

## WELCOME MESSAGE

Hello – and welcome to the latest edition of GUI News, the **Growing Up in Ireland** newsletter for all our families who are participating in the study.

It's been another busy year for the GUI team since we spoke to you last. In December 2009 we were delighted to publish the first full report from the nine-year study in which you and your child participated. It is called **Growing Up in Ireland – The Lives of 9-Year-Olds** and you can download it from our website at [www.growingup.ie/childpublications](http://www.growingup.ie/childpublications). In our previous newsletter we gave you a flavour of some of the first findings from the study, and in this latest edition of GUI News we have included some additional interesting findings from the first report.

We have also just recently published the first report from the infant study. That part of the project involves 11,100 nine-month-old infants whose parents were interviewed in a similar way to you and your child. We have just started work on revisiting these families for a second round of interviews now that the children have turned three years of age.

We are also starting to plan for the return visit to you and your family, which will take place from about the end of July this year. It's hard to believe it will have been four years since you first took part in the study!

We have continued to receive phone calls and emails from those of you who have moved address. Keeping track of thousands of families is quite a challenge, so your efforts to help us keep in touch are really appreciated.



If you do move during the year, please let us know your updated details by free- phoning us on 1800 200 434, emailing [growingup@desri.ie](mailto:growingup@desri.ie) or completing and sending the pre-paid change of address card at the back of this newsletter.

Once again, from all the GUI team, we would like to thank you sincerely for your ongoing commitment to the study and the generosity of your time. **Growing Up in Ireland** would not be possible without you.



*James Williams*

Prof. James Williams  
Principal Investigator & Co-Director  
**Growing Up in Ireland**



*Sheila Greene*

Prof. Sheila Greene  
Co-Director  
**Growing Up in Ireland**

## LAUNCH OF GROWING UP IN IRELAND – THE LIVES OF 9-YEAR-OLDS

**Growing Up in Ireland – The Lives of 9-Year-Olds** is the first full report from GUI on the Child Cohort, which is made up of 8,500 nine-year-olds and their families – including you and your family. The report looks at how children are doing across a number of important areas in their lives such as their physical and mental health, education and home life. Overall, the report shows that children in Ireland are doing well in these areas. However, it does show some concerns in areas such as weight/obesity and bullying.

The report was published in December 2009, and launched by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Mr. Barry T.D. It was launched at **Growing Up in Ireland's** first annual research conference.

This is the first in a series of reports that will be produced from the study. If you would like to see a copy of the full report or a summary, you can download it from our website:

[www.growingup.ie/childpublications](http://www.growingup.ie/childpublications)



## GUI WAVE 2 – FOLLOWING UP WITH YOU AND YOUR CHILD

Over three years have now passed since you and your family kindly agreed to be part of the **Growing Up in Ireland** study. As you know, **Growing Up in Ireland** is a unique study following the progress of the same group of children over time to help improve our understanding of all aspects of children and their development.

When your child turns 13 years old we plan on revisiting you and your family for a follow-up interview to see how life has changed and how your child has grown. This second round of interviews will begin in the summer of this year and continue until the end of December.

Taking part in the follow-up interview will be very similar to your first experience.

It will involve carrying out an interview with you and your child, including a short test in English and Maths in much the same way as the first interview when your child was nine-years-old. As before, all the information we collect is strictly confidential and can only be used for research purposes.

When the time comes for your follow-up visit later this year we will send you a letter in advance with detailed information on what taking part will involve. We are very much looking forward to re-connecting with all the **Growing Up in Ireland** families and study children.



## YOUNG PEOPLE'S REPORT

Along with this issue of GUI News we enclose a young person's version of our first report on nine-year-olds. This booklet aims to present the study results in an interesting and relevant way to young people generally, and most importantly, the children who have taken part in the study. Perhaps you would like to give it to your child who helped us in the study to let them see the sort of information which was recorded.

This publication was put together with the help of our Children's Advisory Forum (known as the CAF). The CAF is a committee of 84 children from 12 schools across Ireland which was set up to make sure the voices of children are heard within the study. The role of the CAF is to make sure we include the views and opinions of children when we are making decisions.

To date the CAF has done some very significant work for the study and this young people's report was their latest project. In April 2010 we brought ten members of the CAF together for a workshop to get their opinions on what topics for the main report they felt would be of interest to people of their age. We also worked with them on design ideas, how the young people's report should look and how long it should be. Based on their thoughts and ideas we produced the young people's report which is included with this newsletter. We hope your child will enjoy reading all about the results from the study which is based on their lives.

