

**ncds**

National Child  
Development Study

# Life in your early 60s

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SURVEY GUIDE

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This booklet provides you with information about the survey and what it will involve. There are a number of different activities we would like you to take part in: an interview; some health measurements to be taken by a healthcare professional; an online questionnaire about diet and nutrition and a paper questionnaire, about your life now. You will also be asked to complete a second paper questionnaire about your childhood.

## WHY IS NCDS SO IMPORTANT?

For over 60 years, as you've journeyed through life, from childhood to middle age, we've never been too far away. Thanks to you, this amazing study that you are part of has become one of the longest running of its kind, anywhere in the world. The wealth of rich information we've collected about your individual lives over the years is a priceless resource for research, and it will become even more valuable over time. For 60 years, researchers have used data from the NCDS to make discoveries that are relevant to us all, and from which society will continue to benefit for generations to come.

Here are just a few examples of findings from recent research published using NCDS data.

## Social mobility

In 2018 an important new book on social mobility was published, which used data from NCDS. The book, *Social Mobility and its Enemies*, explains how social mobility, or the extent to which our place on the social or economic ladder of life is based on our family origins, is falling in Britain. Apart from the USA, Britain has the lowest level of social mobility in the Western world. The authors compared the information that NCDS collected about your parents' jobs and earnings when you were young and information about you as adults with similar information collected from people born in 1970. They found that people born in 1970 are less likely than those from your generation to climb the social or economic ladder. The book explores the reasons for this, including the role of education and it proposes some possible solutions.

## **Childhood obesity, then and now**

Recent research, using data from NCDS and three other British cohort studies, has shown how the relationship between social class and childhood and teenage weight has changed significantly in recent times. When you were young, there was very little association between social class and being overweight. This was also the case for people born in 1946 and in 1970. But amongst people born in 2001, those from less advantaged families were more likely to be overweight as children and teenagers than those from wealthier families. This growing difference in health between rich and poor could well have a lasting impact on today's less advantaged children.

## **Childhood adversity and mid-life wear-and-tear**

At age 44 you were visited by a nurse who carried out a range of health measurements which can be combined to create a measure of overall wear-and-tear on the body. This is known as 'allostatic load'. A recent research project looked at the link between stressful or traumatic childhood events and wear-and-tear at age 44. For some there appeared to be no link but on average, people who had experienced these stressful or traumatic events as children showed greater wear-and-tear in adulthood.

## **Cognitive ability is linked to adult wages**

Research using NCDS data found that those of you who performed best in the cognitive assessments we set you at age 11 had higher earnings at age 55. The researchers also examined the link between personality and adult earnings and found that those who were more open and those who were more conscientious had better paid jobs on average.

## **Working in your 50s and retirement planning**

Longer life expectancies mean that many people will have to work for longer than in previous generations, and the majority of you are expecting to keep on working in your 60s. A report for Joseph Rowntree Foundation using NCDS showed that just over a third of men and a quarter of women think that they will still be working after your State Pension age of 66. Those of you in low earning jobs at 55 were most likely to expect to be working in your 60s and beyond the state pension age. On the other hand, quite a few of you stopped working in your early 50s, often because of poor health.

Find out more about NCDS research at **[ncds.info](https://www.ncds.info)**

## WHAT DOES THE SURVEY INVOLVE?

You will be contacted by an interviewer who will invite you to take part. Your participation is, of course, entirely voluntary.

The interviewer will arrange a convenient time to conduct the interview.

## THE INTERVIEW

The interview will collect information about lots of different topics, including your health, life with your family and friends, caring for elderly parents and grandchildren, and preparing for retirement. This will take around 90 minutes. During the interview the interviewer will also ask you to do a few tasks which will examine how you think.

As always, you can skip any question you do not wish to answer. For some questions, which might be more private, you will fill in the answers by yourself.

## 'YOUR LIFE NOW' PAPER QUESTIONNAIRE

Once you have arranged an appointment the interviewer will post you a paper 'Your Life Now' questionnaire. If possible, we would like you to complete it before your interview. The paper questionnaire will include questions about wellbeing, physical activity and leisure activities, and will take about 30 minutes to complete.





## CHILDHOOD QUESTIONNAIRE

You will also be asked to complete a paper questionnaire asking you about your childhood. This questionnaire will include questions on your health, your education, and family life as a child. It should take around 30 minutes to complete. The interviewer will provide you with more information about this when they contact you.

