



**YOUTH IN FOCUS PROJECT DISCUSSION PAPER SERIES
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**The relationship between income support history
and the characteristics and outcomes of Australian youth**

A report prepared for the Australian Government Department of Families,
Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs under the
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The *Youth in Focus* (YIF) Project studies the consequences of growing up in an income-support dependent family. Specifically, we aim to assess the overall correlation between parents' and children's receipt of income support and investigate its causes.
- This report uses the survey data collected as part of the YIF project to provide a broad picture of ways in which economic disadvantage may be transferred from one generation to the next. We do so by comparing characteristics and outcomes of our youth respondents and their parents across six income-support stratification categories. These categories range from no history of income support (category A), to prolonged (more than 6 years) reliance on the income-support system (category B); the remaining categories C to F include families characterised by a shorter exposure to the income-support system.
- For almost all of the analysed data, categories A (no history of income-support use) and B (intensive reliance on income support) show the most significant disparities in the answers of the surveyed individuals. Respondents from the remaining four categories (C to F) usually report numbers that fall between those observed for the two polar categories. This suggests that both length and recency of exposure to income support matter in determining respondents' outcomes, and a more comprehensive analysis would be needed to separate their individual effects.
- Our results point to a number of channels through which the intergenerational transmission of disadvantage may be occurring in Australia. In particular, this includes education, health factors and risky behaviours, as well as financial transfers from parents.
- We find large differences in the educational experiences of both the parent respondents and the young people across economic categories, with young people growing up in families with history of intensive income-support receipt being less likely to complete Year 12 before leaving school and less likely to have a university entry score.
- The more intensive income-support use is also found to be correlated with poorer health outcomes for both parents and the 18-year olds, and a higher prevalence of alcohol, tobacco and illicit drug use among the young adults. Mental health also seems to be worse among the more disadvantaged respondents.
- Parents heavily reliant on income support tend to provide less assistance to their 18-year old children in the form of co-residence and financial support. Although this may be due to their lower socio-economic status and poorer ability to provide support to their children, our results suggest that greater family discord may also contribute to this disparity.
- At the same time, there are a number of reasons to be optimistic about the potential for the majority of young people to make a successful transition to independent adulthood. In particular, when asked about satisfaction with their relationship with each

other, the young adult respondents and their parents report high degree of mutual respect and understanding. The young people are also positive about their futures. They agree that a good education, one's own ambition, and a job are important in getting ahead in life, and the vast majority takes a very assertive and active approach towards life, believing that they can achieve whatever they set their minds to.

INTRODUCTION

This research takes advantage of new survey data collected as part of the *Youth in Focus* (YIF) project to assess the relationship between a young person's characteristics and outcomes on the one hand and the income-support history of his or her family on the other. In particular, we are interested in the following questions:

- How do the characteristics of young people vary by income-support history?
- Do the labour market and educational outcomes of young people vary with the extent to which their families accessed the income-support system as they were growing up?
- Is health – i.e., self-assessed health, health behaviours, etc. – related to income-support history?
- How are youths' attitudes towards education, work, and income support related to their experiences of the income-support system?

Data: The Youth in Focus Survey

The YIF Survey is designed to collect a variety of information from a random sample of families who have appeared in the administrative data at least once since 1991. The survey design is based around a birth cohort of youth who turned 18 just before wave 1 interviewing. For each 'youth', we identified all individuals who received any type of payment on behalf of that youth in the history of the administrative data. From these individuals, who we henceforth refer to as 'parents', we selected the person who had the longest duration of care (as measured by receiving a payment on behalf of the youth or claiming the youth as a dependent) over the history of the administrative data set. We further implemented a set of rules designed to identify the natural mother from the administrative data. Although the administrative data do not contain information on the actual family relationships, the chosen method proved extremely successful in identifying the natural parents. Among wave 1 respondents, a natural mother was selected in 96.5 per cent and a natural parent in 98.6 per cent of cases.

The parents were interviewed once and we anticipate that the children will be interviewed approximately biannually for three waves. Respondents were asked to provide information on topics such as employment, education, physical and mental health, attitudes and values, family relationships and other psycho-social factors, the children's experiences while growing up, neighbourhood and school quality, etc. More details about the survey can be found in the User's Guide to the YIF Data (Breunig *et al*, 2007).

Methodology

The methodological approach has been to conduct a cross-tab analysis of the key variables in both the youth and parent surveys set by the stratification variable found in the YIF survey data. This stratification variable is important in that it provides a neat summary of income-support history. In particular, young people were classified into six economic categories based on the income-support histories of their parents as follows:

Economic Category
Income-Support History

A	No income support or unknown
B	Heavy exposure to income support: more than 6 years
C	First income support after 1998 and less than 6 years
D	First income support between 1994 and 1998, and less than 3 years
E	First income support before 1994, and less than 6 years
F	First income support between 1994 and 1998, and 3 year or more but less than 6 years

Results are presented in the following 20 sections of the report. Sections 1 – 9 consider the characteristics and life circumstances of parents as well as parental reports of the nature of their relationships with their 18-year-old children and their children’s experiences while growing up. These sections of the report draw on the information gathered from the 3,964 parents – mainly biological mothers – interviewed in the parent survey. Sections 10 – 20 discuss a range of outcomes and experiences as reported by the 4,079 young people who answered the YIF youth survey or the self-completion questionnaire (SCQ).¹

In each case, our goal was to provide a broad overview of the ways in which income support histories affect the outcomes of young people. Consequently, in our discussion we focus most intensely on comparing the outcomes of young people and parents in economic categories A and B because this provides the sharpest contrast in the economic circumstances of young people.

Structure of the Report

This research provides a broad picture of the ways in which income-support histories might matter for young people and will be important identifying the most important areas for future research. Moreover, this exercise will be fundamental to developing a deeper understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the YIF Survey data themselves.

In what follows we present a brief background of the YIF project including information about the project organization and research partners, project motivation, and main research questions. Subsequently, the results are presented in 20 different sections. Sections 1 – 9 are based on information collected from parents, while Sections 10 – 20 are based on the information provided by youths. Brief conclusions and directions for future research are presented at the end of the report.

¹ Not all young people completing the survey answered the self-completion questionnaire. Due to the SCQ being filled in by youth, the filtering/routing is not as precise as in the phone questionnaire. There are cases where respondents do not answer questions they are supposed to, and where they answer questions they do not need to. Therefore, the number of observations available for particular questions can be somewhat smaller.

BACKGROUND TO THE YOUTH IN FOCUS PROJECT²

Youth in Focus (YIF) is a joint research project between the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) and a team of academic researchers. The research team includes Professor Deborah Cobb-Clark, Dr Robert Breunig, Dr Chris Ryan, and Dr Tue Gørgens of the Australian National University (ANU), Professor Jeff Borland of the University of Melbourne, Professors Barbara Wolfe and Robert Haveman of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Ms Jocelyn Pech of the Australian Fair Pay Commission Secretariat (previously with the Department of Family and Community Services).

The YIF project is supported by a five-year Linkage-Project grant from the Australian Research Council (ARC).³ In addition to its initial commitment of resources for the project, FaHCSIA has provided support for background research relevant to the project. Centrelink has given in-kind support by providing staff time and expertise for work related to building the administrative data set. The ANU is the lead institution and has primary responsibility for coordinating the work of the research team, FaHCSIA, and Roy Morgan Research Pty Ltd (RMR) – the market research firm conducting the survey – and for reporting to the ARC.

Project Motivation

The overarching goal of the YIF project is to understand the ways in which economic and social disadvantage might be transferred from one generation to the next. To achieve this, the project explores some of the consequences for young Australians of growing up in disadvantaged families using an innovative combination of survey and administrative data. Our focus is on outcomes in the early adult years when young people are moving into higher education, entering the labour market, starting families, and generally establishing themselves as independent adults. Developing a fuller understanding of reasons that disadvantaged youth succeed – or fail to succeed – is a necessary first step in formulating sensible policies targeted towards breaking any cycle of dependence and promoting the social and economic independence of Australian youth. In particular, it is well-established that individuals who grow up in families that are dependent upon income support are themselves much more likely to be dependent upon income support as adults.

Although the association between growing up in an income-support dependent family and reliance upon social assistance as an adult are well-established, only limited research has assessed which factors underlie this relationship. A lack of educational qualifications, early child-bearing, poor health and disability all contribute to reducing a young person's labour market opportunities and increasing the chances of needing social assistance – see Haveman et al. (2001). Determining the causal effect of these risk factors is difficult, since while all can cause dependence on income support, each may also result from a history of dependence on income support.

This project is designed to address and overcome the weaknesses of previous studies. By using a combination of administrative data going back to 1991 and survey data gathered from both parents and children, issues of timing, intensity, and incidence of disadvantage can be studied while controlling for a range of background and demographic factors. The

² This section of the report is taken from the User's Guide to the Youth in Focus Data (Breunig *et al*, 2007).

³ ARC Linkage Project LP0347164 entitled "The Intergenerational Transmission of Dependence on Income Support: Patterns, Causation and Implications for Australian Social Policy Research".

nature of the Australian payments system, managed by Centrelink, provides a population sampling frame of young Australians who grew up in a range of family circumstances. In particular, the same administrative database used to manage income-support payments is also used to manage childcare subsidies (which are not means tested) and tax rebates for dependent children (which are means tested and not paid to the top 15 per cent (approximately) of the income distribution). Thus this data source from which the survey sample is drawn provides consistent administrative data not only for disadvantaged families, but also for a large 'control group' of middle and upper-middle income families.

Main Research Questions

The data generated by the project will be the foundation for research on a wide variety of issues including youth health, education, and employment, as well as the influence of intergenerational factors on young people's socio-economic outcomes. The overarching goal of the YIF project is to understand the consequences of growing up in disadvantage on economic, social, and demographic outcomes in early adulthood.

To this end, the research project has two main objectives. The first objective is to describe the overall correlation between parents' and young, adult children's outcomes. The second objective is to investigate the causal mechanisms behind these relationships paying particular attention to the intergenerational correlation in income-support receipt. The literature points to several mechanisms through which disadvantage might be passed from one generation to the next, however, little is known about their relative importance. Identifying which mechanisms are most important in accounting for the intergenerational correlation in disadvantage is a necessary first step in formulating evidence-based policies targeted towards breaking any cycle of welfare dependence.

Data collection is designed to focus on four possible transmission mechanisms: low educational attainment, early fertility, poor health and/or disability, and attitudinal factors. All of these may depend upon the socio-economic status and income-support history of a young person's family and may affect a youth's future receipt of income support. Information gathered from matched pairs of youths and parents, lengthy administrative data, and a medium-length panel survey provide the mechanisms by which these research questions may be addressed.

Section 1:

The Demographic Characteristics and Family Backgrounds of Parents

Overview of Findings:

The sampling frame used in the *Youth in Focus* (YIF) survey was the administrative dataset (TDS2) that, in addition to demographic data, contains records of the Centrelink payments received by the individuals in the dataset. The administrative nature of this dataset, however, does not allow us to identify the actual relationship between the focal youth and their administrative parents. The research team employed a special procedure to ensure that natural parents (preferably mothers) were chosen as a target parent to be interviewed.⁴ This was done to ensure that the survey information was collected from the individual most knowledgeable about the focal youth. As a result (see Table 1.1), natural mothers were interviewed in more than 96 per cent, and natural parents – in 98 per cent, of cases.

In order to comprehensively assess socio-economic status of the interviewees and their families, the chosen parent respondents were asked a battery of background questions. These questions ranged from demographic characteristics of the respondents themselves, such as gender, age, marital status and country of birth, to information on respondent's parents (such as their education and employment). Moreover, natural parents were asked about their current and previous relationships, total number of children they had, and the characteristics of the other natural parent of the focal youth. Respondents who were not natural parents of the focal youth were asked to provide educational and employment information on both natural parents.

Table 1.2 provides statistics on demographic characteristics of respondents. Our results show a significant disparity in the current marital status of respondents by economic category. For example, the proportion of married respondents differs dramatically for those who have no history of income-support use (category A) and those with a history of prolonged and intensive reliance on income support (category B). At the same time, the percentage of divorcees is almost six times greater for category B (29 per cent) than for category A respondents (5 per cent). The same dramatic difference can be observed in the proportion of sole parents that were never married.

The age composition of respondents also varies across economic groups. Respondents in category B tend to be younger on average, with the highest reported proportions of people under 40 and 45 years of age (19 and 52 per cent respectively). In contrast, less than 3 per cent of respondents in category A (no income-support history) are aged below 40, and the proportion of those 45 years-old and younger is around a quarter for this category.

It can also be observed that respondents that have had intensive exposure to the income-support system (category B) are less likely to be currently living in the same household as the focal youths: of the parents in this category, only two thirds live with focal youths, as opposed to 81 per cent of parents who never accessed the income-support system (category A) or 83 per cent of parents who had had very short exposure to the income-support system eight to twelve years ago (category D). This indicates that economic category needs to be considered in any analysis of the factors that cause young adults to move out of their parental homes and become independent.

Around three quarters of all respondents were born in Australia, and this proportion is relatively stable across stratification categories with the exception of category C which has relatively fewer people born in Australia and more migrants from both English and non-

⁴ For details of the procedure, please refer to the User's Guide to the Youth in Focus Data (Breunig *et al*, 2007).

English speaking countries. Taking into account that category C consists of people who started using income-support system in or after 1998, this perhaps is not surprising given that migrants would not have been exposed to the income-support system until migration and would not have been eligible for income support immediately upon arrival into Australia. Finally, there is a much higher percentage of Aboriginals among the respondents belonging to category B.

Table 1.3 provides summary statistics on the family background of parent respondents, showing occupations of their parents when respondents were 14 years old. The questionnaire also asked parent respondents whether their family took annual holidays out-of-town when the respondent was 14 years old. The answers to this last question will be used as one of the indicators of childhood family prosperity. The survey data show a relatively higher share of manager, farmer, and professional fathers among respondents of category A (no history of income support) when compared to all other categories and especially category B (heavy exposure to the income-support system). The likelihood of the respondent's family taking annual holidays is also lower for respondents who were heavy users of the income-support system.

The YIF survey collected data on relationships and fertility histories of respondents who were natural parents of the focal youth. As mentioned earlier in this section, respondents who were not natural parents were not asked to provide information on their relationship and fertility history, but instead answered questions on the education and employment of natural parents.

Among the natural parents of the focal youths, the total number of children the respondents have varies across economic categories, with the heavy users of income support being more likely to have large families of five children or more (19 per cent for category B as opposed to 6 to 12 per cent for other categories). On the other hand, respondents who do not have any history of income-support receipt (category A), are more likely to have one marriage or de-facto relationship (88 per cent for this category vs. 59 per cent for category B).

Table 1.5 summarises the characteristics of both natural parents of the focal youth. This is to provide a more detailed picture of the focal youth's background; note that if the respondent is a natural mother (natural father), the data in this table will include their answers about themselves from other sections of the survey. It can be seen that the country of birth for both natural parents varies across categories in much the same way as described earlier in this section. As regards education, both mothers and fathers of focal youths in category A (no income-support history) are more likely to have tertiary educational qualifications (advanced degree, bachelor or higher) than any other category; the disparity is especially severe in comparison with category B respondents. The respondents with intensive history of income-support receipt (category B) are also much more likely than any other category to have not completed Year 9 (13.5 per cent for natural mothers and 13.3 per cent for natural fathers). The occupational distribution across categories follows similar pattern: the proportion of professional mothers and fathers is highest among respondents who never received income-support payments, while the proportion of labourers, elementary sales or clerical workers (for mothers) or production or transport workers (for fathers) is highest for respondents who are heavily dependent on income support.

On balance, these results point to important differences in the demographic characteristics and family backgrounds of parents across economic categories.

Table 1.1
Parent's Relationship to Focal Youth

	Frequency	Percent
Mother (natural or adopted)	3,826	96.52
Father (natural or adopted)	82	2.07
Step-mother	11	0.28
Step-father	3	0.08
Grandmother	13	0.33
Elder brother/ elder sister	2	0.05
Aunt/ uncle	14	0.35
Other	12	0.30
Can't say	1	0.03
Total	3,964	100

Table 1.2
Demographic Characteristics of Parents

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Gender^a							
Male	3.06	2.34	3.26	1.19	0.78	2.36	2.37
Female	96.94	97.66	96.74	98.81	99.22	97.64	97.63
Currently living with focal youth^a							
Living with focal youth	80.57	66.74	72.30	83.49	74.74	71.23	73.86
Not living with focal youth	19.43	33.26	27.70	16.51	25.26	28.77	26.14
Current marital status^a							
Married	89.28	34.68	57.23	80.67	68.75	56.13	61.18
Separated but not divorced	3.06	13.23	11.81	6.21	7.55	12.74	9.06
Divorced	4.98	28.95	23.01	8.59	14.58	24.53	18.11
Widowed	1.63	6.30	4.48	2.39	1.82	2.83	3.81
Single and never married	0.77	16.49	3.26	1.91	6.51	3.77	7.52
Don't know/ refused	0.29	0.35	0.20	0.24	0.78	0.00	0.33
<i>Of those not married:</i>	112	923	210	81	120	93	1,539
<i>Living with someone in relationship, %</i>	<i>22.32</i>	<i>16.90</i>	<i>15.24</i>	<i>23.46</i>	<i>32.50</i>	<i>26.88</i>	<i>19.23</i>
<i>Not living with someone in relationship, %</i>	<i>76.79</i>	<i>82.56</i>	<i>84.29</i>	<i>76.54</i>	<i>67.50</i>	<i>72.04</i>	<i>80.25</i>
<i>Don't know/ refused, %</i>	<i>0.89</i>	<i>0.54</i>	<i>0.48</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>1.08</i>	<i>0.52</i>
Age of respondent^a							
<40 yo or less	2.58	18.97	6.92	4.77	13.02	9.43	10.57
41 to 45 yo	24.11	33.19	28.92	32.46	32.55	27.36	29.82
46 to 50 yo	45.55	27.81	38.29	42	38.02	42.45	37.06
>50 yo	27.75	20.03	25.87	20.76	16.41	20.75	22.55

^a Per cent of strata total.

Table 1.2 (Continued)
Demographic Characteristics of Parents

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Country of birth^a							
Australia	78.47	76.36	68.43	76.13	74.22	78.77	75.83
Other English-speaking country	10.14	10.05	13.03	12.65	12.24	8.49	10.85
Other non-English-speaking country	11.39	13.59	18.53	11.22	13.54	12.74	13.32
<i>If born outside Australia:</i>	225	334	155	100	99	45	958
Speaks only English at home	73.33	62.87	56.13	67.00	65.66	64.44	65.03
Speaks other languages at home	26.67	37.13	43.87	33.00	34.34	35.56	34.97
<i>If speaks other languages at home:</i>	60	124	68	33	34	16	335
<i>English-speaking ability:</i>							
Very good	45.00	33.87	35.29	36.36	50.00	37.50	38.21
Good	31.67	38.71	38.24	48.48	41.18	37.50	38.51
Not good	21.67	22.58	25.00	12.12	8.82	25.00	20.60
None at all	1.67	4.84	1.47	3.03	0.00	0.00	2.69
Aboriginal/TSI status^a							
None	98.95	93.63	97.56	99.05	96.35	97.17	96.54
Aboriginal	0.77	5.73	1.83	0.95	3.13	2.83	3.03
Torres Strait Islander	0.10	0.35	0.41	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.20
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	0.00	0.07	0.20	0.00	0.26	0.00	0.08
Refused	0.19	0.21	0.00	0.00	0.26	0.00	0.15

^a Per cent of strata total.

