

Data factsheet:

housing and

communities

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UNIVERSITY OF
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IDEAS TO LIFE

Introduction to Growing Up in New Zealand

Growing Up in New Zealand is a contemporary longitudinal study of New Zealand children and their families, launched on 1 February 2008. The overarching objective of the study is to generate policy-relevant evidence to optimise children's developmental trajectories in multiple areas, including health, education and social and cognitive functioning.¹ *Growing Up in New Zealand* has enrolled approximately 18,000 participants (6,822 mothers, 4,401 partners and 6,853 children). Data was first collected during the mothers' last trimester of pregnancy, and subsequent major data collection waves occurred at 9 months, 2 years, 4.5 years, 8 years and 12 years.

Policy priority: housing and communities

- Housing is a key determinant of child health. Poor housing quality and household overcrowding are risk factors for various infectious diseases and respiratory diseases.²⁻³ Tenure security can reduce residential mobility and contribute to a child's sense of stability and community.⁴ Children's neighbourhood environment can determine their access to a range of other resources.⁵
- Access to affordable, safe and stable housing is a wellbeing objective for the Budget 2023⁶ and an indicator of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy.⁷ Warm and dry housing, thriving communities and secure tenure are also key focus areas of the Government Policy Statement on Housing and Urban Development.⁸
- *Growing Up in New Zealand* can provide robust contemporary evidence on a variety of topics related to children's housing and community context. The study measures a range of housing and community indicators, as well as factors that contribute to a child's housing context.

¹ Morton SMB, Ramke J, Kinloch J, Grant CC, Atatoa Carr P, Leeson H et al. Growing Up in New Zealand cohort alignment with all New Zealand births. *Aust N Z J Public Health*. 2015 Feb;39(1):82-87.

² Mendell MJ, Mirer AG, Cheung K, Tong M, Douwes J. Respiratory and allergic health effects of dampness, mold, dampness-related agents: a review of the epidemiologic evidence. *Environ Health Perspect*. 2011;119:748-756.

³ Baker MG, McDonald A, Zhang J, Howden-Chapman P. Infectious diseases and attributable to household crowding in New Zealand: a systematic review and burden of disease estimate. Wellington: He Kainga Ora/Housing and Health Research Programme, University of Otago; 2013. 1-80.

⁴ Scanlon E, Devine K. Residential mobility and youth well-being: research, policy, and practice issues. *The J Sociol Soc Welf*. 2001;28:119-138.

⁵ Pearce J, Witten K, Bartie, P. Neighbourhoods and health: a GIS approach to community resource accessibility. *J Epidemiol Community Health*. 2006;60:389-395.

⁶ Budget 2023: Budget Policy Statement. Wellington: Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa New Zealand Government; 2022. 1-28.

⁷ Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy. Wellington: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet; 2019. 1-89.

⁸ Government Policy Statement on Housing and Urban Development. Wellington: Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa New Zealand Government; 2021. 1-54.

How can Growing Up in New Zealand contribute to the Government's policy priorities?

Policy area	Measured construct	Data collection wave						Example measures
		AN	9M	2Y	4.5Y	8Y	12Y	
Housing quality	Housing condition							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether the house is overcrowded What forms of heating they use Issues with keeping house warm or cool Issues with dampness and mould Whether their house is insulated Sources and treatment of drinking water
	Household crowding							
	Heating/keeping house warm							
	Cooling/keeping house cool							
	Dampness and mould							
	Insulation							
	Drinking water quality ⁹							
Affordable and secure housing	Housing tenure							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether they live in a family-owned home, private rental or public housing How often they have moved house Experiences of homelessness
	Housing costs							
	Residential mobility							
	Severe housing deprivation							
Thriving communities	Sense of neighbourhood belonging							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether they like living where they live Whether it is safe to walk around the neighbourhood at night Whether they feel like they belong in their communities Whether their main social networks are local or non-local How long they intend to stay in their neighbourhood
	Neighbourhood engagement							
	Neighbourhood characteristics							
	Use of local services							
	Neighbourhood preferences							
	Intent to stay in neighbourhood							
	Independence of child							

⁹ Drinking water quality questions were asked at the 23-month data collection wave

Constructs related to housing and communities

Growing Up in New Zealand also collects data on factors related to housing and communities.

Domain	Constructs related to housing and communities
Education	Choice and utilisation of educational services, transitions between educational settings
Family and whānau	Child relationships with other caregivers, extended family relationships, intergenerational relationships
Health and wellbeing	Activity and exercise, availability and access to health services, infectious diseases, respiratory disorders, skin infections in household, stress in early childhood
Psychological and cognitive development	Anxiety, depression, loneliness, perceived stress, life satisfaction, resilience, social support and coping
Societal context	Economic capital, transport mode, household socioeconomic status, finance, material wellbeing, parental education, work

Using Growing Up in New Zealand data

1. *Growing Up in New Zealand* has four main objectives:

- To map the developmental trajectories for a cohort of New Zealand children as a group and within Māori, Pacific and Asian subgroups in particular, across multiple levels of influence (political, social, cultural, intergenerational, familial and individual) for outcomes in key social, developmental and health domains across the lifecourse.
- To provide a description of cross-sectional outcomes (in several domains) at key points in the lifecourse of the developing child to enable subgroup-specific analyses and comparisons with international populations.
- To focus on factors and trajectories, across multiple levels of influence, that confer resilience and optimise development, rather than focusing solely on risk factors for poor outcomes.
- To identify critical or sensitive periods in development, and levels of influence, that will allow the development of policy directed at optimising the development of every child born in New Zealand.