# THE INFANT STUDY

In our last newsletter we told you all about the infant study which *Growing Up in Ireland* is carrying out with 11,100 nine-month-old babies and their families. We visited the homes of these families for interview between September 2008 and April 2009.

The first report from that part of the study was launched by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Mr Barry Andrews T.D., at the end of November 2010. If you would like to see a copy

of this report or its summary you can download it from [www.growingup.ie/infantpublications](http://www.growingup.ie/infantpublications)

The children in that part of the study are now turning three years old and throughout the coming months we will be returning to them and their families for a follow-up visit. Just like our return visit to your family, we are very much looking forward to seeing how the infants have grown and changed since our first interview.

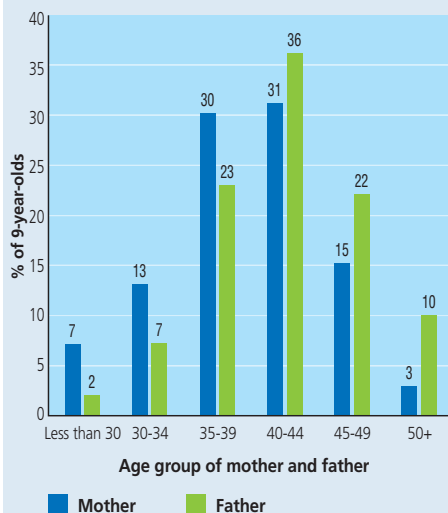


**In our last newsletter we gave you a flavour of some of the first results from the study. Here are some more we hope you will find interesting.**

## Family

- The average age of mothers of nine-year-olds in the study was just over 39 years. 30% of mothers in the study were aged 35 to 39 with just over 31% aged 40 to 44 years.
- On average, fathers were slightly older than mothers, at 42 years. Most fathers were aged 40 to 44 years (36%), 22% were aged 45 to 49 years and 10% were aged 50 or over. Only 2% of fathers of nine-year-olds were aged less than 30 years (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Proportion of mothers and fathers in different age groups**

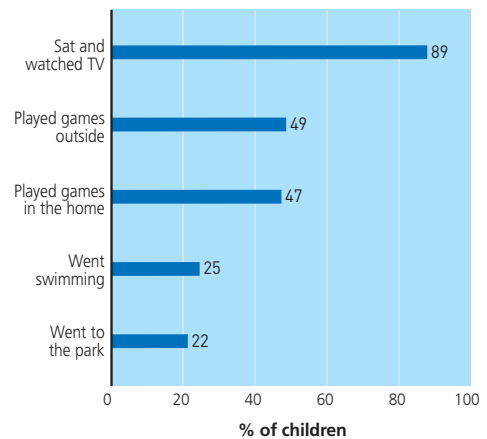


- Over 60% of nine-year-olds had one or two siblings living at home with them. 10% of nine-year-olds had no siblings in the household.
- Contact with extended family was quite high. Just over two-thirds (66%) of the children in the study whose grandparents were alive visited them 'quite a lot'. Around half saw their aunt/uncles (52%) and cousins (49%) 'quite a lot'.

## Family Activities

- Around three-quarters of parents (72%) said they sat down to eat a meal with their nine-year-old every day and 77% said they talked about things together every day.
- When asked about the things they did together with their parents, the activity most frequently mentioned by nine-year-olds was 'watching TV together'. This was followed by 'playing games outside' (49%) and 'playing games in the home' (47%) (Figure 2).

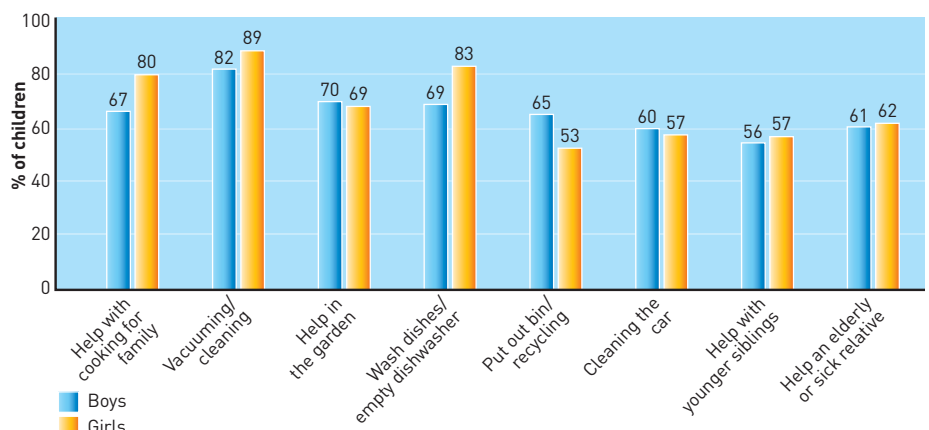
**Figure 2: Percentage of children who had undertaken specific activities with their parents in the past week**