## THE HEALTH VISIT

We would like to follow up your interview with a visit from a healthcare professional. If you agree, a healthcare professional will visit you and ask to take a variety of measurements which will allow researchers to examine the causes and consequences of good and poor health in detail.

The health measurements include blood pressure, weight and grip strength measurements and the collection of a small blood sample (which will only be done with your written consent). You can skip any of the measurements you do not wish to do.

**The interviewer will provide you with a leaflet which tells you more about the health visit and will ask whether you are happy to be contacted by a healthcare professional.**







## ADDING OTHER INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

We would like to add some additional information about you from health records held by the National Health Service (NHS) and economic records held by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

The information in these records is more detailed than the information we collect from you in the survey.

- The information in **health records** will help researchers find out what causes particular illnesses and conditions such as cancer and how they could be prevented.
- Your **economic records** include information about your earnings and benefits. This information will help researchers investigate how people's finances affect different aspects of life, in much more detail.

We will only obtain this information with your permission. The interviewer will provide you with more details about this during the interview.

Some of you may have already given permissions for us to collect this information about you. If you have already given permission we will not ask again.

We will also ask your partner (if you have one) for permission to add information from their records. This is because the circumstances of those you live with are so vitally important to your own experiences, so it will make our research more accurate.

You can change your permissions for us to add information from these records at any time without giving us a reason. Please contact us if you wish to do this (see contact details at the end of this booklet).



## WHO IS CARRYING OUT THE STUDY?

The study is run by the Centre for Longitudinal Studies (CLS), a research centre in the UCL Institute of Education, which is part of University College London. This latest survey is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, the Medical Research Council, the Department for Work and Pensions and the U.S. National Institutes of Health. Your interview will be carried out by a trained interviewer from either NatCen or Kantar Public, which are independent research organisations. Then, with your consent, you will be visited by a registered healthcare professional from NatCen.

## ETHICAL APPROVAL

The National Child Development Study has been approved by an independent group of people called a Research Ethics Committee, to protect your safety, rights, wellbeing and dignity.



## **CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA SECURITY**

The information you provide will be treated in strict confidence in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations and used for research purposes only. This means that the data we collect from you is always kept separately from information which could identify you (such as your name and address). When reports based on the data are published, care is taken to ensure that no information which could identify an individual is included.

The data controller for this project is University College London (UCL). The UCL Data Protection Office provides oversight of UCL activities involving the processing of personal data, and can be contacted at: [data-protection@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:data-protection@ucl.ac.uk).

The legal basis used to process your personal data is performance of a task in the public interest.

If you are concerned about how your personal data is being processed, please contact the UCL Data Protection Office in the first instance using the email address above. If you remain unsatisfied, you may wish to contact the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Contact details, and details of data subject rights, are available on the ICO website at: <https://ico.org.uk/>

Your data will be stored securely and retained until no longer required by the Centre for Longitudinal Studies.

Participation in this research is not compulsory and you have the right to withdraw at any stage.

More information about privacy and confidentiality is available on the NCDS website: <https://ncds.info/faqs/#privacy-and-data-protection>

## WHO TO CONTACT IF YOU NEED MORE INFORMATION

We hope this booklet answers any questions you may have. Your interviewer will also be able to answer any further questions you might have when they contact you to make your appointment, but if you need more information or need to make a complaint please contact NatCen:

✉ [ncds@natcen.ac.uk](mailto:ncds@natcen.ac.uk)

☎ 0800 652 4574

For information about the National Child Development Study, you can visit:

🌐 [ncds.info](http://ncds.info)

or contact the NCDS team:

✉ [ncds@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:ncds@ucl.ac.uk)

☎ 0800 035 5761

✎ National Child Development Study,  
Centre for Longitudinal Studies, UCL Social Research Institute,  
20 Bedford Way,  
London, WC1H 0AL.

## WHO TO CONTACT FOR EMOTIONAL SUPPORT AND PRACTICAL ADVICE

If you would like any emotional support or advice on any of the topics included in the survey then the following organisations may be able to help:

For emotional support:  
Supportline: 01708 765 200

For practical advice: Citizen's Advice Bureau: 03444 111 444



# Thank you again

FOR CONTINUING TO CONTRIBUTE  
TO THIS IMPORTANT STUDY. WE  
HOPE YOU FIND THE EXPERIENCE  
ENJOYABLE AND INTERESTING.



**NatCen**  
Social Research

**KANTAR**  
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