



## FOOTPRINTS IN TIME 2016



### COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

## Sydney

### Introduction

Welcome to the *Footprints in Time* 2016 community update, sharing the findings from Wave 8 of the Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children. Interviews in this eighth round were completed in 2015 with the help of over 1,200 families like yours across Australia. Of them, more than 110 families were from the Sydney area.

This fact sheet looks at the *Footprints in Time* families living in Sydney and compares them with families living in other parts of Australia where *Footprints in Time* is also conducted.

We thank all the children and their families who continue to participate in the *Footprints in Time* study. Giving us your time and telling us your stories helps us to understand what you and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children may need to have the best start in life and grow up strong.

### ***Footprints in Time* data in policy development**

Each year as you participate in the *Footprints in Time* study it becomes more and more valuable for researchers and policy makers. Next year marks an important milestone for this project - it will be the 10th time we have visited the *Footprints in Time* families.

The stories and knowledge you have shared with us is helping to build a powerful resource for governments, researchers and others. Earlier this year, the Prime Minister's report on *Closing the Gap* quoted research based on the *Footprints in Time* study.

## Reading

While reading is important for building knowledge and supporting success at school, it also gives kids' brain a good workout, helping to improve memory and logical thinking. More than anything, reading is fun; almost all children in our study said that they had at least one favourite book, and very few children said they did not like to read.

Books with pictures were especially popular with the younger children, and a few children said that comics were their favourite.



Even though electronic forms of reading are becoming more popular, in our study nine out of ten children (92%) said they read printed books, and fewer than one in ten children (8%) were using an electronic format (such as an e-reader or a computer).

## What is your favourite book?

The best-loved books and authors by the children in our study are:

- *The Treehouse Books* by Andy Griffiths and Terry Denton
- *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series by Jeff Kinney
- *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *Matilda*, *The BFG* and *The Twits*, by Roald Dahl
- *The Cat in the Hat*, *Green Eggs and Ham*, and other books by Dr Seuss

Other books that children like to read are *Harry Potter* books by J.K. Rowling, *Where's Wally* by Martin Handford, *Billie B Brown* books by Sally Rippin, *Captain Underpants* series by Dav Pilkey, *Goosebumps* books by R.L. Stine, *WeirDo* by Anh Do, books by Paul Jennings, and *Zac Power* series by H.I. Larry, as well as *Geronimo Stilton* and *Thea Stilton* books.

## What will the future look like?

We asked the older *Footprints in Time* children what they thought they would do and what their life would be like when they are older. Having life goals and aspirations helps children (as well as adults) achieve things that matter to them. Knowing about a child's life aspirations also helps parents, schools and communities lay foundations for good outcomes later in the child's life.

## Future leaders

*Footprints in Time* children could be the future leaders of Australia. About 15% of the children we asked said they would become community leaders when they grew up.

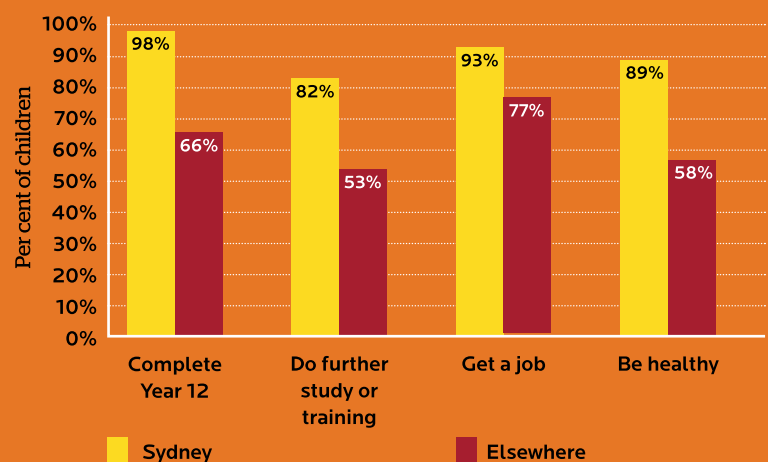
## Who do you want to be like?

We asked the older children (who were about 11 years old in 2015) if there was someone they wanted to be like when they grew up. About six out of ten children named someone who they wanted to be like and the rest did not know. A lot of boys (nearly four out of ten for all the boys we asked) said the person they wanted to be like was a sports person or an athlete— Greg Inglis and Johnathan Thurston were popular choices. Just over one in ten girls named an entertainer (an actor, singer or dancer) such as Jessica Mauboy. A similar number of girls named a sports person or an athlete, like Cathy Freeman. Many children said they wanted to grow up to be like their Mum or Dad or another family member (grandparent, aunty or uncle).

## Health, work and study

When thinking about their future, having a job was very high on the children's lists, with 93% of children in Sydney saying that this was something they would expect to achieve. Almost all children in Sydney also said that they would finish Year 12.

Figure 1: Children's health, work and study aspirations

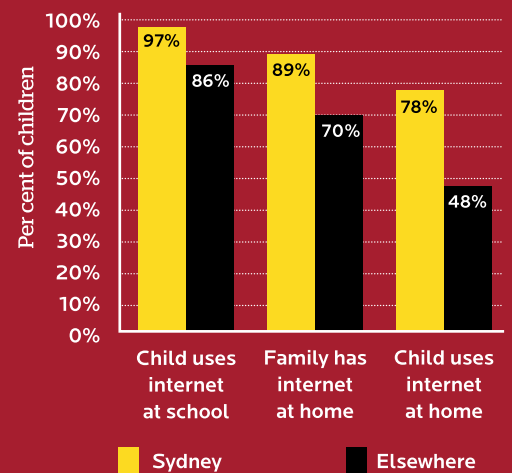


## Internet use

The Internet has become a very important part of everyday life. It allows students and teachers to access information and do research remotely, without having to go into a library. It helps businesses to communicate better and makes it possible for people to work from home. Distance has become less of a problem as people can talk to each other, learn, go shopping and much more, all from their home.

