

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What will my information be used for?

When we ask some of the research questions it may not seem completely obvious how they relate to the objectives of the study but rest assured, they all do! Our research team has developed a robust, field-tested study design that will deliver on the vision of the study. The value of *Growing Up in New Zealand* will increase with time as the information you provide at successive data collections is brought together. The research will benefit our children and future generations by helping policymakers come up with strategies to more effectively improve the lives and development of our children; community and business leaders to understand the environments they work in and all of us get a better understanding of what helps our children grow up healthy and happy.

### There are already two well established longitudinal studies in New Zealand – why was this one also required?

The Dunedin (Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Study) and Christchurch (Christchurch Health and Development Study) longitudinal studies have produced valuable information since they began 35-40 years ago, but New Zealand's population and environment has changed dramatically since the 1970's. *Growing Up in New Zealand* will capture the diversity of 21st century New Zealand and partner with policy makers to turn research into real change. Key features of *Growing Up in New Zealand* are that it starts before the baby is born and includes fathers and partners. *Growing Up in New Zealand* will follow nearly 7,000 children from before birth to early adulthood.

### Is my information confidential?

Your privacy is very important to us. The in-depth answers you provide during the interviews remain confidential and you and your family will not be identified individually in any of the reporting or feedback from *Growing Up in New Zealand*.

## Thank You

We are incredibly grateful to our gift bag sponsors – your contributions are very much appreciated by us and the families we visit. Some of our current partners are listed below, and again thank you. We continue to search for gift bag items and would warmly consider any offers, just drop us an email at [contact@growingup.co.nz](mailto:contact@growingup.co.nz)



Random House Publishing has generously donated a selection of children's books for our gift bags and has also recently released a book by well known New Zealand authors Ian and Mary Grant. The book is called 'Growing Great Families' and covers the following topics: being a parent in the world we now inhabit; building the foundations; what makes a family into a community; moulding big personalities into a family; life-defining values; two pillars of great families - fun and communication; and moving from dependence to interdependence.

Once again these successful authors offer us great parenting skills that any family can use effectively, with great practical advice - including smart strategies, action labs and chapter summaries.

If you would like to read a sample chapter of the book please go to [www.randomhouse.co.nz](http://www.randomhouse.co.nz) and type in the key words 'Growing Great Families'. The book was released on 2 September 2011 and is available at all good bookstores.



# GROWING UP NEWS

Spring 2011

## From Susan...



As this newsletter reaches you I hope the winter chill is beginning to move on and you're enjoying some warmer weather with your family and friends. The year is flying by and we're pleased to provide you with an update on what's been happening at *Growing Up in New Zealand* since our last newsletter.

We were incredibly fortunate to have Professor Sir Peter Gluckman present at a Centre for Longitudinal Research seminar in August. Professor Gluckman is the Chief Science Advisor to the Prime Minister and as such is responsible for providing strategic and operational advice on science and science policy issues. He is also on the Scientific Advisory Board for *Growing Up in New Zealand*. Professor Gluckman was invited to discuss his recent report on the relationship between evidence and policy formation – a topic at the heart of *Growing Up in New Zealand*. In this newsletter we share some of the highlights from the presentation.

In July members of the *Growing Up in New Zealand* research team attended the 17th Australasian Human Development Association (AHDA) Conference in Dunedin. AHDA is an organisation which aims to foster and promote research on human development at all stages of the lifespan, including prenatal development, infancy and childhood, adolescence and adulthood. The conference predominantly involved academics from Australia and New Zealand, but also included delegates from further afield. Researchers from *Growing Up in New Zealand* presented an overview of the project, and also in more detail in the areas of maternal wellbeing, the types of families

involved in the project, and the parents' hopes and dreams for their children. We heard about research on child development from a range of experts in areas such as cognition, language development, and literacy. It was exciting to be able to showcase the study principles and some of the initial findings to this international group of experts.

The University of Auckland is revisiting its 'Research Works Wonders' promotional series and invited *Growing Up in New Zealand* to take part again this year. As one of four research projects being showcased by the University, *Growing Up in New Zealand* welcomes the opportunity to reinforce the value of the study to a wide audience via YouTube. More about our day filming is included in this newsletter.