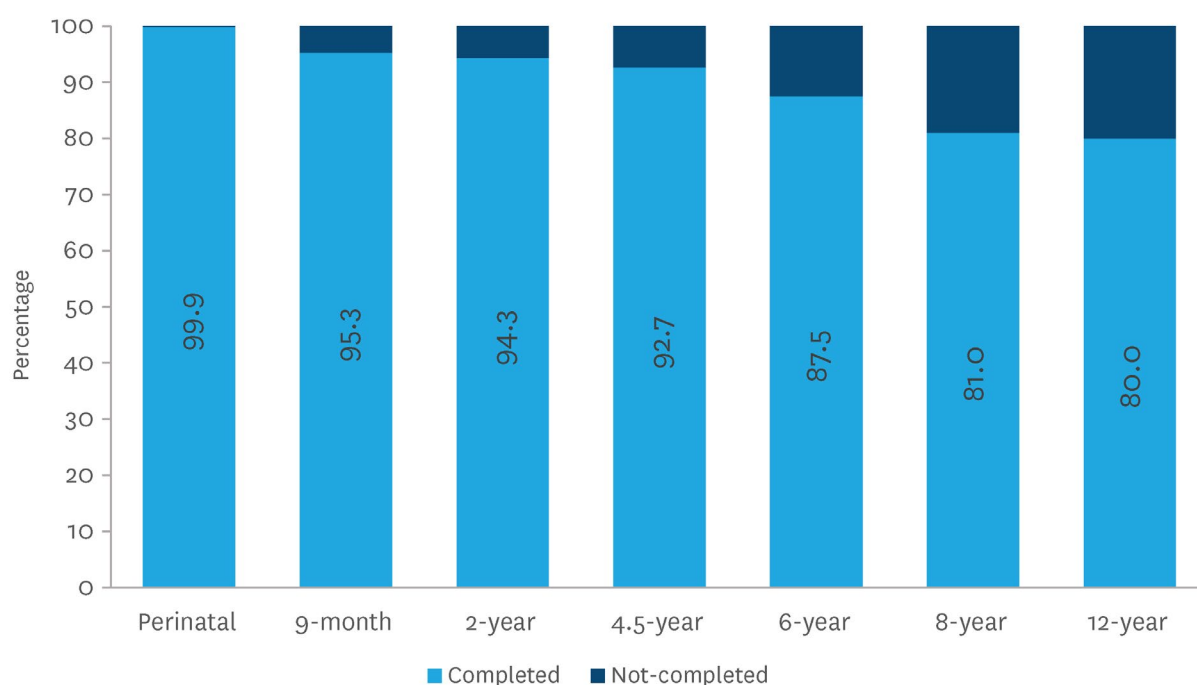


Figure 1. Longitudinal completion rate over time as a proportion of eligible cohort for each data collection wave

2. **Growing Up in New Zealand has several unique features that make it an important resource for policy development.**

- It is the first population-based longitudinal study in New Zealand to begin data collection from before birth, which accounts for the importance of the antenatal period for children's developmental pathways.
- The cohort is unique in terms of its size and diversity to provide evidence across multiple domains of influence on development for New Zealand children. It includes significant numbers of Māori, Pacific and Asian children, which makes analyses within these ethnic groups possible.
- Information is gathered from mothers and their partners from the earliest time point so that the evolving nature of the New Zealand family can be tracked alongside that of our growing children.
- The study has ongoing engagement with the policy sector to ensure the collected data links to areas of cross-sectoral policy focus for children and families.
- Data collected from Growing Up in New Zealand is intended to be used widely. Clear data access protocols govern the study to safeguard participants' ongoing involvement, privacy and confidentiality.
- Some mental wellbeing constructs have been measured longitudinally, which can help identify critical periods during cognitive development.

3. *Growing Up in New Zealand* can provide evidence through:

- Fast track requests – simple cross-tabulations to answer a specific policy-relevant query
- Policy briefs – maximum four-page policy briefs on specific topics
- Bespoke, comprehensive reports for government agencies
- Collaborative projects between government agencies and *Growing Up in New Zealand* researchers

4. Datasets available

Datasets are currently available from antenatal to the 8-year data collection wave. Additionally, we have data available from smaller data collection waves at 6 weeks, 16 months, 23 months, 31 months, 45 months, 72 months, and a specific COVID-19 survey at 10 years. The 12-year data collection wave data will become available at the end of June 2023.

Further resources

A range of existing resources based on our research findings can be found on our website, including:

- [Policy briefs](https://growingup.co.nz/growing-policy-briefs): smaller publications on a specific topic of interest to policymakers and government. growingup.co.nz/growing-policy-briefs
- [Reports](https://growingup.co.nz/growing-reports): comprehensive reports based on data collected at key milestones. growingup.co.nz/growing-reports
- [Published articles](https://growingup.co.nz/published-articles): *Growing Up in New Zealand* researchers use the study data to investigate a wide range of topics around child and youth development. growingup.co.nz/published-articles

For more information, please email researchgrowingup@auckland.ac.nz or visit our website at www.growingup.co.nz

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