

growing up in Scotland



UPDATE 2021

Thanks for continuing to make this important study a success! You are helping policy makers make decisions about things that affect your life and the lives of others in Scotland



The importance of GUS for the Scottish Government

The importance of GUS for the Scottish Government, not to mention local authorities, health boards and all the other users of the data, is as great as it has ever been. Not only has the study helped to inform understanding and policies that directly affect young people and their families, but it has also allowed this information to be captured as Scotland navigates and emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the young people we speak to are getting older, the information you provide through GUS remains as important as ever. GUS is not just a study of childhood, it helps policy and decision makers to understand what matters to young people as children but also as they navigate the changes in life that early adulthood can bring.

Thank you once again for helping us to ensure the success of the survey – we couldn't do it without you. Your input makes this study possible. Thanks also for your patience with all the changes we have needed to make during the pandemic.



A new look

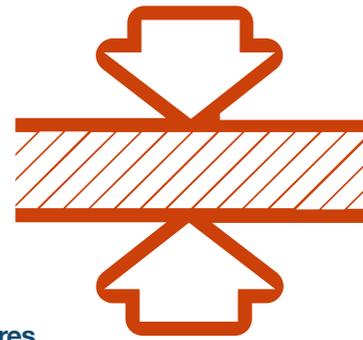
As we prepare to start our 11th round of interviews, it was time to breathe some new life in the GUS study branding. As well as a new logo, we'll be giving the website a refresh and making it easier to navigate. Keep an eye out for the changes at growingupinScotland.org.uk

growing up in Scotland

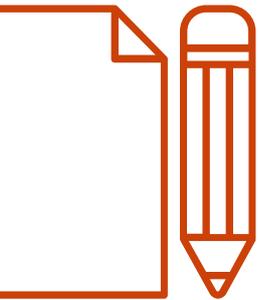


What young people told us about life aged 14...

GUS listens to how young people feel about topics such as school and their learning experiences



Feelings about school/learning



43%

of young people said they 'always' or 'often' looked forward to going to school

61%

'always' or 'often' enjoyed learning

Schoolwork pressures

54%

of young people felt at least 'a little' pressured by the schoolwork they had to do

30%

felt pressure due to schoolwork 'a lot' or 'quite a lot'



What comes next after school



63%

of young people wanted to go to university or college after they leave school

9%

wanted to begin an apprenticeship, or some other vocational training

Social media engagement



63%

of young people spent at least one hour per day watching videos, television programmes or films on an average school day

69%

spent at least one hour on social media or messaging people they know

Overall, life satisfaction was high among young people



75%

said they 'always' or 'often' felt they had what they wanted in life

9%

'always' or 'often' wished their life was different

56%

of young people said they had talked to a friend about problems or things they were worried about

53%

said they had talked to their parents

GUS helps us learn more about what influences language development...

A report published in 2019 used GUS data to investigate the improvement of language ability during the primary school years and factors which may help or hinder language development.

The report found that a gap in language ability between children from more and less advantaged backgrounds was apparent from the start of primary school and continued on to the time when children were close to finishing. Furthermore, this gap widened as children progressed through primary school.

However, economic disadvantage is not the only factor influencing language ability, meaning that having a more advantaged background does not guarantee more advanced language ability.

For example, the findings showed a positive relationship between frequent home reading in early childhood and better language development.



Having a more advantaged background does not guarantee more advanced language ability

...and about changes to children's heights and weights

Through GUS, data has been collected which provides a unique opportunity to further understand factors that influence levels of overweight and obesity among children in Scotland and how this changes as they get older.

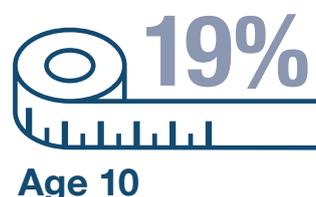
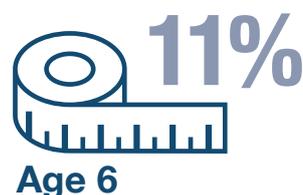
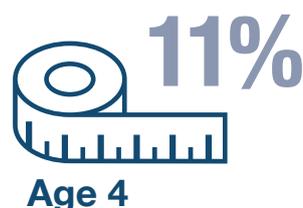
A report published in 2018 found that children were more likely to be overweight or obese at age 10 than they were at younger ages. Although children from more disadvantaged backgrounds were more likely to be overweight or

obese at age 10, lots of other factors were linked to overweight/obesity too. These included higher levels of screen time, irregular breakfast times, snacking, illness and reduced levels of physical activity. Knowing this will help to inform policy development and initiatives in this area.

To view a full list of our publications and to read about any of the GUS findings in more detail, visit the study website: growingupinScotland.org.uk/publications

children were more likely to be overweight or obese at age 10 than they were at younger ages

Obesity rate



What our young people tell us is making a difference

The GUS teams at ScotCen and Scottish Government, and many other researchers using the data, have been busy producing reports and sharing findings from the study with a wide range of stakeholders through seminars and conferences. In October 2019, we held the 10th Growing Up in Scotland conference at the Playfair Library in the University of Edinburgh. The conference was attended by over 150 delegates including Maree Todd MSP, the then Minister for Children and Young People.



Researchers at the MRC/CSO Social and Public Health Sciences Unit have produced lots of reports using physical activity and GPS data collected when our cohort members were aged 10. This information has been very useful in helping researchers and policy makers understand issues related to young people's physical activity and how they experience their local areas

What's next for GUS?

We are currently preparing for the next round of interviews – this will be the 11th round of interviews for those who joined the study in 2005/06, and the 3rd round for those who joined in 2017/18. The first phase of interviews will take place between autumn/winter 2021 and spring 2022, with the second covering the same period in 2022/23. The interviews will take place when our young people will be preparing to finish or will have left school, allowing the study to explore, among other things, their aspirations about and experiences of further education, apprenticeships and the world of work.

Our interviewers are looking forward to catching up with the families who take part very soon! The safety of our families is of the utmost importance to us and the study will continue to be undertaken within Scottish Government COVID guidelines. Your interviewer will advise you as to whether they are able to visit your home or if the survey will need to be conducted another way.

As before, we will be in touch to let you know that your interview is coming up - watch out for your letter and email.

Please keep in touch

Your contribution to the study is really important and we value your commitment. 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 home, please let us know your new details.

You can do this by calling us on Freephone **0800 652 2704**, by emailing **gus@scotcen.org.uk** or by completing the change of address form on our website: **growingupinScotland.org.uk/contact-us/change-your-details-gus-families**