**Table 1.3
Family Background of Parents**

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Father's occupation when respondent was 14^a							
1a. Manager	6.03	3.82	7.33	5.97	6.51	5.66	5.42
1b. Farmer/farm manager	11.20	6.79	8.15	10.26	7.81	6.60	8.58
1c. Professional	13.59	9.27	11.00	13.60	10.42	10.85	11.28
1d. Associate professional	11.10	8.35	8.15	13.13	10.42	11.79	9.94
1f. Tradesperson	18.76	22.43	23.63	21.00	22.40	25.47	21.62
1g. Clerical/ sales assistant	22.01	21.16	20.77	19.57	22.92	15.57	21.04
1h. Labourer	9.09	11.82	11.00	6.44	8.59	8.49	9.94
2. Homemaker	0.10	0.07	0.00	0.24	0.52	0.00	0.13
3. Deceased	2.11	3.68	2.65	3.82	2.34	5.19	3.10
4. Other occupation	2.87	2.83	3.05	2.63	2.60	4.25	2.90
5. No occupation	1.15	4.10	1.63	1.91	3.13	4.25	2.70
6. Can't say	2.01	5.66	2.65	1.43	2.34	1.89	3.36
Mother's occupation when respondent was 14^a							
1a. Manager	1.63	0.99	1.02	1.67	2.34	1.42	1.39
1b. Farmer/farm manager	2.01	1.84	2.04	2.63	1.04	2.36	1.94
1c. Professional	8.80	6.51	6.72	6.44	7.55	6.60	7.24
1d. Associate professional	3.92	4.81	3.05	4.77	5.47	2.83	4.31
1f. Tradesperson	2.97	4.25	1.43	2.63	4.69	2.36	3.33
1g. Clerk, sales assistance	15.98	14.86	17.72	18.38	17.19	21.23	16.45
1h. Labourer	7.66	8.42	9.37	8.59	9.90	5.19	8.32
2. Homemaker	51.39	47.77	50.92	50.6	44.79	49.53	49.22
3. Deceased	0.38	1.77	1.22	0.72	0.78	2.36	1.16
4. Other occupation	1.15	1.34	0.61	0.24	1.30	1.42	1.08
5. No occupation	3.54	5.38	3.87	2.63	4.95	3.77	4.29
6. Can't say	0.57	2.05	2.04	0.72	0.00	0.94	1.26
Annual family holidays out of town when respondent was 14^a							
Yes	54.45	41.12	42.57	52.27	46.61	45.75	46.77
No	43.83	57.40	56.62	45.58	51.56	53.30	51.69
Don't know	1.72	1.49	0.81	2.15	1.82	0.94	1.54

^a Per cent of strata total.

Table 1.4
The Fertility and Relationship Histories of Natural Parents

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Per cent natural parents ^a	99.33	97.59	98.37	99.28	99.22	99.53	98.59
Amongst respondents who are natural parents:							
Number of children^a							
One or none	4.34	5.08	4.55	5.53	6.04	5.21	4.96
Two	38.25	26.69	31.06	32.21	36.22	27.96	31.88
Three	35.16	30.67	35.61	35.10	34.12	29.86	33.24
Four	15.99	18.71	18.22	19.23	14.96	24.17	17.91
Five or more	6.26	18.78	10.56	7.93	8.66	12.32	11.95
Can't say/refused	0.00	0.07	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.47	0.05
Amongst respondents who are natural parents:							
Number of marriages/de-facto relationships^a							
None	0.19	2.76	0.62	0.24	0.52	0.95	1.23
One	87.76	58.67	73.08	79.33	65.88	63.98	71.37
Two	10.60	28.64	21.95	17.79	27.30	28.44	21.72
Three or more	1.45	9.57	4.14	2.64	6.30	6.16	5.50
Can't say/refused	0.00	0.36	0.21	0.00	0.00	0.47	0.18

^a Per cent of strata total who are natural parents

Table 1.5
The Country of Birth, Educational Qualifications, and Occupations of Natural Parents

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Natural mother's country of birth							
Australia	78.56	75.94	69.25	75.89	74.22	77.83	75.73
Other English-speaking	10.05	10.05	12.63	13.13	12.50	9.43	10.90
Other non-English speaking	11.10	13.16	18.13	10.74	13.02	12.74	12.94
Refused/can't say	0.29	0.85	0.00	0.24	0.26	0.00	0.43
Natural father's country of birth							
Australia	75.22	71.13	63.75	73.27	72.40	77.83	72.00
Other English-speaking	10.91	9.84	14.87	12.41	11.98	10.38	11.25
Other non-English speaking	13.59	17.76	20.16	13.84	14.84	11.32	15.92
Refused/can't say	0.29	1.27	1.22	0.48	0.78	0.47	0.83
Natural mother's education							
advanced diploma or degree	16.27	9.06	11.81	13.84	12.50	14.15	12.41
bachelor degree or above	24.31	8.00	15.89	16.23	15.10	15.57	15.24
business/ finance qualification	0.10	0.14	0.61	0.95	0.52	0.47	0.33
certificate I or II	2.58	4.60	2.24	3.82	4.17	5.19	3.68
certificate III or IV	8.13	15.92	15.07	12.89	12.50	14.62	13.04
certificate (unknown level or type)	11.30	10.40	11.81	10.98	9.37	11.79	10.85
trade certificate	0.19	0.35	0.00	0.24	0.26	0.47	0.25
teaching/ education degree	0.19	0.07	0.20	0.00	0.26	0.47	0.15
child care qualification	0.19	0.14	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.47	0.15
registered nurse qualification	0.38	0.14	0.81	0.48	0.52	0.47	0.38
other nursing courses	1.24	0.42	0.41	0.48	0.52	0.00	0.63
office/ secretarial qualification	0.67	0.50	0.41	0.95	1.30	0.94	0.68
hairdressing/ beautician qualification	0.19	0.14	0.00	0.00	0.26	0.00	0.13
hospitality qualification	0.00	0.28	0.41	0.00	0.26	0.00	0.18
year 12 or equivalent	8.61	8.14	7.54	7.16	10.16	6.13	8.17
less than year 12 or equivalent	0.10	0.07	0.41	0.00	0.00	0.47	0.13
year 11	6.89	5.59	7.33	9.31	6.51	4.72	6.58
year 10	14.07	17.76	15.68	16.47	18.49	16.04	16.37
year 9 or less	2.87	13.52	6.31	3.58	5.21	6.60	7.59
other	0.57	1.98	1.02	1.67	0.52	0.94	1.26
did not go to school	0.00	0.21	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.08
Can't say/refused	1.15	2.55	1.83	0.96	1.56	0.47	1.71

Table 1.5 (continued)
The Country of Birth, Educational Qualifications, and Occupations of Natural Parents

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Natural father's education							
advanced diploma or degree	12.44	2.62	7.14	9.07	5.73	7.08	6.99
bachelor degree or above	23.44	7.30	16.33	18.62	10.94	14.62	14.62
certificate I or II	0.38	0.71	0.20	0.72	0.78	1.42	0.61
certificate III or IV	4.21	2.06	3.67	7.16	5.21	3.30	3.74
Certificate (unknown level or type)	13.40	8.23	12.24	10.50	9.64	14.63	10.81
trade certificate	0.00	0.14	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05
teaching/ education degree	0.00	0.07	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.03
year 12 or equivalent	13.49	11.99	14.69	12.89	15.63	15.09	13.33
less than year 12 or equivalent	25.65	17.66	20.61	28.88	24.48	16.04	21.89
year 11	0.86	3.55	3.27	1.43	2.34	6.13	2.60
year 10	2.87	19.43	10.61	3.82	11.72	10.38	11.09
year 9 or less	0.96	13.33	6.12	3.82	7.29	5.19	7.15
other	0.00	0.07	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05
Can't say/refused	2.30	12.84	4.90	3.10	6.25	6.13	7.05
Natural mother's occupation							
1a. Manager	4.40	1.84	5.09	5.49	4.43	4.72	3.71
1b. Farmer/farm manager	2.01	0.57	1.02	2.39	1.30	3.30	1.41
1c. Professional	32.34	12.67	18.94	22.20	22.66	21.23	21.06
1d. Associate professional	9.67	6.86	10.59	12.17	9.64	12.26	9.18
1e. Tradesperson	2.39	3.33	2.24	2.63	3.39	2.36	2.83
1f. Advanced clerical/ services worker	6.41	3.26	3.46	4.53	6.25	5.19	4.64
1g. Intermediate clerical, sales or services worker	22.49	23.99	27.90	24.34	23.44	22.17	23.97
1h. Intermediate production/ transport worker	1.24	3.47	2.04	1.19	3.13	1.89	2.35
1i. Elementary clerical, sales or services worker	6.41	13.38	5.09	9.31	8.85	7.08	9.31
1j. Labourer	4.88	15.99	13.03	6.92	9.38	9.91	10.77
2. Other occupation	2.97	2.19	2.24	3.82	3.91	3.30	2.80
3. No occupation	0.19	0.85	0.20	0.48	0.00	0.00	0.43
4. Homemaker	0.38	0.57	0.61	0.72	0.00	0.94	0.50
5. Can't say	0.10	0.42	0.61	0.48	0.00	0.47	0.33
No reply	4.11	10.62	6.92	3.34	3.65	5.19	6.71

Table 1.5 (continued)
The Country of Birth, Educational Qualifications, and Occupations of Natural Parents

	Economic Circumstances						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Natural father's occupation							
1a. Manager	12.06	4.03	6.52	9.79	4.95	7.55	7.34
1b. Farmer/farm manager	4.40	1.42	3.67	4.30	1.82	4.72	3.00
1c. Professional	23.44	9.91	16.70	18.38	11.20	16.51	15.69
1d. Associate professional	15.98	9.13	12.42	9.79	10.94	9.43	11.60
1e. Tradesperson	17.32	19.60	18.53	20.29	22.14	18.40	19.12
1f. Advanced clerical/ services worker	0.48	0.50	0.61	0.48	0.52	0.00	0.48
1g. Intermediate clerical, sales or services worker	5.17	5.02	7.94	5.49	5.99	8.49	5.75
1h. Intermediate production/ transport worker	7.46	15.15	13.24	15.04	17.19	15.09	13.07
1i. Elementary clerical, sales or services worker	2.58	3.47	4.07	3.10	3.65	1.42	3.18
1j. Labourer	5.07	16.70	8.15	8.59	13.28	9.43	11.00
2. Other occupation	4.69	2.19	3.46	2.86	2.34	4.72	3.23
3. No occupation	0.00	2.26	0.81	0.00	1.04	0.94	1.06
5. Can't say	0.57	3.68	1.22	0.48	2.08	1.89	1.97
No reply	0.77	6.94	2.65	1.43	2.86	1.42	3.51

Section 2:

The Household Composition and Housing Arrangements of Parents

Overview of Findings:

This section of the report considers the current housing arrangements of parents, providing insight into such issues as the type of housing respondents live in, as well as the size and the composition of their households. The summary statistics are provided in the Tables 2.1 and 2.2.

Our results show that, in contrast to parents who have no history of income-support dependence (category A), respondents who rely heavily on income support (category B) are much less likely to live in the dwellings that they either own outright (17 per cent for category B vs. almost 40 per cent for category A) or pay the mortgage for (32 per cent for category B vs. more than half of category A respondents). Consequently, for people with long and intensive histories of income-support reliance, the probability of living in rented accommodation is more than nine times greater than for people who never used the income-support system.

The disparity among people renting their accommodation is also quite pronounced for people relying heavily on income support. While for all other categories the percentage of respondents renting from a private landlord is around 80 per cent, it is only 58 per cent for category B respondents, with a much larger proportion of them renting from the government or local council (more than 40 per cent for category B vs. 11 – 20 per cent for other categories). Moreover, amongst respondents who do not own their dwelling, only 37 per cent of intensive income-support users have ever been in the process of buying their own home, as opposed to more than 70 per cent of people with no history of income-support reliance (category A).

For the respondents from categories C to F, belonging to families whose reliance on income support was less severe, the answers in most cases range between the two extremes of A and B. In particular, the proportion of home owners in categories C, E and F is around 25 per cent, while for category D, which includes people who had only very short (less than 3 years) and not very recent exposure to the income-support system, the corresponding number is 29 per cent. In addition, the percentage of people in these four categories who are currently in the process of repaying their mortgage is much closer to the percentage reported by category A respondents who have no history of income-support receipt. This suggests that the length and recency of income-support use can also be important determinants of respondents' outcomes.

The housing section of the *Youth in Focus* (YIF) survey also asks questions about the type of housing the respondents live in, as well as the number of rooms in the dwelling and the number of people living in the respondent's household. The overwhelming majority of respondents live in stand-alone houses (the proportions range from 88 to 97 per cent, with the lowest proportion occurring in category B and the highest in category A). People with an intensive history of income-support use (category B) tend to live in dwellings with a smaller number of bedrooms, with more than 60 per cent of respondents in this category living in houses/apartments that have three or less bedrooms, in contrast to only 33 per cent of respondents with no history of income support (category A). However, this may be related to the smaller household size for category B respondents, almost half of whom live with two or less people, as opposed to only a quarter of category A respondents.

Thus, the survey results show that people with the history of intensive and prolonged exposure to the income-support system are more likely to live in rented accommodation, to

be renting from government or local council, and to have smaller households and smaller dwellings.

Table 2.1
The Household Composition and Housing Arrangements of Parents

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total number of respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Number of people living with respondent^a							
One or less	6.79	20.38	14.26	7.40	10.68	13.68	13.37
Two	18.76	27.18	27.29	18.62	24.22	21.23	23.46
Three	38.76	25.48	28.51	35.80	32.03	36.32	31.66
Four	24.59	14.86	19.35	25.78	21.61	16.04	19.85
Five or more	11.10	11.75	10.39	12.41	11.46	12.74	11.50
Refused/can't say	0.00	0.35	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.15
Housing arrangements^a							
Owned outright	39.81	17.20	25.46	29.36	25.00	25.94	26.69
Being paid off	53.11	31.71	47.66	57.76	53.13	47.64	45.01
Rented	5.17	47.06	25.05	11.93	19.79	24.06	25.71
Other housing arrangements	1.91	4.03	1.83	0.95	2.08	2.36	2.60
Total renting^b	54	665	123	50	76	51	1,019
Renting from private landlord	83.33	58.35	80.49	80.00	80.26	86.27	66.44
From government/local council	16.67	40.90	14.63	18.00	19.74	11.76	32.29
Don't know	0.00	0.75	4.88	2.00	0.00	1.96	1.28
Total not owning or paying off mortgage^c	74	722	123	54	84	56	1,122
Owned or have been in process of buying a house or flat etc.	71.62	37.26	60.61	64.81	59.52	71.43	46.97
Never owned or been in process of buying a house or flat etc.	28.38	62.74	39.39	35.19	40.48	28.57	53.03
Type of current housing^a							
Stand-alone house	96.84	87.76	89.61	95.70	93.75	93.40	92.10
Semi-detached house	1.34	5.38	2.85	1.43	3.39	1.42	3.18
Flat, unit, or apartment	1.53	5.87	7.33	2.63	2.86	5.19	4.24
Other	0.29	0.99	0.20	0.24	0.00	0.00	0.48

^a Per cent of strata total.

^b Per cent of renters.

^c Per cent of non-owners.

Table 2.1 (continued)
The Household Composition and Housing Arrangements of Parents

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Number of bedrooms in the dwelling^a							
Two or less	1.24	9.55	6.11	2.15	4.43	6.13	5.47
Three	32.25	52.51	42.97	31.98	46.35	45.75	42.86
Four	47.37	29.51	35.64	47.97	38.54	35.38	38.12
Five or more	18.66	8.14	14.87	17.90	10.68	12.74	13.27
Can't say/refused	0.48	0.28	0.41	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.28

^a Per cent of strata total.

Section 3:

The Educational Attainment of Parents

Overview of Findings:

The level of parental education is an important determinant of educational and employment outcomes for young adults. The correlation of educational attainment between generations is well-documented in the research literature (see Cobb-Clark and Gørgens 2004 for a comprehensive literature review), and is considered one of the most important driving mechanisms behind the intergenerational transfer of advantage or disadvantage. The level of parental educational attainment is likely to influence that of their children through the availability of financial resources to fund education, the ability of parents to assist their children with school homework, and the transfer of attitudes towards education, among other things.

The parent questionnaire of the *Youth in Focus* (YIF) study collects information on the educational attainment of parents, including both secondary and post-school education. Respondents are asked questions about the highest level of primary or secondary school completed, the type of school attended in their last year of school, and other educational qualifications they might have completed since leaving secondary school.

Our data indicate that the level of school education tends to be lower for people who have a history of intensive income-support use (category B). Specifically, 21 per cent of respondents belonging to this category report completing 9 years or less of secondary school. This proportion is much smaller for all other economic categories, the differential being greatest for category A respondents who do not have any history of income-support use (less than 5 per cent). Category A respondents are also on the whole more likely to have completed Year 12 or equivalent of secondary school (53 per cent as opposed to 28 per cent in category B). The respondents belonging to the other four categories, who have been accessing the income-support system for a shorter period of time, report Year 12 completion rates between 37 and 43 per cent which lie almost exactly in the middle of proportions reported by the two first categories.

Regarding post-school education, the proportions of parents who have had no education after completing secondary school vary between 31 and 42 per cent across economic categories, with respondents who have a history of intensive income-support use (category B) reporting the highest percentages. The rates of attainment of trade certificates and other qualifications are relatively constant across categories; however, the proportion of people who have university degrees is three times lower for category B respondents than for people with no history of income support (category A) and twice as low for respondents in all other categories.

Table 3.1
The Educational Attainment of Parents

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Highest level of primary or secondary school completed^a							
Year 9 or less	4.78	20.95	9.16	7.16	9.38	9.91	12.06
Year 10	27.94	37.44	37.68	31.74	40.89	34.43	34.54
Year 11	14.16	13.31	15.07	18.14	12.50	16.98	14.38
Year 12 or equivalent	53.01	27.67	37.27	42.96	36.72	38.68	38.62
Did not go to school	0.00	0.21	0.41	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.13
Can't say/ refused	0.10	0.42	0.41	0.00	0.52	0.00	0.28
Total	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Total who went to school	1,044	1,404	487	419	382	212	3,948
Type of school attended during last year of school^b							
<i>Government school</i>	<i>74.9</i>	<i>81.41</i>	<i>76.8</i>	<i>73.75</i>	<i>81.15</i>	<i>79.25</i>	<i>78.17</i>
<i>Catholic school</i>	<i>15.13</i>	<i>11.54</i>	<i>13.96</i>	<i>16.95</i>	<i>11.78</i>	<i>12.74</i>	<i>13.45</i>
<i>Other non-government</i>	<i>9.58</i>	<i>6.48</i>	<i>8.62</i>	<i>8.83</i>	<i>7.07</i>	<i>8.02</i>	<i>7.95</i>
<i>None of these/ can't say</i>	<i>0.38</i>	<i>0.57</i>	<i>0.62</i>	<i>0.48</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>0.43</i>
Other educational qualifications completed since leaving school^a							
None	31.20	42.25	34.22	34.13	39.58	31.13	36.63
Still studying for first degree	0.67	2.69	1.63	1.43	1.04	1.89	1.69
Trade certificate	17.03	21.09	20.98	18.85	20.83	25.47	19.98
University degree	28.13	8.85	18.53	17.66	17.97	18.87	17.48
Other qualification	22.87	25.12	24.44	27.68	20.57	22.64	24.14
Can't say/ refused	0.10	0.00	0.20	0.24	0.00	0.00	0.08

^a Per cent of strata total.

^b Per cent of total who went to school.

Table 3.1 (continued)
The Educational Attainment of Parents

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Highest qualification completed since leaving secondary school^c							
Bachelor degree or above	36.43	14.49	25.80	25.65	25.44	23.94	25.12
Advanced diploma or diploma	24.47	16.67	18.47	22.30	21.05	21.83	20.50
Certificate iii or iv	12.24	29.62	23.25	20.07	21.93	21.83	21.52
Certificate I or ii	3.52	8.59	3.82	5.95	7.02	7.75	6.01
Certificate (unknown)	17.16	20.38	20.38	17.84	15.79	17.61	18.58
Trade certificate	0.28	0.90	0.00	0.37	0.44	0.70	0.49
Registered nurse qualification	0.56	0.26	1.59	0.74	0.88	0.70	0.65
Other nursing courses	1.83	0.77	0.64	0.74	0.88	0.00	1.02
Office/ secretarial/ Hospitality qualification	0.98	0.90	0.64	1.49	2.19	1.41	1.10
Teaching/ education degree	0.00	0.51	0.64	0.00	0.44	0.00	0.29
Business/ finance qualification	0.28	0.26	0.32	0.00	0.44	0.70	0.29
Hairdressing/ beautician qualification	0.14	0.38	0.96	1.49	0.88	0.70	0.57
Child care qualification	0.28	0.26	0.00	0.00	0.44	0.00	0.20
Other	0.28	0.26	0.32	0.00	0.00	0.70	0.25
Can't say/ refused	0.84	3.72	1.91	2.60	0.88	1.41	2.13
	0.70	2.05	1.27	0.74	1.32	0.70	1.27
Total completed qualification since secondary school	711	780	314	269	228	142	2,444

^c Per cent of total who completed qualification since secondary school.

Section 4:

The Employment, Earnings, and Income of Parents

Overview of Findings:

In the transmission of advantage and disadvantage across generations, parental employment characteristics are a crucial determinant of the child's future employment, labour earnings and overall income. Various international studies point to a strong degree of correlation between parental and children's earnings; moreover, current and permanent family income affect the educational and health outcomes of young adults.