The next report from *Growing Up in New Zealand* will be available in early 2012. Significant preparation is taking place and we look forward to sharing these results with you. This report will look at the data collected up until your child was nine months of age and will include the first longitudinal analysis of all your data. The final report will be made available to view prior to the public launch.

As always, please contact us if you have any questions or concerns. We value your time and greatly appreciate your ongoing support of the study.

With kind regards,

Dr Susan Morton

## Research Works Wonders



'Research Works Wonders' is a YouTube based series of videos showcasing leading research by The University of Auckland. Research by the University helps us understand problems more deeply, enabling us to develop

solutions and plans to make New Zealand and the world a better, healthier place. The first 'Research Works Wonders' series was developed in 2009 and explored a range of topics including 'Will there be a cure for cancer?' and 'Does nature have a cure for Alzheimer's?' *Growing Up in New Zealand* featured in the first series and was revisited by the production team at the end of July to capture the progress of the study.

"Research Works Wonders provides *Growing Up in New Zealand* with a unique platform from which to share the value and potential of the study," says Dr Susan Morton. "During the filming it was great to look back at how far we've come as well as look forward to an exciting future."

The video can be viewed at [www.youtube.com/user/researchworkswonders](http://www.youtube.com/user/researchworkswonders).

## Keeping Us Up To Date

### FILL IN YOUR NAME AND DETAILS HERE:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
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(tick here if you would like to receive this newsletter by email in future)

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## Professor Sir Peter Gluckman Seminar



Professor Sir Peter Gluckman

The Centre for Longitudinal Research – He Ara ki Mua was pleased to host Professor Sir Peter Gluckman at a seminar in August. Professor Gluckman is the Chief Science Advisor to the Prime Minister and as such is responsible for providing strategic and operational advice on science and science policy issues. He is also on the Scientific Advisory Board of *Growing Up in New Zealand*.

Professor Gluckman recently released a report that explored the role of evidence in policy formation. The report is intended as an initial high level paper to stimulate discussion amongst policy advisors and policy makers and recognises that one of the key challenges for all governments is how to make the best use of evidence in both policy formation and policy evaluation.

Professor Gluckman's view is quite clear – "the use of high quality information and evidence should be at the core of government decision making. Decisions made in the absence of informed background material are, by definition, made on the basis of common sense, which does not always reflect reality, and on the basis of belief and dogma. These are less likely to be effective and efficient and can entrench policies which may be of little value." Professor Gluckman adds, "Policy formed in the absence of knowledge or without considering relevant knowledge is simply dogma and cannot serve the public well."

This position is directly relevant to *Growing Up in New Zealand* given the evidence base the study will deliver over time. While the major purpose of the project is to understand the realities of family life in contemporary New Zealand, it also has a role to work alongside policy makers to utilise the evidence to inform strategies most likely to improve the health and well-being of all young New Zealanders over time. *Growing Up in New Zealand* will watch with interest the considerable on-going discussion and work within government as a result of Professor Gluckman's report.

A full version of Professor Gluckman's presentation can be found at [www.pmcasa.org.nz/news-and-events](http://www.pmcasa.org.nz/news-and-events)

## The Growing Up in New Zealand Team: Dr Polly Atatoa Carr



Dr Polly Atatoa Carr

In this newsletter we continue profiling the research team leading *Growing Up in New Zealand*. Dr Polly Atatoa Carr is an Associate Director of the study and a specialist in Public Health Medicine. Polly is an Honorary Senior Lecturer at The University of Auckland, based at the Waikato Clinical School. Her major research interests are the societal and cultural

impact on health, life course development and equity; research ethics; and the translation of evidence into effective and responsible policy.

Polly's academic career began with studying science and molecular biology at the Universities of Waikato and Auckland. While in molecular medicine, Polly felt that her work was a little too distant from any tangible population impact so she plucked up the courage to apply to medical school, completing her medical training in Auckland and Hamilton. For the next few years Polly conducted her clinical practice in Rotorua until the very premature birth of her first daughter brought her back to the Waikato for family support.

While in Rotorua, Polly found the most satisfying aspect of working with patients was helping them and their whānau with aspects of preventative health and wellbeing. Polly worked with landlords, councils and community advocates to improve the health system journey for patients and their support network. Polly was able to continue this role in Hamilton working with ACC in injury prevention, looking at barriers to diabetes care for Māori whānau and Pacific peoples, and completing her specialist medical training as a Public Health Physician.