## Helping out at Home

- When we asked the children about helping out around the house 85% said they carried out vacuuming/cleaning 'often' or 'occasionally'.
- Over a quarter (26%) of children 'often' helped out with a sick or elderly relative, while a third (33%) 'often' helped out with younger brothers or sisters.
- Figure 3 shows the percentage of boys and girls who said they did each task – either 'often' or 'occasionally'. It shows that more girls than boys said they helped out at home in most activities. The biggest difference is in chores such as 'washing dishes/emptying the dishwasher' (83% of girls and 69% of boys). The only task carried out notably less by girls than boys was 'putting out the bins/recycling' (53% of girls and 65% of boys)

**Figure 3: Percentage of boys and girls who performed each household task either 'often' or 'occasionally'**



### Neighbourhood and Community

- When we asked you about problems in your local area the issue of rubbish and litter lying around seemed to be the biggest - 34% of mothers said this was very common or fairly common.
- When we asked the children about their views on where they lived 22% said they felt there was too much traffic near where they lived, 22% felt that the streets were dirty and 22% thought there was a lot of graffiti.
- 91% of mothers agreed it was safe for their children to play outside where they lived during the day. This dropped to 68% when asked if they felt it was safe to walk alone after dark and 58% when asked about the availability of safe parks, playgrounds and play spaces in the local area.
- By comparison, when we asked the children, 95% said they felt safe where they lived and 77% said that they felt there were places for children to play safely near their homes.



- Over one-third of mothers said that their child met with their friends outside of school two or three days a week, and over one-quarter said their child spent time with friends almost every day of the week.
- When we asked the children a number of questions about bullying, 40% of nine-year-olds said they had been bullied or 'picked on' by another child or adult in the last year. Rates were similar for both boys and girls.
- The most common type of bullying reported by children was 'verbal bullying' (name calling or 'slagging') followed by 'exclusion' (being left out of games, chats etc) and 'physical bullying'.

### Friends and Bullying

- When we asked you about your child's friends a total of 41% of children were reported to have two or three close friends, while 51% of children had at least four close friends.

## Your feedback is important to us...

We are always interested to hear your views, experiences and feedback on the **Growing Up** study.

If you have something you would like to tell us, please contact our Communications Officer, Jillian Heffernan, at [jheffern@tcd.ie](mailto:jheffern@tcd.ie) or write to: The Children's Research Centre, Trinity College, Dublin 2.

If you would prefer to receive this newsletter by email, please contact Jillian at [jheffern@tcd.ie](mailto:jheffern@tcd.ie)

## PLEASE KEEP IN TOUCH

The GUI study depends on your support and we hope you will continue to be part of this unique and important project. If this newsletter has been forwarded to you at an address that is different from the one we have on record or if you are moving, please give us your new details by filling in the attached change-of-address form and return it to us in the pre-paid envelope provided.

Alternatively you can contact us through any of the following ways:

Freephone us at 1800 200 434

Contact our Communications Officer, Jillian Heffernan, at 01 8963378

Email us at: [growingup@esri.ie](mailto:growingup@esri.ie)

Write to: **Growing Up in Ireland**, Economic and Social Research Institute, Whitaker Square, Sir John Rogerson's Quay, Dublin 2

## IF YOU HAVE CHANGED ADDRESS PLEASE FILL IN YOUR DETAILS

Your First Name	_____	Tel. (home)	_____
Family Name	_____	Tel. (work)	_____
Participant Child's Full Name	_____	Tel. (mobile)	_____
Date of Birth	_____	Email	_____
Old Residential Address	_____	Date this card	_____
	_____	was completed	_____
New Residential Address	_____		
	_____		