To assess this, the *Youth in Focus* (YIF) parent respondents were asked a number of questions about their employment status. These questions included the number of hours worked, amounts earned, both before and after tax⁵, employment arrangements and respondents' occupation. Parents with two or more jobs were asked about the number of hours and earnings in all their jobs as well as in the main job only. In order to evaluate current family prosperity, respondents were also asked to provide information on their own and their partner's income from various sources, including wages or salaries income, income from own business, and income from interest or dividends.

The employment-related results in this Section are summarised separately for the three groups of people: those currently employed, those who were last employed less than one year before commencement of Wave 1 interviewing (August 2006), and those whose last employment was more than one year prior to the survey. People with past employment only were asked a limited set of questions that included occupation and, for those recently employed, the number of jobs they had had at the time of their last employment. Respondents who were not employed at the time of the survey were also asked questions about their job search activities and current main activity. The income of parents (and partners) is summarised by source in the last table in this Section (Table 4.5).

The proportion of currently employed respondents ranges between 58 and 87 per cent across the six economic categories. The highest percentage of those currently employed is observed amongst respondents belonging to category A, who have never been exposed to the income-support system. The group that has the lowest proportion of currently employed is the category that includes people heavily dependent on income support (category B). This group of respondents also has the highest proportion of people who were never employed. Among the other four groups of the surveyed parents, category D respondents, whose income-support-related history was very short (less than three years) and not very recent, most closely resemble respondents belonging to the category A. The remaining categories (C, E, and F) which include people with histories of income-support use of varying recency and of up to six years long, all report percentages that range between those for categories A and B. It is worthwhile to note, however, that the proportion of the currently employed in these three categories is much closer to the percentage reported by the category A individuals.

Among those employed, the proportion of people who have more than one job is relatively stable across economic categories, however, hours worked and earnings differ dramatically. For parent respondents who are or were intensive users of the income-support system (category B), both the hours of work and earnings from all jobs tend to be skewed towards the lower end of the scale, while for respondents who never received income support (Category A) the opposite is true.

⁵ The after-tax earnings categories were made out to roughly correspond to the before-tax earnings categories under the 2005-06 financial year tax rates.

The prevalent occupations of respondents also differ across categories. The share of professionals is much higher among those parents who did not receive any income support (36 per cent for category A) than among heavy users of the income-support system (18 per cent for this category), however, the latter category has the highest percentages of clerical, sales and services employees and labourers (47 and 17 per cent, respectively, as opposed to 35 and 5 per cent for category A). The same pattern can be observed for the group of currently non-working parents whose last employment was less than one year ago and, perhaps to a lesser extent, for respondents who last worked more than one year prior to the survey.

Cross-occupational distribution of respondents from the other economic categories does not seem to have as clear a pattern as when we consider the two extreme categories only. In many cases, however, the numbers reported by respondents belonging to the categories C to F fall between those observed for A and B. A more comprehensive analysis is needed to disentangle the combined effects of the length and the timing of income-support.

About one fifth of all parents unemployed at the time of the interview were looking for paid work, the corresponding proportion being two times as high for respondents who had a history of longer income-support receipt (categories B, C, E, and F) as for respondents who had no exposure to income-support system (category A). Category B respondents were also more likely to identify themselves as looking for full-time jobs than their category A counterparts. Regarding the main activity of the unemployed parents, more than three quarters of category A respondents reported housework as their main activity, while only less than half of category B respondents did the same, instead being much more likely to report that they are looking after ill or disabled persons (10 per cent), are disabled or injured themselves (13 per cent), or are looking after children (just below 19 per cent) which would suggest a presence of younger children in the household.

Finally, the breakdown of respondents' income by source and amount is shown in Table 4.5. Comparing the income received from various sources by respondents in categories A and B – the two polar categories with respect to income-support receipt – two general observations can be made. The data show that people who have a history of intensive income-support receipt are, firstly, less likely to receive income from any of the sources asked about in the interview, and, secondly, those who do receive income are more likely to receive lower amounts of income than those who have never used income-support system. For instance, more than 60 per cent of the category B respondents report the annual wages/salaries received by respondents (and partner, if available) at a level of \$35,000 or less. At the same time, about 68 per cent of category A respondents (and their partners) received more than \$60,000 a year from wages and salaries. Among the remaining four groups, category D (less than 3 years of income-support receipt) follows category A most closely, reporting the second highest proportion (51 per cent) of respondents who received more than \$60,000 a year from wages and salaries.

Overall, it can be seen that there are significant disparities between employment, earnings and income across the survey stratification categories. Respondents who rely most heavily on income support are less likely to be employed, and, if employed, tend to work fewer hours. Category B respondents also have lower earnings and generally work in more menial occupations. On the other hand, these respondents are more likely to be looking for paid full-time work than people in other categories.

Table 4.1
The Employment Status of Parents

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Employment status^a							
Currently employed	87.46	58.10	76.78	84.96	79.95	78.30	74.19
Recently employed	2.97	7.36	4.48	3.34	3.65	5.19	4.94
Employed in the past	8.33	25.55	14.87	9.55	13.54	13.68	16.20
Never/can't say	1.24	8.99	3.87	2.15	2.86	2.83	4.67

^a Per cent of strata total.

Table 4.2
The Employment Circumstances and Earnings of Parents Currently Employed

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Currently Employed	914	821	377	356	307	166	2,941
Number of jobs respondent has^a							
Only 1 job	86.21	85.87	85.94	88.48	92.83	85.54	87.01
More than 1 job	13.68	14.13	13.79	11.52	7.17	14.46	12.92
Can't say	0.11	0.00	0.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.07
Total hours worked in all jobs^a							
20 hrs or less	21.01	33.25	24.40	21.91	17.92	24.70	24.86
> 20 to 30 hrs	22.87	22.17	21.49	19.94	20.20	18.07	21.59
> 30 to 40 hrs	33.59	29.96	33.42	41.57	43.32	36.14	34.68
> 40 hrs	21.01	11.94	19.10	15.17	17.59	20.48	17.14
Refused/Can't say	1.53	2.68	1.59	1.40	0.98	0.60	1.73
Total Not Volunteering or Working Without Pay							
	900	799	372	349	306	160	2,886
Weekly earnings before tax^b							
\$350 or less	13.11	30.54	20.43	19.20	14.38	21.25	20.20
>\$350 to \$500	14.33	19.77	18.55	16.05	14.38	18.13	16.81
>\$500 to \$650	13.44	18.15	22.04	13.47	14.38	15.63	16.08
>\$650 to \$900	18.78	16.65	19.62	23.21	24.51	18.75	19.44
>\$900	31.33	8.14	13.71	20.34	26.14	21.25	20.20
Incomparable payment	0.78	0.50	0.00	0.29	0.65	0.00	0.49
Refuse/can't say	8.22	6.26	5.65	7.45	5.56	5.00	6.79
Weekly earnings after tax^b							
\$315 or less	15.33	31.29	22.85	19.20	15.69	23.13	21.66
>\$315 to \$440	13.56	17.52	17.20	17.77	16.34	15.00	16.01
>\$440 to \$545	14.33	18.90	23.12	15.19	14.38	13.75	16.81
>\$545 to \$720	19.67	14.02	19.62	19.20	23.86	20.00	18.50
>\$720	24.89	8.01	10.75	17.48	21.90	17.50	16.77
Incomparable payment	0.44	0.50	0.27	0.86	0.00	0.63	0.45
Refuse/can't say	11.78	9.76	6.18	10.32	7.84	10.00	9.81

^a Per cent of strata total.

^b Per cent of those not volunteering or working without pay.

Table 4.2 (continued)
The Employment Circumstances and Earnings of Parents Currently Employed

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	914	821	377	356	307	166	2,941
Respondent's occupation^a							
a. Manager	5.25	2.68	5.31	5.62	5.21	4.82	4.56
b. Farmer/farm manager	2.30	0.37	1.33	2.53	1.63	4.22	1.70
c. Professional	35.67	17.90	20.16	23.88	27.69	24.10	25.81
d. Associate professional	10.72	8.77	11.94	12.92	10.75	13.86	10.78
f. Tradesperson	2.84	3.41	3.18	2.81	3.26	2.41	3.06
g. Clerical, sales and services employee	34.90	46.89	41.38	39.04	41.04	36.14	40.29
h. Labourer	4.38	16.69	12.73	7.58	6.19	9.04	9.72
i. Homemaker/housewife/househusband	0.44	0.49	0.00	0.84	0.00	0.60	0.41
j. Other/Can't say	3.50	2.44	3.98	4.49	4.23	4.82	3.54
k. Unemployed	0.00	0.37	0.00	0.28	0.00	0.00	0.14

^a Per cent of strata total.

Table 4.3
The Employment Circumstances and Earnings of Parents Who Last Worked Less than One Year before Wave 1 Interviewing (August 2006)

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	31	103	22	14	13	11	194
Number of jobs respondent had^a							
Only 1 job	100.00	90.29	100.00	92.86	100.00	90.91	93.81
More than 1 job	0.00	9.71	0.00	7.14	0.00	9.09	6.19
Respondent's occupation^a							
a. Manager	0.00	2.88	4.55	7.14	14.29	9.09	4.08
b. Farmer/farm manage	0.00	1.92	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.02
c. Professional	25.81	3.85	18.18	0.00	7.14	18.18	9.69
d. Associate professional	9.68	5.77	18.18	14.29	0.00	0.00	7.65
f. Tradesperson	3.23	6.73	4.55	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.59
g. Clerical, sales and services employee	41.94	57.69	36.36	64.29	42.86	27.27	50.51
h. Labourer	12.90	19.23	18.18	7.14	28.57	45.45	19.39
j. Other/Can't say	6.45	1.92	0.00	7.14	7.14	0.00	3.06

^a Per cent of strata total.

Table 4.4
The Employment Circumstances and Earnings of Parents Who Last Worked More than One Year before Wave 1 Interviewing (August 2006)

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	87	361	73	40	52	29	642
Respondent's occupation^a							
a. Manager	0.00	0.83	5.48	7.50	0.00	3.45	1.71
b. Farmer/farm manage	0.00	0.83	0.00	2.50	0.00	0.00	0.62
c. Professional	12.64	7.48	23.29	22.50	5.77	10.34	10.90
d. Associate professional	6.90	6.93	8.22	10.00	7.69	10.34	7.48
f. Tradesperson	6.90	6.37	2.74	2.50	5.77	3.45	5.61
g. Clerical, sales and services employee	63.22	52.63	39.73	47.50	55.77	55.17	52.65
h. Labourer	9.20	21.33	20.55	7.50	23.08	13.79	18.54
j. Other/Can't say	1.15	3.05	0.00	0.00	1.92	3.45	2.18
k. Unemployed	0.00	0.55	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.31

^a Per cent of strata total.

Table 4.5
The Job Search of Parents Not Currently Working

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	131	592	114	63	77	46	1,023
Looking for paid work within the last 4 weeks?^a							
Yes	10.69	20.78	23.68	15.87	20.78	23.91	19.65
No	87.79	78.89	75.44	82.54	79.22	76.09	79.77
Can't say	1.53	0.34	0.88	1.59	0.00	0.00	0.59
Total looking for paid work:	14	123	27	10	16	11	201
Looking for full-time or part-time work?^b							
Full time work	14.29	21.95	14.81	0.00	18.75	18.18	18.91
Part time work	50.00	41.46	51.85	40.00	62.50	54.55	45.77
Any work	35.71	34.96	29.63	60.00	18.75	27.27	33.83
Can't say	0.00	1.63	3.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.49
Total not looking for paid work:	117	469	87	53	61	35	822
Respondent's main activity at present:^c							
Looking after children	5.98	18.55	18.39	13.21	16.39	5.71	15.69
Own illness, injury or disability	3.42	13.43	12.64	0.00	14.75	5.71	10.83
Looking after ill or disabled person	1.71	9.38	6.90	1.89	1.64	17.14	7.30
Travel or on holiday	3.42	0.21	1.15	1.89	0.00	0.00	0.85
Working in an unpaid job	2.56	3.20	2.30	3.77	1.64	2.86	2.92
Home duties/ housework	77.78	46.27	45.98	71.70	62.30	54.29	53.89
Studying	1.71	6.18	9.20	7.55	1.64	8.57	5.72
Home schooling children	0.00	0.64	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.36
Church activities	0.00	0.64	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.36
Waiting to start next job	0.00	0.21	1.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.24
Retired/ pensioner	0.85	0.64	1.15	0.00	1.64	2.86	0.85
Other	1.71	0.43	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.86	0.61
Can't say/ refused	0.85	0.21	1.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.36

^a Per cent of strata total.

^b Per cent of those looking for paid work.

^c Per cent of those not looking for paid work.

Table 4.6
The Income of Parents by Source

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Total respondents (or partners) receiving wages/salary in 2005-06 financial year	954	904	389	369	345	175	3,136
Per cent of strata total	91.29	63.98	79.23	88.07	89.84	82.55	79.11
Combined yearly wages/salaries before tax ^a							
Less than \$10,000	2.20	17.92	7.20	3.79	4.64	10.29	8.26
\$\$10,000 - 25,000	4.72	21.90	13.11	5.96	6.38	8.57	11.26
\$\$25,000 - 35,000	4.51	19.91	16.20	7.59	7.54	16.57	11.77
\$\$35,000 - 45,000	4.30	12.50	17.48	9.21	10.14	10.29	9.85
\$\$45,000 - 60,000	8.81	9.96	12.85	15.72	16.52	17.14	11.77
\$\$60,000 - 80,000	18.45	6.53	13.62	23.31	21.45	16.57	15.21
\$\$80,000 - 100,000	21.17	2.43	9.00	15.72	13.33	7.43	11.99
\$100,000+	28.72	1.99	5.66	11.65	13.33	7.43	13.27
Refused/can't say	7.13	6.86	4.88	7.05	6.67	5.71	6.63
Total respondents (or partners) receiving own business income in 2005-06 financial year	295	164	87	124	93	49	812
Per cent of strata total	28.23	11.61	17.72	29.59	24.22	23.11	20.48
Combined yearly income from own business ^b							
Less than \$15,000	19.45	40.24	34.48	20.97	13.98	20.41	24.94
\$\$15,000 - 30,000	13.65	25.61	20.69	16.94	20.43	36.73	19.51
\$\$30,000 - 60,000	22.53	19.51	25.29	31.45	25.81	16.33	23.58
\$\$60,000+	30.03	3.05	10.34	20.16	24.73	12.24	19.26
Refused/can't say	14.33	11.59	9.20	10.48	15.05	14.29	12.72
Total respondents (or partners) receiving workers' compensation in 2005-06 financial year	22	23	15	8	6	6	80
Per cent of strata total	2.11	1.63	3.05	1.91	1.56	2.83	2.02
Combined yearly workers' compensation ^c							
Less than \$15,000	50.00	69.57	53.33	75.00	50.00	83.33	61.25
\$15,000+	50.00	30.43	46.67	25.00	50.00	16.67	38.75

^a Per cent of those received wages/salaries

^b Per cent of those receiving income from own business

^c Per cent of those received workers' compensation

Table 4.6
The Income of Parents by Source (continued)

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Total respondents (or partners) receiving interest/dividends in 2005-06 financial year	422	147	116	120	88	55	948
Per cent of strata total	40.38	10.40	23.63	28.64	22.92	25.94	23.92
Combined yearly interest and dividends ^d							
Less than \$3,000	46.92	70.75	59.48	62.50	59.09	60.00	56.01
\$3,000+	50.95	28.57	39.66	36.67	40.91	38.18	42.62
Refused/can't say	2.13	0.68	0.86	0.83	0.00	1.82	1.37
Total respondents (or partners) receiving rental income in 2005-06 financial year	228	52	34	60	43	23	440
Per cent of strata total	21.82	3.68	6.92	14.32	11.20	10.85	11.10
Combined yearly income from rental property ^e							
Less than \$15,000	57.21	78.85	67.65	71.67	58.14	78.26	63.72
\$15,000+	42.36	21.15	32.35	28.33	37.21	17.39	35.37
Refused/can't say	0.44	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.65	4.35	0.91
Total respondents (or partners) receiving income from other sources 2005-06 financial year	57	120	51	19	15	16	278
Per cent of strata total	5.45	8.49	10.39	4.53	3.91	7.55	7.01
Combined yearly income from other sources ^f							
Less than 15,000	64.91	62.50	58.82	47.37	73.33	81.25	62.95
15,000+	35.09	37.50	39.22	52.63	26.67	12.50	36.33
Refuse/can't say	0.00	0.00	1.96	0.00	0.00	6.25	0.72

^d Per cent of those receiving interest/dividends

^e Per cent of those receiving rental income.

^f Per cent of those received income from other sources

Section 5:

Parents' Reports of Youths' Educational Experiences and Childhood Activities

Overview of Findings:

The nature of a young person's educational experiences is central to understanding his or her future life chances. In particular, educational qualifications are closely tied to adult labour market outcomes including income levels, the nature of one's job, the propensity to be unemployed, etc. Education has also been linked to health outcomes as well as to economic and social wellbeing more generally. Consequently, it is imperative to understand the extent to which educational disadvantage is the mechanism through which economic disadvantage is passed from one generation to the next.

For this reason, the *Youth in Focus* (YIF) survey includes a range of very detailed questions about not only educational outcomes, but also about the educational process more broadly. Specifically, parents are asked several questions about the youth's education including: the youth's attendance and performance at school, the youth's participation in various educational programs and extra-curricular activities, the parent's involvement in the youth's education, as well as the youth's current study plans. These outcomes – as reported by parents – will be discussed in this section of the report. Youths' perspectives on their educational experiences will be discussed in Section 13, while parents' and youths' views about the importance of getting a good education are discussed in Sections 9 and 18 respectively.

We begin by considering parents' reports of youths' performance in school (see Table 5.1). Parents with no history of income-support (category A) report that their children performed somewhat better in school than do parents with an intensive history of income-support receipt (category B). In families with shorter history of income support (categories C to F), the children perform better than in the families with heavy income-support reliance, but worse than in the families with no income-support history. Specifically, while 71 per cent of non-income-support parents report that their youth always or often received good marks in secondary school, only 66 per cent of parents with intensive income-support receipt report the same. Parents on intensive income-support are more than twice as likely to report that their child never received good marks. Parents in category B are also much more likely to report that their child's performance at school was average or below average. Moreover, amongst young people with below-average performance, 39 per cent of those on intensive income support are reported to have been "well below average" compared to only 28 per cent of those with no income-support history. In contrast, amongst those seen as having above-average performance, young people growing up on income support are much less likely to be seen as having performed well above the average.

These differences in reported school performance are reinforced by parents' reports of their children's educational experiences in school (see Table 5.2). In particular, regular attendance at secondary school is closely related to the family's experience with the income-support system. Specifically, parents with a history of intensive income-support receipt (category B) are more than twice as likely to report that their child often arrived late to secondary school and are almost five times as likely to report that their child was often absent from secondary school. Some of this may be related to higher mobility amongst the income-support population. More than one in four young people in families with a history of intensive income-support use have attended four or more schools, while 41 per cent have lived in five or more houses since birth. In contrast, the majority of youth in families with no income-support experience have attended one or two schools and have lived in one or two houses.

The nature of the school experience also appears to depend on a family's income-support history. Specifically, young people growing up in families with intensive income-support histories are two and a half times as likely to have repeated a year in school (15 vs. 6 per cent) or to have been suspended from school (25 vs. 10 per cent) (see Table 5.2). Moreover, young people in income-support families (all of the categories B to F) are much more likely to have been placed in remedial English or mathematics classes, programs for those with learning disabilities, and much less likely to have participated in gifted and talented classes. Interestingly, this does not seem to be related to the family's nativity status. The proportion of immigrant or first-generation young people accessing English as a second language courses is similar in economic category A and B families.

Extra-curricular activities after school or on weekends can be important in complementing the educational experience provided by schools. The results in Table 5.3, however, again point to disparities across economic categories. Fully 85 per cent of non-income-support parents report that their child participated in after-school or weekend activities during secondary school. In comparison, 66 per cent of parents with intensive income-support histories reported that their child participated in extra-curricular activities. Table 5.3 also provides information about the breadth of the activities undertaken by participants.⁶ In many cases, the proportion of category A and B youth participating in a particular activity is similar; for example, football/rugby/soccer, basketball, other organised clubs, etc. In other cases – for example, music, tennis, and netball – children are much more likely to participate in that activity if they are in families with no income-support history. On the other hand, young people in income-support families are more likely than other young people to have participated in church groups, boxing/martial arts, and cadets. In addition to differences in the types of activities undertaken, there are also differences in the number of activities that young people participated in during secondary school. Specifically, two-thirds (66 per cent) of children growing up in income-support families participated in at most one activity. In contrast, the majority of children in non-income support families participated in two or more extra-curricular activities.

