

## Information for parents and guardians – nine-year interview

Your child was one of more than 11,000 children and their families who first took part in the ***Growing Up in Ireland*** study when the children were nine months of age in 2008/09. This study follows the progress of the same group of children over time. Government and others are using this information to help improve our understanding of all aspects of the lives and needs of children and their families.

We would like to interview you and your child again in the next few weeks (at a time which suits your family) to find out how they have grown and changed over recent years.

### Who is running the study?

***Growing Up in Ireland*** is funded by the government, with a contribution from The Atlantic Philanthropies. It is being carried out by a group of independent researchers led by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) and Trinity College Dublin.

### What does taking part in this interview involve?

An interviewer will contact you in the next week or so to arrange to interview you and your nine-year-old child. If you live with a spouse or partner, we would also like to interview them.

Your nine-year-old will be asked to complete questionnaires and an English vocabulary test. The visit to your home will last about two and a half hours at a time convenient for you.

As part of the study, we would also like to interview your child's teacher about your child and their performance in school. You will not be able to see what the teacher says about your child, though you will be able to see the blank questionnaire in advance, if you wish.

If you decide not to take part in the study, it will in no way affect any health, educational or social care which you or your family will receive from the State.

### How we deal with issues of confidentiality?

As with the previous interviews, all the information given to a ***Growing Up in Ireland*** interviewer during the survey is treated in the strictest confidence. It can be used only for research purposes. No-one in government or any government agency or department will be able to identify information given by the family.

The study is being carried out under the Statistics Act (1993). This is the same legislation as is used to carry out the Census of Population, and it ensures complete confidentiality of all the information collected.

However, if an interviewer observes something or is told something outside the answers given to the survey questions which causes them or the people running the study to have serious concerns for the welfare of a child, they may have to tell someone who can help.

We will use an ID number on your questionnaire. This will help to ensure that your information is kept anonymous. We will remove your name, address and other identifying information. Research data based on

anonymised responses from those who take part in the study will then be stored electronically. It will be made available to researchers through application to the Irish Social Science Data Archive or the Central Statistics Office. More information on how the data are used is available on [www.growingup.ie](http://www.growingup.ie).

### **What kind of questions will my family be asked?**

This interview will be similar to our last interview. We will ask you, and your spouse or partner, questions about things like your child's health, education and play. We will also ask you some questions about your own health, relationships and family life.

The questions are straightforward, though some are quite detailed. Some will address relatively sensitive issues, like your family's income, your relationship with your spouse or partner (if relevant) and family life.

The interviewer will be able to help if you have any concerns or questions about the survey questionnaire itself.

Your nine-year-old will be asked questions about what they think about school, their friends and where they live. They can choose not to leave out some (or all questions) if they want to.

If you would like to see any of the questions before your child is interviewed, the interviewer will have blank copies of the questionnaire with them. We want to make sure that as many children as possible take part and have a voice in the ***Growing Up in Ireland*** study, but you can choose not to have your child complete individual sections or questions if you prefer.

We would also like your child to complete an English vocabulary test – this is like the ones used in schools.

### **Following up in a few years' time**

We have not yet decided if there will be a further round of follow-up interviews. However, it is possible that we may wish to return to your household again, perhaps when your child is 13 years old.

### **Who are the interviewers?**

The interviewer who will call to your home is from the ESRI. Each interviewer carries a photo ID card.

Each interviewer has been specially trained for the study and has been vetted by An Garda Síochána. The interviewer is not allowed to be alone with your child at any time during their visit to your home. **You can check the identity of your interviewer or let us know if you were unhappy with the way the interview was conducted by calling Freephone 1800 200 434.**

### **What are my rights if I take part?**

- You and your family may choose to withdraw from the study at any time.
- If there are any questions which you do not wish to answer, you do not have to do so.

### **Your participation counts**

Studies like these help us to understand the role of all caring adults in the life of a child, and to find out how we can improve the future for all children and families in Ireland. We hope that you can support us in our work and we would like to thank you, in advance, for your help.

### **Where can I find out more information?**

- **Phone:** Freephone 1800 200 434 or 01-863 2000
- **Online:** Email us at [growingup@esri.ie](mailto:growingup@esri.ie) or visit [www.growingup.ie](http://www.growingup.ie)
- **Write:** Growing Up in Ireland, ESRI, Whitaker Square, Sir John Rogerson's Quay, Dublin 2