Outcomes (IRISEO) quintile |
| 1st quintile (most disadvantaged) | 194 | 41.8 | 58.8 |
| 2nd quintile | 283 | 45.2 | 66.1 |
| 3rd quintile | 704 | 56.7 | 71.9 |
| 4th quintile | 242 | 60.3 | 77.7 |
| 5th quintile (most advantaged) | 248 | 62.5 | 82.7 |
| Child’s sex |
| Male | 850 | 54.9 | 72.2 |
| Female | 821 | 53.8 | 71.4 |
| Child’s Indigenous status |
| Aboriginal | 1,464 | 55.5 | 71.8 |
| Torres Strait Islander | 110 | 48.2 | 77.3 |
| Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander | 97 | 44.3 | 66.0 |
| Child’s age group |
| Younger cohort | 954 | 55.7 | 72.9 |
| Older cohort | 717 | 52.7 | 70.4 |
| Primary carer’s sex |
| Male | 41 | 68.3 | 80.5 |
| Female | 1,630 | 54.0 | 71.6 |
| Primary carer’s Indigenous status |
| Indigenous | 1,425 | 51.5 | 69.7 |
| Non-Indigenous | 246 | 71.1 | 84.1 |
| Primary carer’s partnership status |
| Partner in household | 919 | 58.4 | 74.9 |
| No partner in household | 752 | 49.5 | 68.1 |
| Primary carer’s labour force status |
| Employed  | 495 | 58.8 | 79.0 |
| Not employed | 1,159 | 52.4 | 68.8 |
| Home ownership status |
| Home owner\* | 283 | 72.6 | 83.9 |
| Private rental | 325 | 62.7 | 81.6 |
| Public or community housing rental | 1,012 | 47.5 | 66.0 |
| Total | 1,671 | 54.4 | 71.8 |
| Number responding | 1,671 | 909 | 1,200 |
| \* Includes paying off the mortgage and owning outright.Note: LORI, IRISEO and primary carer characteristics are based on the characteristics of Wave 1 primary carers. The primary carer might have changed after Wave 1, but if the child and his or her family continued to participate in the study they were accounted for in the reinterviewed group. The numbers in the table therefore reflect the proportions of children whose primary carers were interviewed, not the proportions of primary carers who were reinterviewed. |

The highest reinterview rates occur for children who, in Wave 1, lived in urban areas and were in the younger cohort. Primary carers had higher reinterview rates if they were employed, non-Indigenous, partnered in Wave 1 and either owned their own home or were renting privately.

Nevertheless, there is a relatively high level of participation among all groups. While respondents may not participate every year of the study, they remain relatively well engaged from year to year. For example, while only 36.8 per cent of families living in areas of high or extreme remoteness participated every year, 63.9 per cent participated in Wave 5.

1. These correspond to year levels at school. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)