Consistent with the patterns for extra-curricular activities, parents with intensive income-support histories also report being less involved in the parent committees in their children's schools (see Table 5.4). In particular, slightly more than half (56 per cent) of income-support parents report participating in a school committee or having attended a school committee meeting in comparison with 69 per cent of non-income-support parents. Moreover, non-income support parents (category A), or parents with recent (category C) or short (category D) income-support exposure were more likely to have participated over a longer time period.

Risky behaviour appears to be much more prevalent amongst young people growing up on income-support (see Table 5.5). More than one in five (21 per cent) of income-support parents report that their 18-year old has been in trouble with the police or attended juvenile court. This is a much higher incidence than amongst non-income-support families (9 per cent), or even families which have a shorter history of income support (around 11 per cent for categories C, D, and F, and 15 per cent for category E). According to their parents, youth growing up on income support are also much more likely than youth with no income-support history to have at some point drunk alcohol excessively (27 vs. 22 per cent), to have used illegal drugs (17 vs. 7 per cent), and to have hung out with a bad crowd (26 vs. 11 per cent).

⁶ As respondents could report multiple activities, the numbers presented do not sum to 100 per cent.

Given these patterns, it is perhaps not surprising that at age 18 there are substantial differences in the educational outcomes of young people from different economic categories (see Table 5.6). Overall, almost two-thirds (65 per cent) of young people in non-income-support families were studying at the time of the wave 1 interview in comparison with only 42 per cent of young people in families with intensive income-support histories. Youth in families with some income-support experience (economic categories C – F) have rates of study that hover around 52 – 58 per cent. Thus, there appears to be a clear relationship between a young person's income-support history and the propensity to be studying at age 18.

Amongst those who are still studying at age 18, there are also differences in the level of study across economic categories. Only 33 per cent of young people in families with intensive income-support receipt who are studying are undertaking a university degree. Eighteen per cent are in Year 12, while 45 per cent are studying at Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institution or a technical school. In contrast, the majority (52 per cent) of those in non-income-support families have commenced a university degree, while only 34 per cent are studying at a TAFE or technical school and 13 per cent are in Year 12. Given that the sample is drawn from a single birth cohort, the differences in the proportions of young people remaining in Year 12 are most likely not driven by age differences across economic categories, but are more likely to be due to the differences in the propensity for young people with different family backgrounds to have repeated a year at school.

Of those not studying at age 18, almost two-thirds (65 per cent) of young people in non-income-support families have completed their Year 12 qualification. In contrast, the majority of young people in income-support families ended their studies without receiving their Year 12 qualification and more than one in ten (12 per cent) left school with only a Year 9 qualification.

Taken together, the results in this section point to large differences in the educational experiences of young people across economic categories. Clearly, there remains much that we do not know about the potential causes and future consequences of these educational disparities. Still, the patterns are particularly troubling because of their consistency across a vast range of measures and because the magnitude of the gaps are substantial. Future research on the ways in which income-support receipt might be correlated with or cause educational disadvantage is a matter of high priority in order to assess the extent to which there is scope for policy to assist income-support clients in ensuring good educational outcomes for their children.

Table 5.1
Youth's School Performance

	Economic code						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Did youth receive good marks in secondary school?^a							
Always	34.26	26.89	30.55	31.98	29.17	27.36	30.07
Often	36.65	29.44	33.20	30.55	30.47	33.02	32.21
Sometimes	24.50	33.12	29.53	30.07	30.99	30.19	29.72
Never	4.11	9.41	5.50	6.68	9.38	8.96	7.21
Can't say	0.48	1.13	1.22	0.72	0.00	0.47	0.78
Focal youth's performance at school^a							
Above average	47.18	31.42	41.55	40.33	38.54	34.43	38.62
Average	46.51	56.69	51.93	51.55	50.00	53.77	52.07
Below average	5.84	11.25	5.70	7.64	10.94	10.85	8.70
Can't say	0.48	0.64	0.81	0.48	0.52	0.94	0.61
<i>Of those above average.^b</i>							
<i>A little above average</i>	<i>52.54</i>	<i>56.31</i>	<i>56.37</i>	<i>56.80</i>	<i>60.81</i>	<i>54.79</i>	<i>55.52</i>
<i>Well above average</i>	<i>46.04</i>	<i>39.86</i>	<i>42.16</i>	<i>38.46</i>	<i>37.16</i>	<i>43.84</i>	<i>41.93</i>
<i>Can't say</i>	<i>1.42</i>	<i>3.83</i>	<i>1.47</i>	<i>4.73</i>	<i>2.03</i>	<i>1.37</i>	<i>2.55</i>
<i>Of those below average.^c</i>							
<i>A little below average</i>	<i>68.85</i>	<i>57.86</i>	<i>67.86</i>	<i>71.88</i>	<i>71.43</i>	<i>39.13</i>	<i>62.32</i>
<i>Well below average</i>	<i>27.87</i>	<i>38.99</i>	<i>32.14</i>	<i>25.00</i>	<i>26.19</i>	<i>60.87</i>	<i>35.07</i>
<i>Can't say</i>	<i>3.28</i>	<i>3.14</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>3.13</i>	<i>2.38</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>2.61</i>

^a Per cent of strata total.

^b Per cent of those above average

^c Per cent of those below average

Table 5.2
Youth's Educational Experiences in Childhood

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Did youth often arrive late at secondary school?^a							
Yes	8.23	19.82	12.42	7.88	16.41	14.62	13.98
No	91.1	78.56	86.15	91.17	82.03	83.02	84.71
Can't say	0.67	1.63	1.43	0.95	1.56	2.36	1.31
Youth's absence from secondary school^a							
Often	4.31	20.45	10.79	6.44	13.8	12.26	12.44
Not often	95.41	77.99	88.19	92.6	85.94	86.32	86.6
Can't say	0.29	1.56	1.02	0.95	0.26	1.42	0.96
Number of different schools attended by youth^a							
One	3.44	3.96	2.85	3.34	2.34	3.30	3.43
Two	56.27	36.87	44.40	44.63	38.80	41.04	44.15
Three	26.22	29.72	31.36	30.31	32.29	34.43	29.57
Four	9.67	14.86	11.00	14.80	17.19	10.38	12.99
Five or more	4.31	13.73	9.78	6.68	9.11	10.85	9.41
Can't say	0.10	0.85	0.61	0.24	0.26	0.00	0.45
Number of different houses youth lived in since birth^a							
One	29.28	14.65	18.74	19.09	15.63	16.04	19.65
Two	28.33	16.70	22.81	25.06	20.57	19.81	21.95
Three	18.18	14.30	17.31	16.23	15.63	17.92	16.22
Four	8.71	11.54	11.20	14.32	13.02	11.79	11.20
Five or more	15.41	40.76	28.72	25.06	34.38	33.49	29.92
Refused/Can't say	0.10	2.05	1.22	0.24	0.78	0.94	1.06
Did youth ever repeat a year at school?^a							
Yes	6.32	15.22	10.79	11.46	12.76	14.15	11.63
No	93.40	84.36	88.59	88.31	87.24	84.91	87.99
Can't say	0.29	0.42	0.61	0.24	0.00	0.94	0.38
Was youth ever suspended from school?^a							
Yes	9.76	25.27	14.26	15.27	17.19	15.09	17.43
No	90.14	73.96	84.93	84.25	82.81	83.96	82.06
Can't say	0.10	0.78	0.81	0.48	0.00	0.94	0.50

^a Per cent of strata total.

Table 5.2
Youth's Educational Experiences in Childhood (continued)

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Was youth ever expelled from school?^a							
Yes	0.67	3.54	1.63	0.95	2.08	0.94	1.99
No	99.23	96.11	97.56	98.57	97.92	98.11	97.65
Can't say	0.10	0.35	0.81	0.48	0.00	0.94	0.35
Was youth placed in a remedial English course?^a							
Yes	9.95	13.31	12.83	13.37	12.50	16.04	12.44
No	89.76	84.50	85.54	85.20	86.20	83.49	86.20
Can't say	0.29	2.19	1.63	1.43	1.30	0.47	1.36
Was youth placed in a remedial mathematics course?^a							
Yes	4.78	8.14	6.31	5.25	8.07	9.91	6.81
No	94.64	89.53	92.06	93.56	89.84	88.21	91.57
Can't say	0.57	2.34	1.63	1.19	2.08	1.89	1.61
Was youth placed in program for students with learning difficulties?^a							
Yes	7.56	14.01	9.57	8.83	10.16	12.26	10.75
No	92.25	84.57	89.82	90.69	89.84	87.74	88.57
Can't say	0.19	1.42	0.61	0.48	0.00	0.00	0.68
Was youth placed in a special program for physically handicapped^a							
Yes	0.48	0.78	1.43	0.72	1.04	0.94	0.81
No	99.52	98.73	98.17	99.05	98.96	98.58	98.92
Can't say	0.00	0.50	0.41	0.24	0.00	0.47	0.28
Was youth placed in a program for gifted and talented?^a							
Yes	19.62	12.10	17.31	15.04	16.15	16.51	15.67
No	80.00	86.34	81.47	83.53	82.29	82.55	83.17
Can't say	0.38	1.56	1.22	1.43	1.56	0.94	1.16
Total parents born overseas or no info:	341	530	222	147	147	72	1,459
Was youth placed in English as a second language course^b							
Yes	4.69	4.34	12.16	8.16	4.08	1.39	5.83
No	94.43	93.21	87.39	90.48	95.24	97.22	92.73
Can't say	0.88	2.45	0.45	1.36	0.68	1.39	1.44

^a Per cent of strata total.

^b Per cent of overseas-born parents.

Table 5.3
Youth's Extra-Curricular Activities in Childhood

	Economic Categories						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Youth's participation in after-school/ weekend activities during secondary school^a							
Participated	84.69	65.75	73.73	79.71	72.14	80.19	74.6
Did not participate	14.93	33.12	25.66	19.81	27.34	19.81	24.72
Can't say	0.38	1.13	0.61	0.48	0.52	0.00	0.68
Types of activities^a							
Brownies/guides	1.13	1.72	1.93	0.90	0.36	0.59	1.29
Cubs/scouts	4.18	3.88	5.25	4.19	4.33	4.71	4.26
Church group	5.42	7.86	5.80	5.99	3.61	7.65	6.26
Other organised club	3.39	3.98	2.49	4.79	2.89	4.71	3.65
Basketball	14.92	12.59	12.43	17.66	16.61	16.47	14.44
Football/Rugby/Soccer	37.85	38.32	40.61	41.32	42.96	41.18	39.40
Netball	23.62	13.89	16.85	20.66	17.69	16.47	18.43
Cricket	14.35	9.69	11.60	14.07	10.83	11.76	12.04
Gymnastics	5.42	4.31	4.42	2.99	3.25	4.71	4.43
Swimming	11.53	8.40	12.98	10.48	9.03	11.18	10.35
Other organised sports	13.79	11.52	12.71	11.08	9.39	7.65	11.87
Bush-walking	0.56	0.32	0.55	0.00	0.36	0.00	0.37
Horse-riding	3.73	1.51	0.55	1.50	2.89	2.35	2.23
Skate-boarding	0.56	0.43	0.55	0.00	0.72	0.00	0.44
Music	16.38	11.95	11.60	13.17	15.88	11.76	13.73
Art	1.13	0.54	0.83	1.50	1.08	0.00	0.88
Drama	7.12	6.35	4.97	6.59	4.69	8.82	6.43
Dance	14.35	11.09	11.33	9.58	8.30	11.76	11.70
Debate team	1.81	0.86	1.10	1.80	3.25	1.76	1.56
Tennis	10.73	5.38	9.94	8.98	7.94	7.06	8.29
Skiing	0.68	0.43	0.28	0.30	0.36	0.59	0.47
Motor sports	1.13	0.22	0.28	0.90	1.44	0.00	0.68
Volunteer work	3.62	3.01	3.31	2.99	2.89	5.88	3.38
Cultural activities	1.81	1.18	1.10	1.80	2.89	2.94	1.69
Academic activities/competitions	0.56	0.22	0.83	0.30	1.81	0.00	0.54
Athletics/cross-country running	2.26	1.83	1.93	3.29	0.72	0.59	1.96
Badminton/squash /table tennis	1.36	0.54	0.28	0.60	0.36	2.35	0.85
Baseball/softball	2.03	1.51	1.10	2.10	1.08	2.94	1.72
Boxing/martial arts	1.69	4.20	1.93	4.49	1.81	4.71	3.01
Bowling (ten pin/lawn)	0.56	0.65	0.28	0.60	0.00	1.18	0.54

^a Per cent of strata total.

Table 5.3
Youth's Extra-Curricular Activities in Childhood (continued)

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total number of respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Types of activities continued^a							
Cadets (army/navy /air force)	0.79	2.26	1.10	1.50	0.72	0.59	1.35
Cycling/BMX racing	0.45	0.86	0.28	0.30	0.36	0.00	0.51
Diving/water polo	0.34	0.11	0.00	1.20	0.36	0.59	0.34
Field hockey	2.15	1.51	2.21	2.10	1.81	2.94	1.96
Golf	0.79	0.11	0.83	0.30	0.00	0.59	0.44
Skating/ice hockey	0.11	0.22	0.28	0.30	0.36	0.00	0.20
Roller-blading/roller hockey	0.23	0.43	0.00	0.30	0.72	0.00	0.30
Rowing/canoeing /kayaking	0.79	0.00	0.28	0.60	0.36	0.59	0.41
Surfing/surf life saving	1.13	1.18	0.28	0.60	0.72	1.18	0.95
Volleyball	0.79	1.08	1.10	0.90	0.72	1.18	0.95
Watersports (sailing /fishing/snorkelling)	0.23	0.54	0.28	0.00	0.00	0.59	0.30
Other	3.28	3.55	4.42	4.49	2.53	3.53	3.58
Can't say	0.23	0.86	0.28	0.60	0.72	0.00	0.51
Number of activities^a							
None	15.31	34.25	26.27	20.29	27.86	19.81	25.40
One	26.79	31.78	32.18	28.88	32.03	30.66	30.17
Two	28.13	19.82	22.81	26.73	22.40	26.42	23.71
Three	16.65	8.99	11.81	13.13	11.46	12.74	12.24
Four	13.11	5.17	6.92	10.98	6.25	10.38	8.48

^a Per cent of strata total.

Table 5.4
Parental Involvement in Youth's Education

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Respondent attended school committee meetings/participated in parent committee^a							
Yes	69.28	55.98	60.08	64.68	59.38	62.26	61.58
No	30.62	43.31	38.90	34.61	40.63	37.74	37.94
Can't say	0.10	0.71	1.02	0.72	0.00	0.00	0.48
Total Participants	724	790	295	271	228	132	2441
Involved in parent committee activities for more than one year^b							
Yes	80.66	71.05	83.05	82.29	78.51	78.79	77.71
No	19.20	28.19	16.61	17.71	20.61	21.21	21.88
Can't say	0.14	0.76	0.34	0.00	0.88	0.00	0.41

^a Per cent of strata total.

^b Per cent of participants.

Table 5.5
Parental Reports of Risky Behaviour

	<i>Economic Category</i>						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Did youth ever get in trouble with police or attend juvenile court?^a							
Yes	8.71	20.95	10.79	10.26	14.58	11.79	14.23
No	91.20	78.49	88.59	89.26	85.16	88.21	85.39
Can't say	0.10	0.57	0.61	0.48	0.26	0.00	0.38
Did youth ever drink alcohol excessively?^a							
Yes	22.39	27.46	25.25	26.49	26.82	26.42	25.63
No	77.03	71.34	73.93	72.08	71.09	72.17	73.26
Can't say	0.57	1.20	0.81	1.43	2.08	1.42	1.11
Did youth ever use illegal drugs?^a							
Yes	7.46	16.77	11.61	10.26	13.54	9.43	12.29
No	88.90	78.98	84.32	84.73	82.29	87.26	83.63
Can't say	3.64	4.25	4.07	5.01	4.17	3.30	4.09
Did youth ever hang out with a bad crowd?^a							
Yes	11.29	26.04	18.94	17.66	18.49	16.98	19.17
No	88.13	72.40	79.43	80.43	80.73	82.08	79.59
Can't say	0.57	1.56	1.63	1.91	0.78	0.94	1.24

^a Per cent of strata total.

Table 5.6
Youth's Current Educational Outcomes

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Is youth currently studying?^a							
Yes	65.36	42.39	56.21	57.04	51.56	57.55	53.41
No	34.45	56.69	43.18	42.48	47.66	41.51	45.96
Can't say	0.19	0.92	0.61	0.48	0.78	0.94	0.63
Total youths currently studying	683	599	276	239	198	122	2,117
Current level of studies^b							
Year 10 secondary school	0.00	1.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.38
Year 11 secondary school	0.59	1.00	0.72	0.42	0.51	0.00	0.66
Year 12 secondary school	12.59	17.86	13.41	17.57	15.15	22.95	15.59
Year 13 secondary school	0.29	0.50	0.00	0.42	1.52	0.00	0.43
Undertaking university degree	51.83	33.06	46.38	43.51	41.92	40.16	43.27
Studying at TAFE or technical school	34.26	44.57	38.41	37.24	38.89	35.25	38.55
Can't say	0.44	1.67	1.09	0.84	2.02	1.64	1.13
Total youths who stopped studying	362	814	215	180	186	90	1,847
Last year of study or qualification completed when youth stopped studying^c							
Year 9 secondary school	3.04	11.55	5.58	1.67	9.14	5.56	7.69
Year 10 secondary school	10.50	23.83	16.28	16.67	15.59	24.44	18.84
Year 11 secondary school	10.50	15.85	11.63	13.33	14.52	10.00	13.64
Year 12 secondary school	65.19	37.47	56.28	60.00	50.00	50.00	49.16
Year 13 secondary school	0.55	0.12	0.47	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.22
Trade certificate	4.42	3.69	3.72	2.78	4.30	4.44	3.84
Other TAFE or equivalent	4.70	6.14	4.19	4.44	4.84	5.56	5.31
University degree	1.10	0.12	0.93	0.56	0.00	0.00	0.43
Can't say	0.00	1.23	0.93	0.56	1.61	0.00	0.87

^a Per cent of strata total.

^b Per cent of those currently studying.

^c Per cent of those currently not studying.

Section 6:

Parents' Reports of Own and Youths' Health

Overview of Findings:

The empirical evidence is clear that individuals with higher socio-economic status live longer, healthier lives. What is less clear is the extent to which this relationship arises because of a spurious correlation in the determinants of health and socio-economic status or whether the underlying relationship is causal. And indeed if it is causal, whether poor health causes a reduction in economic wellbeing or whether it is a lack of economic resources that causes poor health. There is a large international literature that attempts to disentangle the complicated relationship between economic status and health (see for example, Adams, et al. 2003; Meer, et al. 2003; Smith 1999). Sorting out the nature of this relationship is particularly challenging given the evidence that adult health has its roots in childhood (see for example, Case et al, 2001; 2003).

The *Youth in Focus* (YIF) survey collects detailed information on a range of health outcomes and health behaviours from both parents and young people. In this section we assess parents' reports of their own health and health-related behaviours as well as the health of their children while growing up. The health outcomes and health-related behaviours of youth – as reported by young people themselves – are explicitly considered in Section 17.

Consistent with previous evidence, our results provide evidence that economic and social disadvantage is associated with poorer health outcomes amongst Australians (see Table 6.1). Two-thirds of parents with no income-support history (Category A) report that they are in very good or excellent health. In contrast, only 44 per cent of parents with a history of intensive income-support receipt (Category B) report similar levels of excellent or very good health. Moreover, parents in Category B are five times as likely (15 vs. 3 per cent) to report that they are in poor or very poor health. Parents with some income-support history report somewhat better health than respondents in Category B but still fall short of the non-income support respondents (the proportion of those in good or excellent health in categories C to F ranges between 48 to 60 per cent).

These disparities in self-reported health status reflect differences in reported health conditions across economic categories. Specifically, non-income-support recipients (category A) and parents with very short exposure to the income-support system (category D) are somewhat less likely to report that they have been diagnosed with asthma. Moreover, in comparison with respondents with intensive income-support history, category A parents are half as likely to report having been diagnosed with depression. In fact, more than one in three (35 per cent) parents with an intensive history of income-support reports having been diagnosed with depression which is consistent with other evidence that mental health issues are prevalent in the income-support population (Butterworth, et al. 2004).

Body mass index is an important indication of individuals' overall health. In particular, individuals' body mass index (BMI) is calculated as follows: $BMI = \text{Weight(kg)}/[\text{Height(m)}]^2$. Once BMI is calculated, individuals can then be from underweight to morbidly obese using the following scale:

BMI	Category
18.5 or less	Underweight
18.5 to 24.99	Normal Weight
25 to 29.99	Overweight
30 to 34.99	Obesity (Class 1)
35 to 39.99	Obesity (Class 2)
40 or greater	Morbid Obesity

The YIF Survey asks respondents to report their height and weight so that BMI can be calculated. These results are presented in Table 6.1. Respondents with no history of interaction with the income-support system are somewhat more likely (49 versus 43 per cent) to report a height and weight that places them in the normal range of BMI. In contrast, respondents with a history of intensive income-support are more likely to be both underweight and obese.

