



Findings from the first 6 years

Growing Up in Scotland (GUS) is the longitudinal research study following the lives of thousands of children from birth through to the teenage years and beyond. Launched in 2005, families from all parts of Scotland are taking part in GUS which collects information on a wide range of topics including family circumstances and change, child health and development, use of services and support, experiences of school and pre-school, diet and physical activity, parenting styles and responsibilities. A further 6,000 babies born during 2010/11 have been recruited to take part in GUS. Information from these families will tell us whether the experiences of children growing up in Scotland are changing. GUS is providing important new evidence to help inform the development of policies and services for children and their families. Findings from GUS support the case for increased investment in early years, early intervention and prevention.

All research findings from the study are available through the study website:
www.growingupinscotland.org.uk

New findings from the first 6 years of the study were published in May 2012:

The involvement of grandparents in children's lives

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/05/4455>

Early experiences of primary school

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/05/7940>

Overweight, obesity and activity

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/05/5385>

Full reports and summaries are available.

Please turn over to read some of the key findings from these reports.

If you would like to sign up to receive regular updates and about new developments and findings from GUS, please visit our website www.growingupinscotland.org.uk

You can also follow us on Twitter: [@growingupinscot](https://twitter.com/growingupinscot)



ScotCen
Social Research



GUS is funded by the Scottish Government and is carried out by ScotCen Social Research in collaboration with the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships at the University of Edinburgh and the MRC Social and Public Health Sciences Unit in Glasgow.

Involvement of grandparents in children's lives

- At age 6, the number of children's grandparents (as identified by the child's main carer) ranged from 0 to 10. Almost all (99%) children have at least one living grandparent and 80% have 3 or more alive. Grandparents varied in age from 30 to 96 years old.
- A significant minority of children age 6 (13%) do not have a grandparent living locally (within 30 minutes' drive). Children from higher income families were more likely than those from lower income households to have no local grandparents (22% compared with 8%).
- Maternal grandparents tend to be closer and have more contact with grandchildren than paternal grandparents.
- The proportion of grandparents who have very frequent 'hands-on' interaction is generally higher among lower income families and for children whose mothers were under 20 at their birth.
- Grandparents in Scotland are a key source of informal childcare. When children started school, reliance on grandparents increased to 67% of among parents who used any childcare. However, since the number of parents making no use of childcare also increased, the proportion of all children receiving regular grandparent care remained stable at almost 2 in 5.

Early experiences of primary school

- Most children started school the year they were eligible to but 13% started the year after (deferred entry). Boys were more likely than girls to have been deferred (15% compared to 9%). The most common reasons for deferral were that parents felt their child was not ready or not old enough to start school.
- Two-thirds of parents chose to send their child to the local school. Families living in more deprived areas were more likely to request a school outwith their local school catchment area (placing request).
- Most parents said that their child had adjusted well to school. However, about one third of children had complained about school or were sometimes reluctant to go.
- 71% of parents are very satisfied with their child's school while 26% are fairly satisfied. The factors driving parents' satisfaction are: receiving information about what the children are learning and how to help them learn, the usefulness of parents' evenings, the approachability of teachers and parents' confidence in being able to help their child with homework.
- 8% of children in Primary 1 have an Additional Support Need (ASN.)
- One fifth of parents had volunteered to help at school – in the classroom, office or library.

Overweight, obesity and activity

- At age 6, 22% of children in Scotland are overweight or obese. 9% are obese.
- 15% of children exercised for less than the recommended level of 60 minutes daily.
- 31% of children had 3 or more hours of 'screen time' (in front of a TV, computer or games console) on a typical weekday.
- The factors associated with a greater likelihood of a child being overweight were: the mother being overweight or obese, frequent snacking on sweets or crisps at toddler age, skipping breakfast, not eating the main meal in a dining area of the home and low parental supervision generally.
- The factors associated with low physical activity were: mother's low physical activity, a less warm mother-child relationship, poor knowledge of the physical activity recommendations for children and no nearby swimming pool.
- The factors associated with high screen time were: mother's high screen time, a TV in the child's bedroom, fewer mother and child shared activities, greater social deprivation and poor quality local green spaces.
- Only 14% of mothers with an overweight or obese child recognised their child as overweight.

For more information please visit www.growingupinScotland.org.uk or contact Lesley Kelly, GUS Dissemination Officer on 0131 651 5004 or lesley.kelly@ed.ac.uk