During this time Polly has continued to be motivated by her passion for equity and improving population wellbeing by working both within and outside of the health sector. She has worked for Te Puna Oranga and the Population Health Service at the Waikato District Health Board, in partnership with the Waikato Regional Council, for the National Heart Foundation developing a guideline for rheumatic fever prevention, and with the Ministry of Health working on a framework for Māori Research Ethics.

The opportunity to work with *Growing Up in New Zealand* arose in early 2009, and Polly is now an Associate Director of the study and leads the Culture and Identity Domain.

Being based in the Waikato is important to Polly, as this is where her family have lived and worked, and where she was born and raised. Being able to help ensure that participants from the Waikato were successfully enrolled, and continue to be involved in *Growing Up in New Zealand* is an important part of her role.

"The Waikato region contributes a strong Māori voice to the study, as well as bringing important perspectives from 'South of the Bombay's'. The involvement of the diverse cultures in *Growing Up in New Zealand* gives the study, and the information that we gather, a unique richness and meaning".

Like many of the parents that participate in *Growing Up in New Zealand*, Polly is passionate about balancing her work with her own family life and community commitments. Polly's husband is Cook Island, from the island of Mangaia, and with three young daughters and a teenage stepdaughter, cultural, family and community activities are important to her own wellbeing and identity.

## GROWING UP IN NEW ZEALAND TIMELINE (based on your child's age)

Pre-school face to face interview

39-month phone call

31-month phone call

Two-year face to face interview

16-month phone call

Nine-month face to face interview

## Coming To You Soon...The Auckland Interview Team

As you're hopefully aware the two-year interviews are underway. Feedback from families who have completed their interview is positive with many enjoying the games their child gets to play during the interview. In this newsletter we thought we'd share a couple of interesting facts about our Auckland based interview team. We will profile our Waikato based team in the next newsletter.

Many of the team has been with the project for more than two years with some involved in the recruitment of our families. Before joining *Growing Up in New Zealand* the team members were in a wide variety of roles including an administration assistant for Television New Zealand, a graphic designer, a travel office manager, a kindergarten teacher, a social worker and a business development officer.

Common to all the team is their enjoyment of meeting and interacting with the families in the study. They feel privileged to be invited into your homes and enjoy the interaction with your families. The team welcomes the opportunity to take part in a study that will make a real difference to the future of New Zealand children and their families. One team member said that it's a pleasure to be part of such a large New Zealand project that inspires and captures the imagination of families.

The two-year interviews in particular are proving to be a lot of fun for the team. According to one interviewer you just never know what is going to happen! Another interviewer said how much they enjoyed interacting with the two year olds - "they are all so different and special in their own unique way."

We hope you and your family enjoy the contact with our interview team. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or comments.



## Are You Missing Out?

We currently have a number of different data collection waves in the field. If your child is 16 months, 23 months or two years old and you haven't heard from us, then please get in touch. You can call us on:

**Freephone 0508 476 946**

**Monday - Friday 8.30am to 6.00pm**

At 16 months we do a brief phone call to ask a couple of questions about you and your baby. Just before your child is two we're ringing to let you know about the two-year interview and to ask you some more questions. Both calls take no longer than five minutes of your time. The two-year interview takes about as long as the nine-month interview but with your permission,

we would also like to spend an additional 30 minutes completing some fun, interactive activities with your two-year old during the mother interview. After the two-year interview we'll see you and your child every two years or so with electronic contact between the face-to-face interviews.

To remind you, partners who didn't want to join *Growing Up in New Zealand* at the beginning can still join the study if they change their minds. Just give us a call and we can enrol them for the next interview onwards. Even if you missed your last interview you can still take part in the study, please give us a call to discuss.

## E-newsletter

Please let us know if you'd like to receive our newsletter electronically instead of in the post. The recently redesigned e-newsletter now links back to the *Growing Up in New Zealand* website where as well as reading the full articles in the newsletter, you can get more information about the study.

Please email us at [contact@growingup.co.nz](mailto:contact@growingup.co.nz) with the words NEWSLETTER in the subject line to receive the newsletter electronically.