Information about parents' smoking and drinking behaviour is presented in Table 6.2. Parents with no income-support history are substantially more likely to say that they have never smoked cigarettes or that they no longer smoke cigarettes. Only 11 per cent say that they smoke daily in contrast to the 38 per cent of income-support recipients who report smoking on a daily basis. Moreover, amongst those who do smoke economic and social disadvantage is closely related to the amount of cigarettes consumed. Respondents with a history of intensive interaction with the income-support system (category B), and those whose first income-support receipt occurred a long time ago (category F) are much less likely to report smoking less than 30 cigarettes per week and much more likely to report smoking more than 150 cigarettes on a weekly basis.

Alcohol consumption is also related to respondents' economic circumstances – though the relationship is somewhat complex. In particular, although respondents with no history of income-support report drinking more frequently, they also report drinking less intensively. To be specific, more than three-quarters of respondents in Category A report being current drinkers in comparison to 56 per cent of those in Category B. Moreover, amongst current drinkers, those with no history of income support are more likely to report drinking at least once a week. In comparison, approximately one-third of Category B respondents report drinking less than once per month or rarely. However, on the days when they do drink, respondents with a history of intensive income-support receipt tend to consume more standard drinks. Just over half (53 per cent) report that they usually consumer at most two standard drinks. In comparison, 75 per cent of non-income-support respondents report that they usually consume no more than two drinks on a drinking day.

Parents' reports about youths' health during childhood are given in Table 6.3. These results indicate that childhood health is strongly related to a family's social and economic circumstances. The incidence of asthma, depression, ADHD, and extended hospitalisation is higher amongst young people growing up in disadvantaged circumstances. Parents in income-support-reliant families are also more likely to express concerns with their children's weight. Though there are no reported differences in the diagnoses of physical disabilities, the incidence of developmental or learning disabilities is somewhat higher amongst young people growing up in families with a history of intensive income-support receipt.

Future research will need to address a number of questions. In particular, what is the mechanism through which economic and social disadvantage might translate into poorer health outcomes for children and their parents? Moreover, to what extent does poorer relative health limit young people's educational and employment opportunities?

**Table 6.1
Parental Health**

	Economic category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Respondent's rating of own health during the past 4 weeks^a							
Excellent	31.39	22.29	29.53	27.92	25.26	21.23	26.41
Very good	34.45	22.08	25.25	32.46	32.03	26.42	28.03
Good	23.64	25.48	28.92	25.30	26.82	33.49	25.96
Fair	7.46	15.29	8.15	9.79	9.38	14.62	11.15
Poor	2.30	10.83	6.31	3.10	5.47	3.30	6.28
Very poor	0.57	3.82	1.63	1.43	1.04	0.94	2.02
Can't say	0.19	0.21	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.15
Respondent ever been diagnosed with asthma?^a							
Yes	15.79	23.99	17.11	15.75	16.67	20.28	19.20
No	84.21	75.94	82.89	84.01	83.33	79.72	80.75
Can't say	0.00	0.07	0.00	0.24	0.00	0.00	0.05
Respondent ever been diagnosed with depression?^a							
Yes	17.80	34.75	28.11	20.05	22.92	28.30	26.41
No	82.11	65.18	71.89	79.71	77.08	71.70	73.51
Can't say	0.10	0.07	0.00	0.24	0.00	0.00	0.08
Respondent ever been diagnosed with any physical disability?^a							
Arthritis	1.72	5.24	2.24	3.82	2.08	1.89	3.30
Diabetes	1.63	2.41	0.61	1.91	1.04	4.25	1.89
Back injury/ complaint	2.01	5.45	3.46	3.58	3.39	4.72	3.86
Other injury due to accident	1.24	2.55	1.83	0.48	1.56	1.89	1.77
Eye problems/ disorder	0.48	0.71	1.02	0.48	0.26	0.47	0.61
Heart disease/ disorder	0.19	0.35	0.41	0.48	0.52	0.47	0.35
Neurological disease/disorder	0.67	1.13	0.81	0.72	0.78	0.00	0.83
Yes (other)	4.11	6.16	2.65	2.63	2.86	3.77	4.36
No	87.85	75.65	86.76	85.44	87.24	82.55	82.77
Can't say	0.10	0.35	0.20	0.48	0.26	0.00	0.25
Respondent ever been diagnosed with any learning disability?^a							
Learning difficulties	0.67	3.18	1.22	0.95	1.82	0.47	1.77
Yes (other)	0.29	1.06	0.41	0.00	0.52	0.94	0.61
No	99.04	95.40	98.37	99.05	97.66	98.58	97.50
Can't say	0.00	0.35	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.13

^a Per cent of strata total

Table 6.1
Parental Health (continued)

	Economic category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents:	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Did respondent have any (other) major health problems that had an important effect?^a							
Psychological problem	1.63	3.04	1.43	0.95	1.82	0.94	2.02
Skin disorders (eczema)	0.48	0.50	0.41	0.24	0.52	1.42	0.50
Blood disorders (diabetes)	2.97	5.24	5.30	2.39	2.86	5.19	4.11
Respiratory disorders	2.20	2.12	2.85	1.43	1.56	1.42	2.07
Digestive/ bowel disorder	1.53	1.34	1.02	1.67	1.56	1.42	1.41
Muscular/ skeletal disorder	0.77	1.42	0.81	1.19	0.52	0.00	0.98
Gynecological disorder	1.53	1.49	1.83	0.95	0.78	0.47	1.36
Arthritis/ osteoporosis	1.15	1.63	0.41	0.48	1.04	1.42	1.16
Heart problems/ disease	0.86	1.77	0.81	1.43	1.30	0.00	1.24
Migraine/ headaches	0.57	0.99	0.20	1.19	0.78	0.47	0.76
Cancer	2.68	4.81	2.85	2.15	2.60	4.25	3.48
Back injury/ complaint	1.05	2.12	2.24	1.91	1.82	2.36	1.82
Other injury due to accident	0.67	1.70	0.20	0.95	1.56	0.94	1.11
Kidney (renal) disease	0.19	0.78	0.41	0.24	0.26	0.94	0.48
Glandular fever	0.29	0.07	0.81	0.24	0.00	0.00	0.23
Neurological disease/disorder	0.67	0.85	0.41	0.95	0.52	0.47	0.71
Hormonal problems	0.57	0.07	0.00	0.48	0.26	0.00	0.25
Yes (other)	2.78	4.03	3.26	3.10	1.30	4.25	3.25
No	76.84	65.53	74.13	77.33	78.65	73.58	72.53
Can't say	0.57	0.50	0.61	0.72	0.26	0.47	0.53
Total respondents with BMI available							
	1,000	1,301	459	402	361	197	3,720
BMI category^b							
Underweight	1.80	3.77	2.40	1.00	2.77	2.03	2.58
Normal weight	48.80	42.81	41.83	47.76	49.03	41.12	45.35
Overweight	30.90	26.21	28.54	31.34	24.93	32.99	28.55
Obese (category 1)	13.00	15.83	20.04	13.18	14.40	14.72	15.11
Obese (category 2)	4.40	6.69	4.79	5.47	6.93	5.58	5.67
Morbidly obese	1.10	4.69	2.40	1.24	1.94	3.55	2.74

^a Per cent of strata total.

^b Per cent of strata total with BMI available.

Table 6.2
Parents' Smoking and Drinking Behaviour

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Respondent's current smoking habits^a							
Never smoked	62.87	35.39	52.34	49.88	43.23	52.36	47.93
No longer smoke	24.88	23.78	22.00	31.50	28.65	24.53	25.18
Daily	10.72	37.93	24.24	15.51	25.26	21.23	24.57
At least weekly (less than daily)	0.96	2.05	1.43	2.86	2.60	0.47	1.74
Less than weekly	0.57	0.85	0.00	0.24	0.26	1.42	0.58
Do you smoke more than you want to?^b							
Yes	80.47	79.38	83.33	84.62	73.15	81.63	79.83
No	17.19	20.28	15.87	15.38	26.85	18.37	19.61
Can't say	2.34	0.35	0.79	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.56
Number of cigarettes smoked weekly^b							
Less than 30	25.78	15.25	19.84	28.21	18.52	16.33	18.39
31 to 60	11.72	18.89	17.46	24.36	22.22	22.45	18.76
61 to 100	23.44	26.17	21.43	21.79	25.93	22.45	24.77
101 to 150	28.91	20.28	25.40	12.82	22.22	18.37	21.48
More than 150	8.59	16.98	12.70	10.26	11.11	20.41	14.54
Refuse/ can't say	1.56	2.43	3.17	2.56	0.00	0.00	2.06
Respondent's alcohol-drinking habits^a							
Currently drink alcohol	76.46	56.05	65.78	71.60	66.67	68.40	65.97
No longer drink alcohol	14.26	29.94	19.96	17.42	22.92	20.28	22.05
Never drank alcohol	9.28	13.80	14.26	10.98	10.42	11.32	11.91
Can't say	0.00	0.21	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.08
How frequently do you drink alcohol?^c							
Every day	12.52	8.21	10.53	10.33	8.98	9.66	10.21
5 - 6 days per week	6.01	2.65	5.26	7.33	3.13	4.83	4.70
3 - 4 days per week	16.52	9.72	12.69	14.00	15.23	9.66	13.19
1 - 2 days per week	33.79	28.41	32.51	35.00	30.86	38.62	32.12
2 - 3 days per month	13.89	18.56	14.86	15.67	16.41	15.17	15.95
Less than monthly/ rarely	17.15	32.07	23.84	17.33	25.39	21.38	23.56
Can't say	0.13	0.38	0.31	0.33	0.00	0.69	0.27

^a Per cent of strata total.

^b Per cent of current smokers.

^c Per cent of current drinkers.

Table 6.2
Parents' Smoking and Drinking Behaviour (continued)

	Economic category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Usual number of standard drinks (on a day when drinking)^c							
One	34.92	19.32	28.48	29.33	26.95	32.41	27.84
Two	40.43	33.21	40.25	38.00	42.58	31.72	37.67
Three	14.89	18.43	15.17	13.33	13.28	20.00	15.95
Four or more	9.14	27.27	15.48	18.00	17.19	15.17	17.55
Refuse/ can't say	0.63	1.77	0.62	1.33	0.00	0.69	0.99
Do you drink more often than you want to?^c							
Yes	9.51	8.71	7.43	9.00	8.59	12.41	9.02
No	90.24	91.16	92.57	91.00	90.63	87.59	90.78
Can't say	0.25	0.13	0.00	0.00	0.78	0.00	0.19
Place where respondent usually drinks (multiple answers allowed)^c							
Own home	82.60	74.87	79.26	78.33	76.56	75.86	78.39
Home of relatives	5.38	5.05	3.72	4.00	3.91	2.07	4.59
Friend's house	19.27	18.43	15.48	20.67	18.36	17.93	18.55
Parties	7.88	10.98	7.74	9.33	11.72	7.59	9.33
Pub, bar, club etc.	8.14	15.66	13.31	9.67	18.36	11.72	12.43
Restaurant	19.40	10.98	15.79	15.67	17.58	13.79	15.49
Park or street	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Weddings/ functions/ special occasions	0.50	0.51	0.31	0.33	0.39	1.38	0.50
Other	0.50	0.51	0.62	0.33	0.78	1.38	0.57
Can't say	0.13	0.25	0.00	0.67	0.39	0.00	0.23
Who do you usually drink with? (multiple answers allowed)^c							
Parents	4.38	4.29	1.55	4.67	3.13	4.14	3.90
Partner	70.96	34.72	45.51	67.00	57.42	53.10	54.07
Children	9.01	8.33	8.36	10.67	7.03	11.03	8.83
Friends	47.43	55.68	50.46	49.67	55.08	50.34	51.47
Workmates	3.63	2.27	4.02	2.67	4.30	2.76	3.17
Alone	7.38	18.18	16.72	6.33	8.20	13.79	12.12
Other	2.25	5.30	4.33	3.33	3.13	3.45	3.71
Can't say	0.00	0.35	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.13

^c Per cent of current drinkers.

Table 6.3
Parental Report of Youth Health

	Economic code						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Focal youth was diagnosed with asthma^a							
Yes	27.66	34.39	27.49	27.21	30.47	27.36	30.25
No	72.34	65.39	72.10	72.55	69.53	72.64	69.60
Can't say	0.00	0.21	0.41	0.24	0.00	0.00	0.15
Focal youth was diagnosed with depression^a							
Yes	7.46	14.23	7.94	6.21	9.64	11.32	10.22
No	92.34	85.28	90.63	93.56	89.58	88.68	89.28
Can't say	0.19	0.50	1.43	0.24	0.78	0.00	0.50
Focal youth was diagnosed with AD/HD^a							
Yes	4.11	8.28	4.89	6.68	8.85	4.25	6.43
No	95.89	91.01	94.50	93.32	91.15	95.75	93.24
Can't say	0.00	0.71	0.61	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.33
Focal youth ever hospitalised for more than 48 hours^a							
Yes	27.94	36.23	27.70	32.46	28.39	30.19	31.51
No	71.96	62.63	71.49	67.30	71.61	69.81	67.94
Can't say	0.10	1.13	0.81	0.24	0.00	0.00	0.55
Number of hospital visits by focal youth^a							
One	58.82	52.25	60.00	59.56	52.29	46.88	55.14
Two	21.11	20.74	17.78	24.26	20.18	32.81	21.46
Three or more	19.38	26.03	21.48	16.18	27.52	20.31	22.75
Refuse/ can't say	0.69	0.98	0.74	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.64
Parent concerned about focal youth's weight? ^a							
Yes	12.34	20.31	16.09	15.99	15.89	17.92	16.68
No	87.56	79.41	83.71	84.01	83.85	81.6	83.12
Can't say	0.10	0.28	0.20	0.00	0.26	0.47	0.20
If concerned about youth's weight: ^b							
Underweight	33.33	37.63	40.51	32.84	39.34	28.95	36.31
Overweight	66.67	60.63	58.23	67.16	60.66	71.05	62.78
Can't say	0.00	1.74	1.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.91

^a Per cent of strata total.

^b Per cent of strata total concerned about youth's weight.

Table 6.3
Parental Reports of Youth Health (continued)

	Economic code						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Physical disability focal youth's been diagnosed with^a							
Heart condition	0.48	0.50	0.20	0.48	0.26	0.47	0.43
Learning difficulties	0.19	0.28	0.20	0.72	0.00	0.00	0.25
ADD/ ADHD/ concentration difficulties	0.10	0.21	0.00	0.00	0.26	0.00	0.13
Arthritis/ osteoporosis	0.19	0.35	0.20	0.72	0.00	0.00	0.28
Blood disease/disorders	0.38	0.21	0.41	0.24	0.00	1.42	0.33
Ear problems/ disorders	0.86	0.92	0.41	0.72	0.52	1.42	0.81
Eye problems/ disorders	1.24	0.78	1.43	0.72	1.04	0.47	0.98
Injury or poisoning	0.29	0.28	0.20	0.24	0.00	0.94	0.28
Intellectual disability/disorder	0.00	0.21	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.08
Musculoskeletal disorders	2.30	2.05	1.43	2.39	2.34	1.42	2.07
Neurological disorders	0.57	0.78	0.81	1.43	0.78	1.42	0.83
Speech difficulties	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.48	0.00	0.47	0.10
Yes (other)	1.63	1.77	1.63	1.43	1.04	1.42	1.59
No	91.58	91.51	92.46	90.45	93.75	90.57	91.70
Can't say	0.10	0.14	0.61	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.15
Developmental or learning disabilities focal youth's been diagnosed with^a							
Heart condition	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.24	0.00	0.00	0.03
Learning difficulties	1.82	3.96	2.44	3.82	3.13	1.42	2.98
ADD/ ADHD/ concentration difficulties	0.29	0.50	0.00	0.48	0.52	0.47	0.38
Ear problems/ disorder	0.48	0.07	0.81	0.48	0.00	0.94	0.35
Eye problems/ disorder	0.38	0.28	0.41	0.95	0.52	0.00	0.40
Intellectual disability	0.48	0.92	0.61	0.48	0.52	0.47	0.66
Musculoskeletal disorder	0.38	0.00	0.00	0.48	0.26	0.94	0.23
Neurological disease/disorder	0.19	0.64	0.41	0.24	0.26	0.47	0.40
Speech difficulties	1.15	0.42	0.61	0.24	0.52	0.47	0.63
Yes (other)	0.38	1.77	0.61	0.24	0.78	0.47	0.93
No	94.35	90.80	93.48	92.12	93.23	93.87	92.61
Can't say	0.10	0.64	0.61	0.24	0.26	0.47	0.40
Major health problems youth had growing up that had important effect?^a							
Glandular fever	1.44	1.34	1.22	1.91	1.04	2.36	1.44
Ear infections/ grommets	2.20	1.56	1.02	2.86	2.34	3.30	1.97
Allergies	1.72	1.91	1.63	1.67	2.60	1.89	1.87
Chronic acne	0.29	0.07	0.41	0.48	0.52	0.47	0.28
Migraines/ headaches	0.48	1.20	0.00	1.19	0.78	0.94	0.81
Respiratory disease/asthma	1.34	2.05	1.02	1.43	1.04	1.42	1.54
Accidents/ poisoning	0.57	0.99	0.81	0.72	0.52	0.00	0.73

^a Per cent of strata total.

Table 6.3
Parental Reports of Youth Health (continued)

	Economic Categories						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Major health problems youth had growing up that had important effect? (continued)^a							
Psychological problems (depression/anxiety)	1.24	2.48	1.43	0.95	1.56	0.94	1.69
Blood disease/ disorders	0.57	0.71	0.20	0.00	0.52	0.00	0.48
Eye problems/ disorders	0.86	0.42	0.41	0.48	0.26	0.47	0.53
Musculoskeletal problems/disorders	0.77	0.85	1.22	0.48	1.04	1.89	0.91
Skin problems/ disorders	0.67	0.57	0.20	0.95	0.78	1.89	0.68
Tonsillitis/ adenoids	0.57	0.64	0.81	0.48	0.26	0.94	0.61
Weight problems/eating disorders	0.29	0.50	0.41	0.24	0.26	1.89	0.45
Other	4.50	4.53	4.89	5.01	3.13	4.72	4.49
No	81.91	79.76	83.71	80.67	83.07	76.89	81.08
Can't say	0.57	0.42	0.61	0.48	0.26	0.00	0.45

^a Per cent of strata total.

Section 7:

Parents' Reports of Youths' Living Arrangements and Financial Support

Overview:

In Australia, as in many other countries around the world, young people are increasingly prolonging the period during which they are financially dependent upon their parents (see for example, Hartley, 1993; Whittington and Peters, 1996; Schneider, 1999; Weston *et al.*, 2001; Cobb-Clark, 2007). Relative to historical trends, young adults today are less likely to leave home, are more likely to be receiving financial support from their parents when they do live apart, and are more likely to return home as their circumstances change (see Hartley, 1993; Schneider, 1999). Thus, co-residence with and financial transfers from parents are important mechanisms through which many families provide the resources that young people rely on as they complete their educations, enter the labour market and establish themselves as independent adults. Moreover, these costs can be quite large. Percival and Harding (2003) estimate, for example, that supporting an 18 – 24 year old costs \$322 per week in comparison to \$164 for children 5 – 9 years old.

Given our interest in understanding the process through which disadvantage is passed from one generation to the next, it is important for us to understand the extent to which parents' ability (and willingness) to provide resources to their adult children is related to the economic circumstances of the family. Consequently, the *Youth in Focus* (YIF) survey asks a range of questions about the living arrangements of and financial transfers between young people and their parents. In this section of the report, we present information about living arrangements and transfers as reported by parents. Youths' reports on these issues are presented later in Sections 11 and 16.

Our results indicate that youth in families with intensive histories of income-support receipt (category B) are more likely to have moved out of the parental home than are youth in families with no history of interaction with the income-support system (category A) (see Table 7.1). Fully one in three (33 per cent) of young people in families with an intensive history of income-support have left the parental home by wave 1 in comparison to less than one in five (19 per cent) youth in families with no interaction with the income-support system. This move is relatively recent for most home-leavers in category A with more than half of youth moving out in the six months prior to wave 1. In contrast, young people in category B are much more likely to have left home more than a year earlier.⁷

Once more, the youth whose families had less intensive history of income-support receipt are on the whole more likely to have left their parents' home at the time of the interviewing than their category A counterparts, but less likely to live independently than the young people belonging to category B. Moreover, as regards the recency of their becoming independent, the numbers reported by the respondents in category D which includes families who have been on income support for less than three years fall between those observed for categories A and B.

