

DATA PAPER

Next Steps (formerly known as the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England)

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Next Steps (formerly known as the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England – LSYPE) is a longitudinal study which follows a sample of around 16,000 people born in 1989/1990. Study members were recruited via schools in England when they were aged 13–14 in 2004. They were interviewed annually for seven waves until they were aged 19/20 in 2010. Co-resident parents were also interviewed in the first four waves of the study.

Keywords: Longitudinal; Cohort; Mixed mode design; Relationships; Fertility; Employment; Income; Education; Health; Well-being; Social participation; Values; Attitudes

Funding statement: Next Steps is funded by the ESRC through grants awarded to the Centre for Longitudinal Studies (CLS).

1. Overview

Introduction/Study Description

The study was managed and funded by the Department of Education (DfE) from 2004 until 2012. In 2013, the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) took over the funding of the study and management transferred to the Centre for Longitudinal Studies (CLS), at the UCL Institute of Education. An additional wave of data collection (wave 8) will take place in 2015/2016 when the study members will be aged 25/26.

The information collected from waves 1–7 of the study covers family background and parents' employment status, young person's characteristics, attitudes, experiences and behaviours and education and schooling. The coverage of study will be broadened at wave 8 to collect more information about health and well-being and identity and participation, as well as family and relationships, employment, education and income.

In addition to survey data, further information was added to the dataset through linkage to National Pupil Database (NPD) records. The NPD is a pupil-level database held by the Department for Education which included pupil and school level data to pupil-level attainment data, for all state-school pupils in England. Further linkages are planned in the future to data about further and higher education, health, economic situation and criminal behaviour.

Next Steps survey and linked administrative data can be accessed, in anonymised form, by bona fide researchers through the UK Data Service at the University of Essex.

2. Context

Spatial coverage

The study covers England primarily. Participants who have moved outside England, but remain within the UK, will be invited to take part by web or phone at wave 8.

Temporal coverage

The Next Steps study first began in 2004, when cohort members were aged 13–14 years. Cohort members were invited to take part in this study annually until 2010 – not all cohort members took part each time they were contacted. All cohort members who had taken part in one or more waves of the study will be re-contacted in 2015/2016.

3. Methods

Steps

The data collection approach involved in-person interviews for the first four waves of the study. From wave 5 onwards, a sequential mixed-mode design has been used, and we propose to retain this approach at wave 8. Cohort members are first contacted by post and email (where available) and invited to participate in a web survey. Those who do not respond (and for whom there is a telephone contact number available) are then phoned by telephone interviewers, and interviewed over the phone where possible. Cohort members who do not participate in the study using either of these modes, and who have not refused, are then contacted in person by an interviewer calling at their address.

All waves of the survey, and all modes, use computer-assisted interviewing (CAI).

Sampling strategy

In Wave 1, the final issued sample was approximately 21,000 young people. The sample was drawn using a two stage probability proportional to size (PPS) sampling procedure with disproportionate stratification.

Schools were the primary sampling units (PSUs). The sample frame included all maintained and independent schools as well as Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) in England during February 2004.

The next stage of the sampling process was the selection of pupils. This stage was again different dependent on the type of school. In state schools, pupils were selected using the Pupil Level Annual School Census, which is a list of all pupils at the school, with selection probabilities being dependent on ethnic groups. Pupils in independent, fee-paying schools and Pupil Referral Units were sampled directly from the school rolls. Overall, pupils not on the school roll were excluded as well as children who were resident in the UK solely for education purposes.

The issued sample for wave 8 will be all cohort members who have ever participated in previous waves of Next Steps with the following exceptions:

- 1) Those who previously indicated that they do not wish to be contacted.
- 2) Those who are known to have permanently emigrated.
- 3) Those who are known to have died.
- 4) Those for whom we hold no current address.
- 5) Those who have not given permission for their contact details to be passed onto CLS.

Quality Control

Data in all waves of the Next Steps study has been collected via Computer Aided Interviewing (CAI), which allows the complex routing of the questionnaire instruments to be automatically controlled. Consistency checks are built into the CAI program to minimise the potential for erroneous data entry. The CAI instruments are rigorously checked prior to fieldwork. Pilot studies are conducted prior to commencement of the main stage of data collection in order to fully test the data collection instruments and all fieldwork procedures. Fieldwork is carefully monitored and quality controlled.

Constraints

Study members have been guaranteed anonymity. Identifiable data is not included in the datasets made available for research. All data is de-identified by the removal of personal data, such as name and address, prior to deposit. Researchers accessing the data via the UK Data Service must abide by the terms of an End User Licence which forbids any attempt to identify an individual. Datasets judged to have a greater disclosure risk are made available via Special Licence which involve additional access conditions.

Privacy

Study members contact details are not stored in the same location as their data to ensure that the data is completely anonymised. Checks also take place on the data to ensure that there are no variables which contain information which could be used to identify individual cohort members.

Ethics

Ethical approval for Next Steps has been gained from the National Health Service (NHS) Research Ethics Committee (REC) system. NHS Research Ethics Committees (RECs) are appointed by the Strategic Health Authorities in England, their equivalents in Scotland and Wales and the Health and Social Care Business Services Organisation in Northern Ireland. RECs safeguard the rights, safety, dignity and well-being of people participating in research. They review applications for research and give an opinion about the proposed participant involvement and whether the research is ethical. Enduring REC ethical approval has been received for wave 8 of Next Steps.

4. Dataset description

Object name

GN 5545 – Longitudinal Study of Young People in England: Waves One to Seven, 2004–2010.

Data type

Primary Data.

Ontologies

N/A.

Format names and versions

SPSS, STATA. Tab Delimited.

Creation dates

Dataset creators

National Centre for Social Research (waves 1–6).

Department for Education (wave 7).

Centre for Longitudinal Studies, UCL Institute of Education (wave 8 onwards).

Language

English.

Programming language

N/A.

Licence

UK Data Service End User Licence.

Accessibility criteria

Previous Next Steps survey and linked administrative data can be accessed by bona fide researchers through the UK Data Service at the University of Essex. Anyone wishing to access the data will need to register with the UK Data Service before downloading. Some datasets are only available via

Special Licence, or via the UK Data Service Secure Lab. Access arrangements comply with ESRC Research Data Policy.

Repository location

The details of all Next Steps datasets currently available are detailed on the UK Data Service website.

Publication date

Next Steps wave 8 data is due to be deposited in early-2017.

5. Reuse potential

Next Steps data is a resource for research and policy community. The study follows a large sample of individuals through the course of their lives, charting the effects of events and circumstances in childhood through to

outcomes and achievements as adults. The scope of enquiry is extremely broad and the data is therefore of great potential value to researchers from a wide range of disciplines.

Competing Interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Acknowledgements

All staff at the Centre for Longitudinal Studies and the organisations previously responsible for the management of the study, the fieldwork agencies who have collected the information on our behalf, the Economic and Social Research Council who have provided the majority of the funding in recent years and the cohort members themselves who have supported the study over the course of its life.

How to cite this article: Calderwood, L and Sanchez, C 2016 Next Steps (formerly known as the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England). *Open Health Data*, 4: e2, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5334/ohd.16>

Published: 25 February 2016

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