Most children in our study used the Internet at school, but this varied from place to place. In Sydney, almost all children (97%) used the Internet at school, which was higher than in the other locations of the study, where nearly nine out of ten children (86%) used the Internet at school. As for access at home, nine out of ten families (89%) in Sydney had Internet access at home (compared to 70% on average in other locations), and eight out of ten children (78%) in Sydney used the Internet at home, compared to five out of ten (48%) in other areas.

Figure 2: Internet access at school and at home



## Online safety

Surfing the Internet is fun, but it can be harmful and dangerous if not done with caution. Sometimes material on the Internet can be false or misleading, or hurtful things can be posted about others using social media and online forums. It can be easy to become a victim of an online crime with people pretending to be someone they aren't.

For *Footprints in Time* children who used the Internet at home, nearly nine out of ten parents (87%) had some rules about how their children used the Internet. These included setting limits on the amount of time their children spent online. Many parents also said that they talked with their children about some of the dangers of the Internet and explained reasons to not give out personal information online.

### How do parents teach their children to be safe online?



*I make sure she uses it in front of me or an adult.*

*I tell him that there are strangers on the internet acting as children and not to give his name, address and age to anyone.*

*We spoke to the kids about the Internet and what is expected and monitor their usage.*

*Educating him about what is appropriate or not, and to let us know immediately if something appears to be inappropriate or unsafe.*

*I have access to her profile and show her how to lock it so no one can access it.*

*Turn off her location.*

*We have the computer set up in the kitchen so we are able to see and watch everything the kids do on the computer/internet.*

*I don't. She teaches me!*

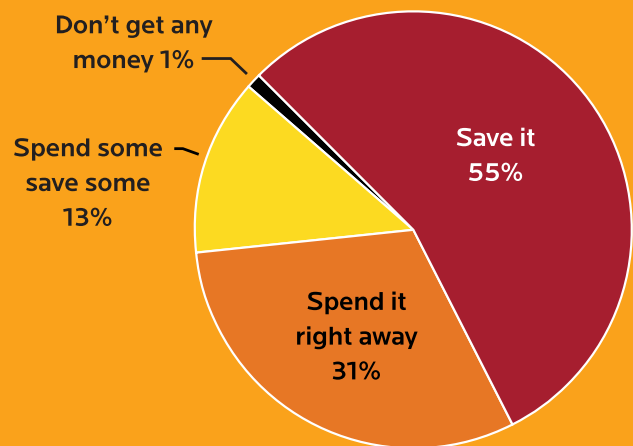


## Managing money

As children get older, one of the life skills they need to learn is managing money. The most common way the *Footprints in Time* children learn about money is shopping with parents or other family. Parents told us that about nine out of ten children (93%) did this across all locations of our study. Most children get pocket money for regular jobs or receive money as gifts.

So what do children do with the money they get? Interestingly, the older and the younger children in our study were using their money in very similar ways. The parents told us that more than half the children (55%) saved money to buy something later. About three in ten children (31%) usually spent their money straightaway, and just over one in ten (13%) spent some of the money and saved the rest. Only one in 100 children (1%) did not get any money of their own.

Figure 3: What children do with their money



## What do parents think will help their children grow up strong?

*Knowing that he is part of a big strong family and he will always have that to turn to.*

*Her right to be [one of] her own people and stand up for her legal rights as anyone in the community, and learn and pass on her culture to her children.*

*Learning how to survive off the land.*

*Knowing his cultural background and being taught language from both his mother and father, and knowing his Dreaming from both sides.*

*The history of Indigenous culture and the struggles they went to get where we are today.*

*Importance of family and extended family. Being connected to the land and respecting the land and others. Acceptance of all people.*

*Island dancing and songs which tell us stories.*

*The unity is something I have noticed a lot--everyone looks out for each other.*

## What helped parents grow up strong?

*My parents and family.*

*I helped Mum do chores around the house. I followed my grandmother to go fishing and she taught me bush medicine, and how to survive and become independent to raise my children.*

*My father taking me out bush on the weekends, because my dad used to work on the station just outside [town]. I learned how to work and became independent.*

*Culture, it teaches you patience, integrity, morals; then everything around you is irrelevant.*



In October 2016, the National Centre for Longitudinal Data (NCLD) held a national conference about studies like this one. The NCLD runs *Footprints in Time* and other longitudinal studies. More than 500 people from all over Australia and overseas participated in the conference, and a number of speakers at the conference used information from the *Footprints in Time* study to talk about topics such as children's and parents' social and emotional wellbeing, the use of childcare, how home nurse visits make a difference to children's outcomes, children's health, smoking, and barriers to good nutrition.

The NCLD regularly publishes findings from *Footprints in Time*. You can find these online at [www.dss.gov.au/nclld](http://www.dss.gov.au/nclld).

## Keeping in touch

If you are a *Footprints in Time* family, we need to keep in touch with you. If you have moved or are going to move, please let us know on the free-call number 1800 106 235 or contact your local RAO.