The destinations of young people who have left home also vary widely across economic categories. Of those who have left home, young people in non-income-support families are five times more likely (20 vs. 4 per cent) than youth in income-support families (category B) to be living in school or university accommodation. In contrast, youth growing up in families with an intensive history of income support are much more likely than other young people to be living independently in a house (either shared or not).

⁷ It is important to note that almost a quarter of parents in category B (24 per cent) are either unable or unwilling to say when the focal child moved out of home.

Consistent with the large numbers of home-leavers in category A who at wave 1 were living in school or university accommodation, the primary motivation for young people in non-income-support families to leave home is to further their education (48 per cent). A further 16 per cent report leaving home for employment reasons, while 13 per cent cite the desire to be independent and 6 per cent move out to live with a partner. The motivation for leaving home appears to be quite different and more varied amongst young people in families with a history of intensive income-support use. The proportion leaving home for educational reasons (17 per cent) or employment reasons (12 per cent) is lower, while the proportion leaving home to be independent (23 per cent) or live with a partner (7 per cent) is much higher. Nearly one in five (19 per cent) of income-support parents (category B) report that the youth left home either because of a poor relationship with someone in the family or because he or she would not accept the rules at home.

Given these patterns it is perhaps not surprising that parents with a history of intensive income-support use are much less likely to approve of their child's living arrangements (50 vs. 61 per cent) and are more likely to report relatively infrequent (monthly as opposed to weekly) contact with their child. It is also interesting to note that although the vast majority of parents are satisfied or very satisfied with their child's living arrangements irrespective of their economic category, parents' in category B are somewhat less satisfied with the amount of contact with their child and the people the child lives with than are parents in category A.

In addition to understanding young people's living arrangements, it is also important to understand the extent to which parents continue to provide financial support to their adult children. Our results suggest that parents with a history of intensive income-support use are less likely to be providing financial support to their 18-year-old children and provide more limited support when they do (see Table 7.3). Specifically, while 60 per cent of category A parents report helping their child with educational costs in the last 12 months, this is true of only 32 per cent of parents in category B. Moreover, although fully one in three category A parents who assisted with study costs report having provided more than \$2,200 in the previous year, only 16 per cent of parents in category B say the same. These general patterns are consistent across the full range of support categories considered in the YIF survey. Parents with no history of income-support receipt are also more likely to be assisting their 18-year-old children with general living expenses, rent or mortgage payments, bills, and car payments than are parents with a history of intensive income-support receipt.

Despite these differences in the intensity and level of support, there is remarkable consistency across economic categories in the extent to which parents who do provide support see it as a gift versus a loan. Irrespective of their interaction with the income-support system, fully 80 per cent of parents who are providing financial assistance to their adult child see it as a gift rather than a loan that needs to be repaid.

Finally, it is important to also consider the extent to which young people who continue to live with their parents make a financial contribution to their parents by paying rent and board. Youth living at home in wave 1 were much more likely to pay rent or board if their family had a history of intensive income-support receipt. Specifically, 45 per cent of parents in category B reported that their 18-year-old child was paying rent or board to live at home. In contrast, only 18 per cent of non-income-support parents said the same. Moreover, when they do pay rent or board, category B are more than three times as likely as their counterparts in category A to be paying at least \$55 per week.

Overall, these results suggest that the extent to which parents are providing assistance in the form of co-residence and financial support to their 18-year-old children depends a great deal on the family's history of interaction with the income-support system. Parents with a history of intensive income-support receipt are much less likely to be providing support and provide less support when they do. It is likely that income-support parents are simply less able to provide support to their children. At the same time, disparity in young people's motivation for leaving home suggests that there is more discord in family relationships in income-support families. Thus, category B parents may also be less willing to provide support to their adult children.

These patterns are particularly concerning because this is a period in life when many young people are making educational and labour market investments. If parents' willingness or ability to continue to support their adult children as they make these investments is negatively related to parents' own economic status, there is potential for parents' economic disadvantage to limit youths' opportunities to invest in their future.

**Table 7.1
Youth Living Arrangements**

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Youth living arrangements							
Youth not living at home ^a	19.43	33.26	27.70	16.47	25.26	28.77	26.14
Total youth not living home	203	470	136	69	97	61	1,036
Date when focal youth moved out of home (as of August 2006)^b							
3 months ago or less	16.75	11.91	19.12	20.29	13.4	24.59	15.25
4 to 6 months ago	35.47	12.55	24.26	21.74	23.71	21.31	20.75
7 to 12 months ago	21.18	16.38	14.71	21.74	17.53	18.03	17.66
13 months to 2 years ago	9.36	13.4	16.91	11.59	11.34	8.2	12.45
More than 2 years ago	12.81	22.13	13.97	15.94	17.53	14.75	17.95
Refuse/can't say	4.43	23.62	11.03	8.7	16.49	13.11	15.93
Type of accommodation youth lives in now^b							
house (not shared)	16.75	22.77	16.91	23.19	26.8	18.03	20.95
flat/ unit (not shared)	7.39	7.87	13.97	4.35	10.31	9.84	8.69
share house	33.5	39.57	36.03	30.43	41.24	31.15	36.97
share flat/ unit	13.3	11.7	9.56	15.94	4.12	19.67	11.78
school or university	20.2	4.26	12.5	14.49	7.22	8.2	9.65
special youth accommodation employment related (nurses home etc.)	0	0.85	0	1.45	1.03	0	0.58
squat	0	0.21	0	0	0	0	0.1
traveling	0	0.21	0	1.45	0	0	0.19
caravan	0.49	1.91	0.74	0	1.03	4.92	1.45
lives with father (unspec)	1.48	2.13	1.47	1.45	1.03	0	1.64
lives with grandparent (unspec)	0.49	0.85	0	1.45	0	1.64	0.68
lives with partner's family	0	0.43	0	1.45	0	0	0.29
lives with aunt or other relatives	0.49	1.06	0.74	0	0	0	0.68
other	0.99	1.28	1.47	1.45	2.06	3.28	1.45
can't say	1.97	3.19	3.68	1.45	2.06	3.28	2.8

^a Per cent of strata total.

^b Per cent of youth not living at home.

**Table 7.1
Youth Living Arrangements (continued)**

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total youth not living at home	203	470	136	69	97	61	1,036
Main reason youth first moved out of home^b							
to move away/be independent	12.81	22.98	15.44	11.59	14.43	16.39	18.05
to live with a partner	5.91	7.23	9.56	10.14	11.34	6.56	7.82
for educational reasons	48.28	16.60	29.41	34.78	20.62	27.87	26.74
for employment reasons	15.76	11.70	15.44	14.49	20.62	11.48	14.00
must live in an institution	0.00	0.43	0.74	0.00	0.00	1.64	0.39
unable to live here: economic reasons/of lack of space	0.49	1.28	0.74	1.45	0.00	1.64	0.97
unable to live here: poor relationship with mother	0.99	7.87	3.68	1.45	4.12	4.92	5.02
unable to live here: poor relationship with father	0.99	2.98	5.15	5.80	5.15	6.56	3.47
unable to live here: poor relationship with both parents	0.49	1.49	0.00	1.45	2.06	0.00	1.06
unable to live here: poor relationship with siblings	0.99	1.91	0.74	1.45	2.06	1.64	1.54
unable to live here: youth won't accept rules	1.48	4.89	1.47	4.35	3.09	6.56	3.67
travelling/working abroad	3.94	1.06	0.00	1.45	1.03	4.92	1.74
to live with other parent	2.46	6.38	3.68	1.45	3.09	1.64	4.34
break up of marriage	0.49	0.21	0.74	2.90	1.03	0.00	0.58
parent(s) moved out/youth stayed	0.99	1.70	2.94	1.45	1.03	0.00	1.54
parent moved out/ left everyone	0.49	0.00	0.74	1.45	2.06	0.00	0.48
wanted to live with other relative	0.49	1.70	1.47	1.45	2.06	1.64	1.45
youth or partner became pregnant	0.00	1.28	0.00	0.00	1.03	0.00	0.68
had no choice	0.49	0.43	1.47	0.00	0.00	1.64	0.58
circumstances changed	0.00	0.64	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.64	0.39
other	1.48	5.53	0.74	0.00	3.09	1.64	3.28
can't say	0.99	1.70	5.88	2.90	2.06	1.64	2.22
Does respondent approve of youth leaving home?^b							
Approved	86.21	65.11	71.32	71.01	77.32	68.85	71.81
Did not approve	10.34	30.85	21.32	27.54	18.56	26.23	23.94
Can't say	3.45	4.04	7.35	1.45	4.12	4.92	4.25
Frequency of respondent's contact with focal youth^b							
three or more times a week	60.59	49.79	51.47	55.07	48.45	49.18	52.32
once or twice a week	33.00	28.30	36.03	39.13	31.96	34.43	31.66
once or twice a month	4.43	11.91	8.09	1.45	11.34	6.56	8.88
a few times	0.99	7.02	2.94	2.90	6.19	4.92	4.83
not at all	0.49	2.13	0.74	1.45	1.03	4.92	1.64
can't say	0.49	0.85	0.74	0.00	1.03	0.00	0.68

^b Per cent of youth not living at home.

Table 7.2
Parental Satisfaction with Youth Living Arrangements

	Economic Categories						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total youth not living home	203	470	136	69	97	61	1,036
Respondent's satisfaction with amount of contact with focal youth^a							
very satisfied	57.14	44.89	44.85	49.28	41.24	40.98	47.01
satisfied	35.47	37.02	37.5	40.58	42.27	42.62	37.84
neither	1.48	1.91	2.94	1.45	6.19	1.64	2.32
dissatisfied	5.91	15.53	12.5	8.7	9.28	14.75	12.16
can't say	0	0.64	2.21	0	1.03	0	0.68
Total youth who moved for reasons other than to be independent/to live with a partner:							
	152	312	89	49	60	42	704
Respondent's satisfaction with people focal youth lives with^b							
very satisfied	55.26	37.82	49.44	46.94	50	38.1	44.74
satisfied	27.63	35.9	31.46	38.78	26.67	38.1	33.1
neither	3.95	4.49	7.87	4.08	5	4.76	4.83
dissatisfied	7.24	15.06	8.99	4.08	13.33	9.52	11.36
can't say	5.92	6.73	2.25	6.12	5	9.52	5.97

^a Per cent of youth not living at home.

^b Per cent of youth who moved for reasons other than to be independent/to live with a partner.

Table 7.3
Financial Transfers to Youth

	Economic category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents:	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Respondent helped youth with study costs in last 12 months?^a							
yes	59.90	32.34	43.18	54.65	48.70	44.81	45.56
no	39.81	67.52	56.62	45.35	51.30	55.19	54.29
can't say	0.29	0.14	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.15
Total respondents who helped with study costs:							
	626	457	212	229	187	95	1806
Amount of study costs assistance							
\$400 or less	13.58	33.04	25.94	22.71	22.46	22.11	22.48
\$401 to \$800	19.17	21.23	21.23	24.45	19.25	16.84	20.49
\$801 to \$1,200	16.77	15.75	15.09	13.54	13.90	17.89	15.67
\$1,201 to \$2,200	15.02	9.85	11.32	14.85	16.04	9.47	13.07
\$2,201 and above	32.59	15.54	20.75	21.40	24.60	27.37	24.36
Refuse/ can't say	2.88	4.60	5.66	3.06	3.74	6.32	3.93
Respondent helped youth with general living expenses in last 12 months?^a							
yes	50.43	40.84	43.58	51.07	50.78	48.11	46.14
no	49.19	58.67	55.60	48.93	49.22	51.42	53.46
can't say	0.38	0.50	0.81	0.00	0.00	0.47	0.40
Total respondents who helped with general expenses:							
	527	577	214	214	195	102	1829
Amount of general assistance							
\$200 or less	12.71	24.44	20.09	18.69	17.44	19.61	18.86
\$201 to \$400	10.25	13.34	9.35	11.68	9.23	12.75	11.32
\$401 to \$800	17.27	22.18	25.70	15.42	18.46	20.59	19.90
\$801 to \$1,200	13.28	10.40	17.29	19.63	15.90	14.71	13.94
\$1,201 to \$2,200	13.85	10.23	10.28	12.15	10.77	5.88	11.32
\$2,201 and above	23.53	11.27	10.75	16.82	17.95	18.63	16.51
Refuse/ can't say	9.11	8.15	6.54	5.61	10.26	7.84	8.15

^a Per cent of strata total

^b Per cent of respondents with youth not living at home

Table 7.3
Financial Transfers to Youth (continued)

	Economic category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Respondent helped youth with rent or mortgage payments in past 12 months?^b							
yes	45.81	17.87	27.21	34.78	23.71	27.87	26.83
no	53.69	81.28	72.06	65.22	75.26	72.13	72.49
can't say	0.49	0.85	0.74	0.00	1.03	0.00	0.68
Total respondents who helped with rent/mortgage:							
	93	84	37	24	23	17	278
Amount of rent assistance							
\$500 or less	9.68	42.86	48.65	16.67	26.09	17.65	27.34
\$501 to \$1,000	10.75	22.62	16.22	20.83	4.35	23.53	16.19
\$1,001 to \$2,000	11.83	20.24	8.11	16.67	17.39	0.00	14.03
\$2,001 to \$4,000	13.98	5.95	8.11	16.67	21.74	11.76	11.51
\$4,001 to \$7,000	20.43	4.76	5.41	12.50	13.04	35.29	13.31
\$7,001 and above	31.18	0.00	10.81	16.67	13.04	11.76	15.11
Refuse/ can't say	2.15	3.57	2.70	0.00	4.35	0.00	2.52
Respondent helped youth with bills (eg. gas) in last 12 months?^a							
yes	14.78	12.98	15.44	15.94	13.40	18.03	14.19
no	83.74	85.96	83.82	82.61	86.60	80.33	84.75
can't say	1.48	1.06	0.74	1.45	0.00	1.64	1.06
Total respondents who helped with bills:							
	30	61	21	11	13	11	147
Amount of bills assistance							
\$200 or less	13.33	42.62	33.33	36.36	46.15	27.27	34.01
\$201 to \$400	33.33	16.39	19.05	9.09	15.38	9.09	19.05
\$401 to \$800	20.00	19.67	19.05	18.18	0.00	36.36	19.05
\$801 to \$2,000	16.67	14.75	19.05	27.27	38.46	18.18	19.05
\$2,001 and above	10.00	1.64	4.76	9.09	0.00	9.09	4.76
Refuse/ can't say	6.67	4.92	4.76	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.08
Respondent helped youth with payments for car etc. in last 12 months?^a							
yes	37.03	19.53	27.90	35.56	28.13	26.42	28.08
no	62.78	80.25	71.89	64.44	71.88	73.58	71.77
can't say	0.19	0.21	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.15

^a Per cent of strata total.

^b Per cent of respondents with youth not living at home.

**Table 7.3
Financial Transfers to Youth (continued)**

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total respondents who helped with car payments:	387	276	137	149	108	56	1113
Amount of car assistance							
\$500 or less	6.98	18.84	13.87	8.05	14.81	16.07	12.13
\$501 to \$1,000	13.70	18.84	17.52	16.11	18.52	8.93	15.99
\$1,001 to \$2,000	14.73	21.38	16.79	21.48	15.74	21.43	17.97
\$2,001 to \$4,000	23.77	18.48	24.09	24.83	28.70	16.07	22.73
\$4,001 to \$7,000	20.93	11.96	10.22	17.45	15.74	17.86	16.26
\$7,001 and above	16.28	7.61	16.06	11.41	6.48	17.86	12.58
Refuse/ can't say	3.62	2.90	1.46	0.67	0.00	1.79	2.34
Total respondents who provided assistance to focal youth:	907	927	368	338	290	151	2,981
Respondent considers the help to be (multiple answers allowed):							
A gift (not expected to be paid back)	80.49	80.69	79.89	81.66	84.48	80.79	81.01
A loan (expected to be paid back)	20.18	18.77	20.11	18.05	16.90	19.87	19.15
doesn't know	0.88	1.73	0.82	0.89	1.03	0.00	1.11
Total focal youth still lives at home	842	943	355	349	287	151	2,927
Does focal youth pay any rent or board to respondent to live at home?							
yes	18.17	44.86	31.27	25.21	26.13	37.09	30.95
no	81.71	54.72	68.73	74.79	73.87	62.91	68.88
can't say	0.12	0.42	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.17
Total youths paying rent and board:	153	423	111	88	75	56	906
Weekly rent and board							
Less than \$25	20.26	10.17	10.81	19.32	10.67	12.50	13.02
More than \$25 to \$40	20.26	11.35	12.61	20.45	16.00	8.93	14.13
More than \$40 to \$55	44.44	37.59	43.24	40.91	44.00	44.64	40.73
More than \$55 to \$80	7.19	20.09	10.81	10.23	16.00	12.50	15.01
More than \$80	4.58	20.09	20.72	6.82	12.00	17.86	15.45
Refuse/ can't say	3.27	0.71	1.80	2.27	1.33	3.57	1.66

Section 8:

Parents' Perspectives on their Relationships with Youths

Overview of Findings:

The *Youth in Focus* (YIF) survey asks both parents and young people a range of (mostly parallel) questions about the nature of and satisfaction with several dimensions of their relationship with each other. Understanding parents' and youths' relationships is important for many reasons. In particular, 18 is an age at which young people are completing their secondary education, entering the labour market or continuing their education, and beginning to establish themselves as independent adults. The extent to which parents are willing and able to provide both emotional and financial support through this important transition depends in part on the relationship between parents and young people.

For example, previous research indicates that co-residence serves as an important mechanism through which parents transfer resources to their adult children (see Cobb-Clark, 2007). These resources play a crucial role in enabling young people to complete their education, enter the labour market, and establish families of their own. However, parents and their adult children often do not share the same expectations about the age at which children will leave home leading to the possibility of intergenerational conflict about the issue (Goldscheider and Goldscheider 1989). Moreover, conflict between parents and co-residing adult children appears to be higher when those children are unemployed or financially dependent on their parents (Aquilino and Supple, 1991).

This section considers parents' perspectives on their relationships with their children. Our results indicate that overall parents are quite satisfied with their (and their partners') relationships with their 18-year-old children, their children's friends, as well as the way those children are living their lives (see Table 8.1). Specifically, satisfaction rates range from between 80 – 95 percent depending on the specific question and economic category considered. Thus, parents appear to be generally happy with the nature of their relationship with their children.

Still, parents who have a history of intensive income-support use (category B) are less satisfied with their 18-year old children's friends and the way that they are living their lives than are parents who have no experience with the income-support system (category A). Specifically, while more than half of parents with no income support history are very satisfied with their children's friends and the way that those children are living their lives, this is true of less than 40 per cent of parents with an intensive income support history. Moreover, parents with an intensive history of income support receipt are more than twice as likely as non-income-support parents to respond that they are dissatisfied with these aspects of their children's lives. Finally, parents in category B are much less likely to be satisfied and much more likely to be dissatisfied with their own and their partner's relationships with the focal youth.

More insight into the relationship between parents and children can be gained by considering the specific nature of this relationship (see Table 8.2). Almost three-fourths (74 per cent) of non-income-support parents can always or usually respect their children's opinions about important things in life and more than two-thirds (67 per cent) believe that their children always or often respect their own opinions. Amongst parents with a history of intensive income-support receipt, only two-thirds report usually or often respecting their children's opinions and only 60 per cent report that their children respect their own opinions.

Similar differences across economic categories exist when we consider the extent to which parents find it easy to understand the focal youth. While 16 per cent of parents with

intensive income-support histories report that they never, hardly ever, or only sometimes understand their son or daughter, this is true of only 11 per cent of parents with no income-support history. Similarly, while more than one in five income-support recipients (category B) report that their 18 year old always or often makes too many demands on them, only 13 per cent of parents in category A feel the same.

Thus, on the whole there are many reasons to be positive about the strength of the relationship between Australian parents and their 18-year old children. Parental satisfaction with their relationships with their teenage children is high and parents report a great deal of mutual respect and understanding. Still, there are substantial disparities in the quality of parental-child relationships across economic categories. Parents with a history of intensive income-support use are less substantially less satisfied with the relationship with their children than are parents with no income-support history.

While the comparison of categories A and B provides the sharpest contrast, our results indicate that not only incidence, but intensity of the income-support use is correlated with the quality of family relationships. Among respondents who have a short history of income-support receipt (categories C to F), the degree of parental satisfaction with various dimensions of their relationship with the focal youth ranges between the two extremes.

