

## Series 36 - Families and Children Study

**Description:** The Families and Children Study (FACS), known as the Survey of Low Income Families for Waves 1-2, originally provided a new baseline survey of Britain's lone-parent families and low-income couples with dependent children. The FACS study has become a 'true panel', whereby 1999 respondents have been re-interviewed in subsequent annual waves in from 2000 to 2004, and new families added in each of these years, to allow representative cross-section as well as longitudinal comparisons. Starting with Wave 3 (2001) the survey was extended to include higher-income families, thereby yielding a complete sample of all British families (and the subsequent name change). From Wave 4 (2002) onwards, longitudinal comparisons can now be made. See also the NatCen and DWP FACS web-pages (<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/facs/> and <http://www.natcen.ac.uk/facs/>).

The main objectives of the survey are to:

- \* evaluate the effectiveness of the Government's work incentive measures in terms of helping people into work, improving living standards and improving child outcomes
- \* compare the living standards and outcomes for children and for families across the income distribution
- \* compare changes in the above across the waves since 1999
- \* FACS also aims to provide commentary on longer-term objectives such as the Government's Public Service Agreement to eradicate child poverty within a generation.

▪ **Available years:** 1999-2005 (Waves 1-7)

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### #36:289 – Families and Children Study 1999-2005

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**Universe:** The study was initially based on interviews with low-income parents living in Great Britain during 1999. From 2001 onwards, higher-income couples were included to yield a complete sample of all British families with dependent children. Parents were defined as anyone over the age of 15 years who had parental custody of either a child aged 16 years or less, or 18 years or less and in full-time education.

**Sample size:** 5,397 (wave 1); raised to 7,400 - 8,500 waves 2-7.

**Methods:** Face-to-face interview; Self-completion.

**Sample:** Multi-stage stratified random sample; weighting used.

**Fieldwork:** Jul-Sep 1999 (wave 1); Jun-Oct 2000 (wave 2); Sep-Jan for all other waves.

**Geography:** No information recorded.

**Access:** SN 4427.

#### Alcohol consumption

**Consumption:** volume and frequency (Usual quantity-frequency frequency, usual volume (waves 4-7); whether respondent drinks regularly (children's self-completion; wave 5, wave 6)).

**Single occasion:** n/a.

#### **Other drinking**

▪ Status (Lifetime, current (wave 5, wave 6), whether only drunk alcohol 1-2 times in life (children's self-completion))

### **Other alcohol variables**

- Family attitudes (Whether and to whom respondent has spoken about their child having had a problem with drinking alcohol in the past 12mths, and how satisfied with person who deal with this (if child aged 8-18))
- Family drinking behaviour (Whether respondent thinks that their child (if aged 8-18) has had a problem with drinking alcohol in the past 12mths (wave 4, wave 5, wave 6, wave 7))
- Alcohol services (Whether and to whom respondent has spoken about their child having had a problem with drinking alcohol in the past 12mths, and how satisfied with person who deal with this (if child aged 8-18))

### **Health status and behaviour:**

- Mental health (Medium)
- Self-reported health (High)
- Smoking (High)
- Drugs (Medium)

- Diet (Medium, as part of expenditure and hardship section)
- Fitness (Medium)

### **Other variables**

- Socialising (Medium)
- Leisure (Medium)
- Caring (High)
- Personality (Medium)
- Political opinions (Medium)
- Use of services (High)
- Attitude (fear) of crime (Low)

### **Demographics**

- Material quality of life (High)
- Income (High)
- Household type/composition (High)
- Finances/taxes/benefits (High, including two-year work and benefit history)
- Employment (High, including two-year work and benefit history)
- Education (High)
- Ethnicity and religion (Medium)