Table 8.1
Parents' Satisfaction with the Relationship with their Children

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Respondent's satisfaction with focal youth's friends^a							
Very satisfied	55.79	37.79	44.81	50.12	45.57	47.64	45.99
Satisfied	35.98	43.67	42.77	36.99	39.84	37.26	40.11
Neither	2.87	5.38	3.67	3.58	5.47	3.30	4.21
Dissatisfied	3.35	8.07	5.7	5.25	5.21	6.6	5.88
Has no friends	0.86	2.12	1.02	1.43	0.78	1.89	1.44
Can't say	1.15	2.97	2.04	2.63	3.13	3.30	2.37
Respondent's satisfaction with the way focal youth is living his/her life^a							
Very satisfied	52.54	38.78	45.82	47.26	45.31	46.7	45.23
Satisfied	35.60	40.62	39.92	36.75	38.02	38.21	38.42
Neither	6.41	5.94	3.46	8.11	5.47	2.83	5.78
Dissatisfied	4.98	13.66	10.18	7.64	10.68	10.85	9.86
Can't say	0.48	0.99	0.61	0.24	0.52	1.42	0.71
Respondent's satisfaction with overall relationship with focal youth^a							
Very satisfied	67.94	59.73	67.01	62.05	66.93	64.62	64.00
Satisfied	26.79	31.78	26.48	31.50	24.74	28.77	28.94
Neither	2.39	2.90	1.83	3.10	3.39	0.94	2.60
Dissatisfied	2.87	5.17	4.28	3.34	4.69	5.66	4.24
Can't say	0.00	0.42	0.41	0.00	0.26	0.00	0.23
Respondent's satisfaction with partner's relationship with focal youth^b							
Very satisfied	59.08	47.70	52.23	52.94	53.29	56.25	53.98
Satisfied	33.19	38.96	36.62	38.10	34.87	32.64	35.76
Neither	3.76	3.68	1.91	4.48	5.92	2.08	3.77
Dissatisfied	3.76	8.13	8.28	4.20	5.26	8.33	5.79
Can't say	0.21	1.53	0.96	0.28	0.66	0.69	0.70
Total married/partnered respondents	958	652	314	357	304	144	2,729

^a Per cent of total respondents

^b Per cent of married/partnered respondents

Table 8.2
Parental Perspectives on the Relationship with their Children

	Economic category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Respondent can respect youth's ideas & opinions about important things in life^a							
Always	39.90	39.42	35.44	42.00	38.02	37.74	39.10
Often	33.59	26.33	30.55	28.40	26.30	33.02	29.34
Usually	15.31	15.36	17.92	16.23	19.79	16.04	16.22
Sometimes	9.86	14.37	12.02	10.98	12.76	9.43	12.11
Hardly ever	0.77	2.55	1.43	1.91	2.08	1.89	1.79
Never true	0.10	1.06	0.81	0.24	0.78	0.94	0.66
Can't say	0.48	0.92	1.83	0.24	0.26	0.94	0.78
Focal youth respects respondent's ideas & opinions about important things in life^a							
Always	30.05	32.06	33.40	31.03	32.81	32.55	31.69
Often	36.46	27.60	30.75	28.40	27.60	31.60	30.63
Usually	19.43	16.49	17.11	20.05	20.05	15.57	18.01
Sometimes	11.39	17.62	14.26	16.95	15.89	15.09	15.19
Hardly ever	2.11	3.04	1.83	2.15	2.08	1.89	2.40
Never true	0.29	2.34	1.63	1.43	1.30	2.36	1.51
Can't say	0.29	0.85	1.02	0.00	0.26	0.94	0.58
Respondent finds it easy to understand focal youth^a							
Always	47.46	47.49	49.29	47.02	49.74	48.11	47.91
Often	25.07	21.73	23.22	25.78	21.35	23.11	23.26
Usually	16.17	14.08	14.87	17.18	15.10	16.51	15.29
Sometimes	8.61	12.10	10.59	7.64	9.90	10.38	10.22
Hardly ever	1.63	3.04	1.63	1.19	1.82	0.94	2.07
Never true	0.57	1.13	0.20	1.19	1.82	0.94	0.93
Can't say	0.48	0.42	0.20	0.00	0.26	0.00	0.33
How often does respondent feel youth makes too many demands on them?^a							
Always	3.35	8.99	5.09	8.11	6.77	5.19	6.51
Often	10.14	13.02	10.39	8.83	11.98	8.49	11.15
Usually	4.78	4.60	3.46	4.77	4.95	2.36	4.44
Sometimes	27.85	22.58	21.79	25.06	24.48	24.06	24.39
Hardly ever	37.70	28.24	34.01	36.28	29.69	37.74	32.95
Never true	15.89	21.87	24.64	16.95	21.88	21.70	20.11
Can't say	0.29	0.71	0.61	0.00	0.26	0.47	0.45

^a Per cent of strata total.

Section 9:

Parental Perspectives on Getting Ahead in Life and Parental Locus of Control

Overview of Findings:

In order to assess the potential importance of attitudes towards work and public assistance on the behaviour of young people and their parents, the *Youth in Focus* (YIF) survey asked respondents directly about their views on benefits for the unemployed and what it takes to get ahead in life. These views may be important in understanding the extent to which the transmission of family or community values regarding work and welfare dependence affect youths' view regarding the acceptability of receiving government support. In particular, some researchers have hypothesized that the intergenerational transmission of attitudes or values is important in understanding the persistence in socio-economic status across the generations (see Dohmen, et al, 2006).

Respondents were also asked to answer a battery of questions designed to measure their locus of control. Locus of control is a psychological concept that is related to where individuals conceptually place responsibility, choice, and control for events in their lives (Rotter, 1966). It is meant to distinguish between those who see control as being internal to themselves to those who believe that it lies externally. This distinction is believed to be related to an individual's motivation on the one hand, and sense of helplessness on the other.

Our results indicate that parents' views about social assistance are closely related to their history with the income support system (see Table 9.1). Amongst parents without an income-support history (category A), approximately 29 per cent believe that unemployment benefits are too low and cause hardship, while 47 per cent believe that they are too high and more than one in five cannot say. Parents with an intensive history of income support use (category B), on the other hand, are much more likely (59 per cent) to believe that benefits are too low and much less likely (22 per cent) to believe that benefits are too high. Those with less recent and more sporadic interaction with the Australian income-support system have perspectives which lie in between these two extremes.

Interestingly, views about who should be primarily responsible for providing for those who are unemployed are much less closely linked to income-support experiences. The proportion of parents who believe that the government is mainly responsible for supporting the unemployed is almost identical amongst those who have no income support history (41 per cent) and those with an intensive income support history (43 per cent). Those who accessed the income-support system for the first time after 1998 (category C) and those first accessing income support between 1994 and 1998 and spending 3 – 6 years on support (category F) are most likely to place responsibility for supporting the unemployed in the government's hands.

The extent to which parents believe that family background – i.e., having well-educated or wealthy parents – is important in getting ahead in life also appears to be somewhat related to income-support history. Only 23 per cent of parents with no income support history believe that coming from a wealth family is extremely or fairly important in getting ahead, while 30 per cent of parents with a history of intensive income-support receipt view family wealth as extremely or fairly important in getting ahead. Those with an intensive history of income-support receipt are also more likely to believe that it is extremely important to have well-educated parents (16 per cent) than are parents with no interaction with the income-support system (10 per cent). Still, the proportion believing that well-educated parents are extremely or fairly important is relatively constant across the two groups (56 vs. 54 per cent in categories A and B respectively).

Although many parents do not believe that family background is important in life success, there is a widely-held view that one's own efforts – education, ambition, and a job – are fundamental in getting ahead in life. Irrespective of income-support history, parents overwhelmingly believe that education, ambition, and jobs are extremely or fairly important in getting ahead. Less than 5 per cent of parents believe that these things are not too important or do not matter at all.

Our results also indicate that parents' locus of control is also related to income-support history (see Table 9.2).⁸ Fully 41 per cent of parents with an intensive history of income-support receipt agree (or strongly agree) with the statement that there is no way they can solve some of the problems that they have. In contrast, this is true of only 28 per cent of parents with no income-support history. Income-support recipients are also much more likely than other parents to believe that they are pushed around in life, that they have no control over what happens to them, and that there is little that they can do to change the important things in life. These results are consistent with a feeling of helplessness amongst income-support recipients.

At the same time, parents with an intensive history of income support are only somewhat less likely than parents without an income-support history to agree or strongly agree that they can do just about anything they set their minds to – 87 vs. 91 per cent in categories B and A respectively. Moreover, more than 93 per cent of both groups believe that what happens in the future mostly depends on them. Thus, while the results suggest that income-support recipients are more likely to feel helpless, the vast majority also believe that they have the ability to achieve what they set out to do.

Taken together, these results indicate that there are some differences in the attitudes that income-support and non-income-support recipients have regarding social policy, the way to get ahead in life, and the extent to which they can influence their own destiny. Still, there appears to be almost unanimous support for view that education, ambition, and jobs are important in getting ahead and the overwhelming majority of parents believe that they have the ability to achieve their goals.

⁸ The specific questions in the YIF survey come from the Pearlin Mastery Scale.

Table 9.1
Parental Perspectives on Unemployment Benefits and Getting Ahead in Life

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Repondents	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
Opinion on unemployment benefits^a							
Benefits for unemployed are too low and cause hardship	28.71	59.24	46.84	31.03	39.58	46.23	44.07
Benefits for unemployed are too high and discourage job search	47.37	22.15	34.62	45.82	38.80	34.43	35.12
Can't say	23.92	18.61	18.53	23.15	21.61	19.34	20.81
Who should be responsible for providing for those who are unemployed^a							
mainly the government	41.15	42.82	48.88	37.23	39.58	49.53	42.58
mainly a person themselves	47.27	41.90	40.53	51.79	49.22	38.21	44.70
can't say	11.58	15.29	10.59	10.98	11.20	12.26	12.71
To get ahead in life, how important is it to come from a wealthy family?^a							
extremely important	4.21	9.84	8.35	4.06	6.51	9.43	7.21
fairly important	18.76	19.75	15.27	17.42	18.23	21.23	18.62
not too important	51.58	39.28	42.36	47.73	44.01	40.09	44.30
does not matter at all	24.11	28.95	32.59	29.83	30.21	28.30	28.30
undesirable, a bad thing	0.10	0.42	0.41	0.48	0.00	0.47	0.30
can't say	1.24	1.77	1.02	0.48	1.04	0.47	1.26
To get ahead in life, how important is it to have well-educated parents?^a							
extremely important	10.05	15.64	16.29	8.83	9.38	12.26	12.74
fairly important	45.55	38.78	36.86	46.30	44.01	45.28	41.98
not too important	33.30	30.36	32.18	30.31	31.77	33.96	31.69
does not matter at all	10.43	14.30	14.05	14.32	14.58	8.49	12.97
undesirable, a bad thing	0.10	0.07	0.00	0.24	0.00	0.00	0.08
can't say	0.57	0.85	0.61	0.00	0.26	0.00	0.55
To get ahead in life, how important is it for a person to have a good education?^a							
extremely important	58.47	66.67	61.71	62.29	58.85	65.09	62.59
fairly important	38.09	29.58	34.01	32.70	37.76	31.13	33.58
not too important	2.30	2.48	3.67	4.30	2.60	2.83	2.80
does not matter at all	0.38	0.85	0.20	0.48	0.52	0.94	0.58
can't say	0.77	0.42	0.41	0.24	0.26	0.00	0.45

^a Per cent of strata total.

Table 9.1 (continued)
Parental Perspectives on Unemployment Benefits and Getting Ahead in Life

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents:	1,045	1,413	491	419	384	212	3,964
To get ahead in life, how important is a person's own ambition?^a							
extremely important	75.79	78.49	74.75	78.52	76.30	75.47	76.94
fairly important	23.25	19.46	22.20	20.76	22.14	22.17	21.34
not too important	0.48	0.92	1.83	0.48	0.78	2.36	0.93
does not matter at all	0.00	0.28	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.13
can't say	0.48	0.85	1.02	0.24	0.78	0.00	0.66
How important is it to have a job?^a							
extremely important	82.39	80.25	83.30	83.77	84.11	84.43	82.16
fairly important	17.03	18.26	15.68	15.75	14.58	15.09	16.83
not too important	0.10	0.78	1.02	0.24	1.04	0.47	0.58
does not matter at all	0.10	0.21	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.10
can't say	0.38	0.50	0.00	0.24	0.26	0.00	0.33

^a Per cent of strata total.

Table 9.2
Parental Locus of Control

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total Respondents	1,031	1,374	478	415	379	208	3,885
There is really no way I can solve some of the problems I have^a							
strongly agree	4.27	11.21	6.90	8.92	6.33	12.50	8.19
agree	23.28	29.48	26.57	22.89	25.86	28.85	26.38
disagree	48.79	38.14	44.56	46.51	48.28	38.94	43.68
strongly disagree	22.11	19.21	20.29	20.96	19.26	18.27	20.26
can't say	1.55	1.97	1.67	0.72	0.26	1.44	1.49
Sometimes I feel that I'm being pushed around in life^a							
strongly agree	3.39	11.79	4.81	3.86	5.80	8.65	7.10
agree	27.64	35.66	33.89	32.29	30.34	37.50	32.54
disagree	51.79	38.86	44.56	46.51	48.02	42.79	44.92
strongly disagree	16.49	12.30	14.44	17.11	15.83	10.10	14.41
can't say	0.68	1.38	2.30	0.24	0.00	0.96	1.03
I have little control over the things that happen to me^a							
strongly agree	1.45	6.26	2.93	3.86	2.11	2.88	3.73
agree	10.09	19.36	17.57	12.05	10.82	14.90	14.83
disagree	65.37	54.59	56.69	60.96	64.12	59.13	59.56
strongly disagree	22.11	17.18	20.29	22.41	22.16	20.67	20.10
can't say	0.97	2.62	2.51	0.72	0.79	2.40	1.78
I can do just about anything I really set my mind to^a							
strongly agree	25.70	30.64	28.45	28.19	31.93	27.88	28.78
agree	65.18	55.90	61.09	62.41	60.42	59.62	60.33
disagree	7.66	11.06	8.58	7.47	6.86	11.06	9.06
strongly disagree	0.29	1.09	0.21	0.96	0.26	1.44	0.69
can't say	1.16	1.31	1.67	0.96	0.53	0.00	1.13
I often feel helpless in dealing with the problems of life^a							
strongly agree	1.36	5.97	2.72	2.41	1.32	1.92	3.29
agree	12.61	26.86	22.38	15.18	20.05	25.48	20.54
disagree	64.60	50.87	55.65	61.93	60.42	53.37	57.35
strongly disagree	20.66	14.41	17.78	19.52	17.41	17.31	17.48
can't say	0.78	1.89	1.46	0.96	0.79	1.92	1.34

^a Per cent of strata total.

Table 9.2 (continued)
Parental Locus of Control

	Economic Category						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
What happens to me in the future mostly depends on me^a							
strongly agree	33.95	39.88	35.77	35.18	37.73	37.50	36.96
agree	59.55	52.69	56.69	58.31	55.67	55.29	56.04
disagree	5.14	5.09	4.81	5.30	5.54	6.73	5.23
strongly disagree	0.58	1.02	0.63	0.24	0.53	0.48	0.69
can't say	0.78	1.31	2.09	0.96	0.53	0.00	1.08
There is little I can do to change many of the important things in my life^a							
strongly agree	1.45	3.93	2.72	1.45	1.06	2.88	2.52
agree	9.80	20.96	15.69	11.81	10.82	17.79	15.21
disagree	69.74	56.99	60.25	65.54	67.28	61.06	62.91
strongly disagree	17.56	15.94	18.83	20.24	19.26	16.83	17.55
can't say	1.45	2.18	2.51	0.96	1.58	1.44	1.80

^a Per cent of strata total

Section 10:

The Demographic Characteristics and Family Background of Youth

Overview of Findings:

This Section and those that follow describe the data received in the course of the focal youth interviews. The youth questionnaire was developed so that the information collected from youth and parent respondents was comparable and could be used to observe the correlations, if any, between parental and children's characteristics and attitudes.

In the first part of the youth interview, young people were asked to provide some demographic and background information about themselves. Moreover, subsequent sections of the questionnaire collected the data on the demographic characteristics of both of the youth's parents, if the youth was judged to be able to provide such information.

Of 4,079 focal youth respondents, slightly more than half were female. The respondents came from all States and Territories of Australia, with the most respondents being from New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland. Around 90 per cent of all focal youth respondents were born in Australia. As with the parent respondents, this proportion is slightly lower for respondents of category C, whose parents first accessed the income-support system after 1998. A higher percentage of young adults belonging to category C were born in non-English speaking countries, and, as can be expected, most of them arrived in Australia for the first time in 2000 or later. Less than 30 per cent of the youth respondents in this category who were born overseas were mostly speaking English at home while they were growing up; this figure is slightly higher for overseas-born respondents of category B (just over 36 per cent). Youth respondents from other categories were more likely to have mostly spoken English at home while growing up; this number is the highest for category A respondents.

Similar to parent respondents, focal youths who identify themselves as having an Aboriginal status come primarily from category B: the proportion of young adults with the Aboriginal status is 6 per cent for this category and ranges between less than 1 per cent and just under 4 per cent for all other economic categories.

The young adults in the survey were also asked questions about the demographic characteristics of their parents and about their living arrangements in childhood. This information, supplemented by data from the parent interview and the administrative dataset, would allow us to analyse family break-up and its importance on the outcomes for young people. The data presented in Table 10.2 provide summary background statistics on the focal youth's parents and to some extent mirror the information collected from parents about their own characteristics and those of their partners. For instance, the results on parents' country of birth represent essentially the same information as Table 1.5 in Section 1 which deals with demographic characteristics of parent respondents and their partners, with the exception that the youth and parent respondents are not perfectly matched. In line with earlier results, around 70 per cent of respondents have parents born in Australia, excluding category C that has fewer Australian-born parents and more parents who migrated from non-English speaking countries, however, this is to be expected since category C consists of people who only recently started to receive income support.

To gain some insight into the respondents' family structure, the focal youth were asked to provide information on whether they have always lived with their parents. In addition, since some of the youth have by the time of the interview already started living independently, the survey included questions about family structure when the focal youth was 14 years old. The data reveal staggering differences across the six economic categories. Only one

fifth of all focal youths whose parents had a prolonged exposure to the income-support system (category B) were living with both their parents at this age, in contrast to more than 70 per cent of the focal youths whose parents had no history of income-support reliance (category A). Moreover, economic category matters in determining which parent does the child live with if the parents are no longer together: while for all the categories the overwhelming majority of young adults lived with their mother at 14, those whose parents were not receiving any income support were more likely to live with their fathers than youths in any other economic category. Gender differences also seem to matter: 22 per cent of boys lived with their father at 14 years of age, as opposed to only 13 per cent of girls.

If the youth had a mother (mother substitute) or a father (father substitute) at the age of 14, they were asked questions about their parents' education, labour force status and occupation. As with the parents' country of birth, these questions mirror information collected in the parent's survey, albeit from a slightly historical perspective.

The overall parental employment and education profiles for different economic categories are very similar to the picture gleaned from the parent survey. The focal youths in category A, whose families have never had a history of income-support receipt, were more likely to have employed parents than all other categories, the differences being especially significant with respect to youths in category B, whose parents were known to rely heavily on income support. For instance, 78 per cent of mothers and 98 per cent of fathers of young adults in category A were employed when the focal youth was 14, in contrast to just 51 and 71 per cent of mothers and fathers in category B. The economic category also matters in determining which occupation the parents of youth respondents were employed in: the category A parents were mostly working in managerial or professional occupations, while category B parents were more likely to have been employed as labourers or clerical and sales workers (especially for fathers).

Finally, the parents who did not have any history of income-support use (category A) have higher rates of the Year 12 completion at the time the focal youth was 14, and a higher probability of having obtained an educational qualification. These rates are almost twice as low for the parents who had a prolonged exposure to the income-support system (category B).

Overall, the family background data for the focal youth show that the young adults who have grown up in the families heavily dependent on income support (category B in the YIF survey) were less likely to live with both of their parents at the age of 14, and are more likely to report lower education and employment status for their parents. These results seem to be confirmed by the information collected directly from the parent respondents. The next step would be to see whether these differences in the family background are correlated with the focal youths' own outcomes, and to employ a more comprehensive analysis to research any causal links or uncover underlying factors of this correlation.

Table 10.1
Demographic Characteristics of Youth

	Economic Categories						Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Total respondents	1,027	1,472	526	420	403	231	4,079
Gender^a							
Male	49.66	45.79	45.06	48.81	46.65	47.62	47.17
Female	50.34	54.21	54.94	51.19	53.35	52.38	52.83
Home state^a							
ACT	2.43	0.75	0.57	1.90	1.99	0.87	1.40
NSW	31.26	30.91	29.28	28.81	29.78	32.90	30.57
NT	0.19	0.41	0.38	0.24	0.50	0.00	0.32
QLD	17.33	22.55	19.20	20.95	20.35	22.08	20.40
SA	8.28	8.83	7.22	5.48	7.20	6.49	7.85
TAS	2.43	3.87	2.85	2.38	4.71	3.90	3.31
VIC	27.07	23.64	29.85	29.05	27.05	27.71	26.43
WA	11.00	9.04	10.65	11.19	8.44	6.06	9.73
Country of Birth^a							
Australia	89.68	91.78	82.32	87.62	90.57	90.04	89.38
Other English-speaking country	4.28	2.31	3.23	3.81	1.24	3.03	3.02
Other non-English speaking country	6.04	5.91	14.45	8.57	8.19	6.93	7.60
Total foreign born	106	121	93	52	38	23	433
Year of Arrival^b							
1990 or earlier	25.47	32.23	9.68	26.92	34.21	26.09	24.94
1991 to 1994	18.87	38.02	8.60	30.77	57.89	13.04	26.56
1994 to 1999	21.70	26.45	26.88	38.46	2.63	60.87	26.56
2000 or after	33.02	1.65	54.84	0.00	2.63	0.00	20.55
Can't say	0.94	1.65	0.00	3.85	2.63	0.00	1.39
Language most spoken at home while growing up^b							
English	57.55	36.36	29.03	48.08	42.11	52.17	42.73
Other language	42.45	63.64	69.89	51.92	55.26	47.83	56.81
ATSI Status^a							
Neither	98.64	92.60	96.58	99.29	96.03	96.10	95.86
Aboriginal	1.07	6.18	1.90	0.71	3.23	3.90	3.36
Torres Strait Islander	0.19	0.41	1.33	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.42
Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	0.00	0.27	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.12

^a Per cent of strata total.

^b Per cent of foreign born.

Table 10.2
Family Background of Youth

	Economic Categories						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Respondents	1,027	1,472	526	420	403	231	1,924	2,155	4,079
Mother's country of birth^a									
Australia	74.49	70.31	62.17	70.71	72.46	74.89	71.41	70.30	70.83
English-speaking	9.44	9.24	10.46	11.67	9.93	6.06	10.24	9.00	9.59
Non-English speaking	15.97	20.11	27.38	17.62	17.37	18.18	18.09	20.51	19.37
Father's country of birth^a									
Australia	71.08	67.05	60.46	70.24	69.73	70.13	68.45	67.56	67.98
English-speaking	11.68	9.38	11.60	9.52	11.41	10.39	11.54	9.61	10.52
Non-English speaking	16.85	21.13	27.76	20.00	18.61	19.48	19.13	21.62	20.45
Total not always living w/ own parents:									
	304	1,099	298	163	216	145	1,003	1,222	2,225
Was the youth living with both parents at 14?^b									
Yes	71.71	21.02	53.69	57.06	42.59	43.45	39.08	38.05	38.52
No	27.96	78.43	45.64	42.94	56.02	55.86	60.42	61.29	60.90
Total not living w/ both parents at 14:									
	86	868	138	70	124	82	611	757	1,368
Was the youth living with their mother at 14?^c									
Yes	76.74	85.60	86.23	82.86	85.48	80.49	81.67	87.05	84.65
No	22.09	14.06	13.04	15.71	14.52	19.51	17.84	12.55	14.91
Total not living w/ mother at 14:									
	19	122	18	11	18	16	109	95	204
Who mostly filled the role of youth's mother at 14?^d									
stepmother	10.53	15.57	11.11	54.55	16.67	18.75	18.35	15.79	17.16
grandmother	10.53	15.57	22.22	0.00	16.67	0.00	10.09	17.89	13.73
sister	0.00	1.64	16.67	0.00	11.11	0.00	2.75	4.21	3.43
foster mother	0.00	1.64	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.25	0.92	2.11	1.47
aunt	10.53	5.74	11.11	9.09	5.56	0.00	2.75	10.53	6.37
father	31.58	18.03	22.22	18.18	27.78	18.75	23.85	16.84	20.59
natural mother	5.26	11.48	5.56	9.09	11.11	18.75	11.93	9.47	10.78
family friend(s)	5.26	2.46	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.92	3.16	1.96
grandparent(s)	0.00	0.82	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.92	0.00	0.49
guardian (school mistress)	5.26	2.46	5.56	9.09	0.00	0.00	2.75	3.16	2.94
partners mother	0.00	1.64	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.92	1.05	0.98
other	0.00	0.82	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.92	0.00	0.49
no one	21.05	19.67	5.56	0.00	11.11	37.50	22.94	12.63	18.14

^a Per cent of strata total.

^b Per cent of those not always living with own parents.

^c Per cent of those not living with own parents at age 14.

^d Per cent of those not living with own mother (own father) at age 14 depending on the question.

**Table 10.2
Family Background of Youth (continued)**

	Economic Categories						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total not living w/ both parents at 14:	86	868	138	70	124	82	611	757	1,368
Was the youth living with own father at 14?^c									
Yes	24.42	14.63	18.12	22.86	19.35	23.17	21.93	12.95	16.96
No	74.42	84.79	81.16	75.71	79.03	76.83	77.41	86.26	82.31
Total not living w/ own father at 14:	64	736	112	53	98	63	473	653	1,126
Who mostly filled the role of youth's father at 14?^d									
stepfather	21.88	17.26	11.61	30.19	43.88	25.40	20.93	19.91	20.34
grandfather	4.69	4.89	5.36	1.89	3.06	1.59	5.71	3.52	4.44
brother	1.56	3.13	4.46	1.89	2.04	3.17	4.02	2.30	3.02
foster father	0.00	0.41	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.59	0.00	0.61	0.36
uncle	6.25	2.58	4.46	1.89	0.00	0.00	3.17	2.14	2.58
mother	9.38	19.02	18.75	9.43	17.35	6.35	13.32	19.91	17.14
natural father	31.25	20.11	27.68	20.75	18.37	28.57	22.83	21.13	21.85
mother's partner	1.56	2.99	2.68	11.32	5.10	3.17	3.81	3.22	3.46
family friend(s)	0.00	0.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.59	0.42	0.15	0.27
grandparent(s)	1.56	0.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.46	0.27
guardian (school mist	0.00	0.27	0.00	1.89	0.00	0.00	0.21	0.31	0.27
aunty	0.00	0.00	0.89	0.00	1.02	0.00	0.21	0.15	0.18
other	0.00	0.54	1.79	1.89	0.00	1.59	1.06	0.46	0.71
no one	20.31	27.31	20.54	16.98	8.16	26.98	23.47	24.50	24.07
Total living always w/ both parents or w/ mother/substitute at 14	1,016	1,420	520	417	396	222	1,870	2,121	3,991
Did mother have a job or business when the youth was 14?									
Yes	78.25	51.48	60.96	72.18	76.01	63.06	66.04	63.65	64.77
No	20.87	45.07	37.88	26.14	22.47	33.78	31.60	34.46	33.12
Total w/ mother did not have a job/business when youth was 14:	221	689	203	116	95	82	635	771	1,406
Has youth's mother ever had a job or business?									
Yes	78.28	69.09	74.88	77.59	77.89	78.05	76.85	70.17	73.19
No	19.91	26.42	22.66	20.69	18.95	17.07	18.90	26.98	23.33

^a Per cent of strata total.

^b Per cent of those not always living with own parents.

^c Per cent of those not living with own parents at age 14.

^d Per cent of those not living with own mother (own father) at age 14 depending on the question.

Table 10.2
Family Background of Youth (continued)

	Economic Categories						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total w/ mother ever had a job or business:	968	1,209	469	391	375	204	1,724	1,892	3,616
Mother's occupation									
Manager	4.44	1.99	3.84	4.09	4.00	1.47	2.67	3.86	3.29
Farmer/farm manager	0.72	1.16	1.49	1.28	0.80	4.90	1.39	1.16	1.27
Professional Associate	32.13	14.47	20.68	21.74	21.87	18.63	22.85	20.82	21.79
professional	7.64	7.61	11.51	8.95	6.93	12.75	7.77	9.14	8.49
Tradesperson	2.27	4.71	3.20	4.35	4.27	1.47	3.54	3.65	3.60
Clerical, sales or services worker	37.40	37.63	35.39	38.11	42.13	34.31	37.76	37.47	37.61
Labourer	6.71	16.05	11.09	11.25	11.47	10.78	11.54	11.68	11.62
Homemaker	3.82	6.37	4.48	6.65	2.67	6.86	4.93	5.29	5.12
Other occupation	2.07	1.49	1.71	0.26	2.13	1.47	1.45	1.74	1.60
No occupation	1.45	3.39	2.56	1.02	1.33	3.43	2.26	2.33	2.30
Can't say	1.34	5.13	4.05	2.30	2.40	3.92	3.83	2.85	3.32
Total living always w/ both parents or w/ mother/substitute at 14	1,016	1,420	520	417	396	222	1,870	2,121	3,991
Had mother completed year 12 of secondary school (at the time youth was 14)?									
Yes	60.04	33.52	44.81	49.88	40.91	40.99	48.77	40.92	44.60
No	35.53	57.25	49.23	45.08	50.76	47.75	43.53	52.38	48.23
Can't say	4.43	9.23	5.96	5.04	8.33	11.26	7.70	6.69	7.17
Had mother obtained educational qualification (at the time youth was 14)?									
Yes	49.90	34.15	38.27	41.25	38.38	44.59	38.98	41.73	40.44
No	36.22	49.08	46.35	43.65	44.19	34.68	43.32	43.85	43.60
Can't say	13.88	16.76	15.38	15.11	17.42	20.72	17.70	14.43	15.96
Total living always w/ both parents or w/ father/substitute at 14	1,006	1,120	479	404	375	210	1,743	1,851	3,594
Did father have a job or business when youth was 14?									
Yes	97.71	71.52	87.06	94.06	93.33	90.00	87.89	85.79	86.81
No	1.99	23.39	11.69	4.46	6.13	8.10	10.33	11.67	11.02
Total w/ father did not have a job/business when youth was 14:	23	319	62	24	25	21	211	263	474
Did father ever have a job or business?									
Yes	78.26	80.56	77.42	62.50	76.00	76.19	81.52	76.43	78.69
No	13.04	10.03	12.90	25.00	16.00	14.29	9.00	14.07	11.81

Table 10.2
Family Background of Youth (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total w/ father ever had a job or business:	1,001	1,058	465	395	369	205	1,704	1,789	3,493
Father's occupation									
Manager	11.29	3.78	5.81	5.57	3.52	5.37	5.87	7.04	6.47
Farmer/farm manager	4.10	3.97	2.37	4.05	2.44	6.83	4.40	3.24	3.81
Professional Associate	25.17	10.11	17.42	17.72	11.92	12.68	17.31	15.93	16.60
professional	15.78	9.45	11.83	11.90	12.74	12.20	12.56	12.19	12.37
Tradesperson	18.98	22.50	19.14	20.51	23.31	21.46	21.07	20.63	20.84
Clerical, sales or services worker	15.78	25.80	23.66	22.78	29.00	21.46	22.48	22.30	22.39
Labourer	4.30	15.03	9.89	9.87	11.65	13.17	9.62	10.79	10.22
Homemaker	0.00	0.09	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.06	0.00	0.03
Other occupation	3.90	3.21	5.81	3.04	2.98	1.46	3.58	3.63	3.61
No occupation	0.10	1.13	0.86	0.00	0.27	1.46	0.65	0.56	0.60
Can't say	0.60	4.91	3.23	4.56	2.17	3.90	2.41	3.69	3.06
Total living always w/ both parents or w/ father/substitute at 14	1,006	1,120	479	404	375	210	1,743	1,851	3,594
Had father completed year 12 of secondary school (at the time youth was 14)?									
Yes	57.85	30.98	46.97	45.54	37.60	41.90	44.29	42.95	43.60
No	38.67	57.14	47.39	48.51	53.33	47.14	49.51	47.97	48.72
Can't say	3.48	11.88	5.64	5.94	9.07	10.95	6.20	9.08	7.68
Had father obtained educational qualification (at the time youth was 14)?									
Yes	63.42	42.14	52.82	56.19	50.13	54.76	53.13	52.24	52.67
No	25.45	37.41	33.82	31.19	32.00	24.76	32.19	31.01	31.58
Can't say	11.13	20.45	13.36	12.62	17.87	20.48	14.69	16.75	15.75

Section 11:

Youths' Living Arrangements and Household Composition

Overview of Findings:

One of the crucial issues that the *Youth in Focus* (YIF) study would be able to address is the process by which the young adults become economically independent and the factors that affect early or late independence. For this purpose, the focal youth questionnaire of the survey collected information on the living arrangements and the household composition of youth.

Slightly less than one fifth of all surveyed young adults were living independently, that is, in a household without parent, guardian, or a parental figure, at the time of the interview. Across the economic groups, the category that has the highest share of the independent focal youths is B (intensive income-support receipt) and the lowest, A (no income support receipt). Gender is also important: more than 22 per cent of the interviewed girls are living independently while only 15 per cent of males are doing so.

Slightly more than 5 per cent of the surveyed 18-year olds were either married or living in a de facto relationship. Economic categories B, E, and F all have higher proportions of partnered youths than other categories. The female respondents are also more likely to live in a de facto relationship: the proportion of those married or in a relationship is 7 per cent for females and less than 3 per cent for males.

As the young people often move away from home at the age of 18 for educational reasons and begin to live in the student residences or share accommodation near their place of study, the shares of those who live in large-group or share accommodation are also summarized in this Section's tables.

Table 11.2 depicts the household composition of the young adult respondents who live with their parents or guardians. The overwhelming majority of focal youths who are not independent are single and do not have children, although female respondents who have partner and/or children are more likely to live with their parents than the male ones. There are no distinctive patterns in the living arrangements across the six economic categories except where it relates to the structure of the parents' family: the young people from category B are much less likely to live with both their parents than the young people in any other category and especially category A (the difference between these two proportions is about 40 percentage points).

The next table (11.3) summarizes the household structure of the independent youth respondents and the factors that contributed to their moving out. It can be observed that the young adults who are partnered and/or have children are much more likely to live on their own than the single ones. Among the respondents who are considered independent, the females are more likely to have a partner and/or children. The data also reveal significant differences in the family structure across economic categories.

The focal youth whose parents have a history of prolonged reliance on income support (category B) tend to become independent earlier than others: more than 35 per cent of youth in this category started living independently more than two years prior to the Wave 1 interview (August 2006) whereas only around 13 per cent of youth in Category A (no income support history) moved away as early.

Different economic groups of youths tend to cite different reasons for their moving away and becoming independent. While the respondents in Category A mostly cite such reasons as education and employment, the focal youths in Category B are much more likely to

state poor relationships at home and general wish to be independent, although for the latter reason the pattern is not as clear. Male respondents were also more likely to move away for employment reasons than the female ones.

As is the case with the parents' questionnaire, the young adults are asked about the administrative parent's relationship to them. As mentioned earlier in this Report, the administrative nature of the TDS2 data used as a sampling frame for the survey did not allow researchers to ascertain the exact relationship between the youth and the adult who received government payments on their behalf. A specific technique was used to make sure that the selected administrative parent was the natural mother of the youth (either biological or adoptive as an infant) and, as the results in Table 11.4 show, the mother was selected in more than 95 per cent of cases, and the natural parents – in 98 per cent of cases, the rest including stepmothers, grandmothers or aunts/uncles.

At the time of the interview, about three quarters of the recorded administrative parents lived in the same household with the focal youth. This figure is, however, only 70 per cent for the focal youths in Category B, which is almost 15 percentage points lower than for Category A. Nevertheless, almost 100 per cent of the selected administrative parents lived with the youth at least at some point in time.

For the youth respondents who currently live with both parents, the chances of this having always been the case are higher for the youth belonging to Category A than to any other category. Of those youth not currently living with both their parents, respondents who have a history of intensive income-support receipt (Category B) are much more likely to never have lived in the same household with both parents: only 71 per cent of young adults in this category report having ever lived with both parents, in contrast to more than 90 per cent for Category A. Category B respondents are also more likely to have lived with their mother and a step-parent, with their mother in a single-parent family, or in a foster family or a welfare home. These findings are perhaps not surprising since single parents would have received government benefits which would place them in one of the income-support receiving categories.

The last three sets of numbers in this section's tables describe the frequency with which the young adults have moved houses while growing up. These figures could serve as an indicator of stability of the young adults' childhood environment. Our results show that respondents of Category B are generally more likely than other young adults to have moved houses often while living with parents and, after becoming independent, to have continued changing dwellings frequently.

In general, the survey results indicate that growing up in families dependent on income support could affect early fertility decisions. The young people who have grown up in such families are more likely to have experienced family break-up, and tend to move out of their parents' or guardians' house at an earlier age.

**Table 11.1
The Living Arrangements of Youth**

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Respondents	1,027	1,472	526	420	403	231	1,924	2,155	4,079
Youth's current living arrangement:^a									
w/ parent(s), guardian, or parental figure living independently	86.76	74.86	83.65	86.19	80.65	75.76	84.56	77.40	80.78
(w/o parent, guardian, parental figure)	13.24	25.14	16.35	13.81	19.35	24.24	15.44	22.60	19.22
Currently married or living in de facto relationship?^a									
yes, married	0.19	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.43	0.05	0.28	0.17
yes, de facto	2.53	7.00	3.61	2.62	6.20	7.36	2.75	6.87	4.93
no	97.27	92.80	96.39	97.38	93.55	92.21	97.19	92.85	94.90
Currently living in large-group accommodation?									
yes	3.89	2.92	3.61	3.10	2.23	5.63	2.49	4.13	3.36
no	95.62	96.47	95.25	96.43	97.02	94.37	96.88	95.27	96.03
Total not large-group accommodation	987	1,429	507	407	394	218	1,876	2,066	3,942
Currently living in share accommodation?									
yes	7.90	15.12	9.27	10.32	11.42	15.14	10.87	12.44	11.69
no	91.79	84.46	90.34	89.43	88.32	83.94	88.81	87.12	87.92
Total in group or share accommodation and NOT in de facto relationship	107	230	62	48	47	38	230	302	532
Does partner/relative live at the same place?									
yes	21.50	30.87	25.81	25.00	19.15	21.05	30.87	22.52	26.13
no	78.50	69.13	74.19	75.00	80.85	78.95	69.13	77.48	73.87

^a Per cent of strata total.

Table 11.2
The Household Structure of Youth Living with Parents/Guardians/Parental Figures

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total respondents living w/ parent(s), guardian, or parental figure	891	1,102	440	362	325	175	1,627	1,668	3,295
Household structure:^a									
Partnered w/ child(ren) and either one or both parents and/or other relatives	0.00	0.36	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.57	0.00	0.30	0.15
Partnered, no children and either one or both parents and/or other relatives	1.91	2.81	2.27	0.28	3.08	4.57	1.54	3.12	2.34
Single w/ child(ren) and either one or both parents and/or other relatives	0.22	1.36	0.45	0.00	0.62	0.57	0.18	1.14	0.67
Single, no children	97.87	95.46	97.27	99.72	96.31	94.29	98.28	95.44	96.84
Living arrangements of those single, no children:^b									
Other relatives only	1.01	2.27	2.05	0.55	2.15	0.57	1.66	1.56	1.61
Both parents w/ or w/o other relatives	87.32	47.73	61.82	85.08	76.92	68.57	69.82	67.03	68.41
One parent w/ or w/o other relatives	9.54	45.46	33.41	14.09	17.23	25.14	26.80	26.86	26.83
per cent of strata total									

^a Per cent of those living with parents, guardians, parental figures.

^b Per cent of those who are single with no children.

Table 11.3
The Household Structure of Youth Living Independently

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total respondents living independently	136	370	86	58	78	56	297	487	784
Household Structure^a									
Partnered, with child(ren)	0.74	6.22	2.33	3.45	5.13	7.14	3.03	5.54	4.59
Partnered, no children	13.97	16.22	15.12	15.52	19.23	16.07	10.77	19.10	15.94
Single with child(ren)	0.00	4.05	1.16	0.00	1.28	1.79	0.00	3.70	2.30
Single, no children	85.29	73.51	81.40	81.03	74.36	75.00	86.20	71.66	77.17
When did youth become independent?^a									
9 mths or less	29.10	22.44	33.33	15.52	35.53	22.64	26.71	24.89	25.59
10 mths to 1 year	41.04	21.88	32.14	41.38	18.42	39.62	27.74	29.32	28.72
13 months to 2 yea	17.16	20.22	19.05	27.59	23.68	15.09	23.29	18.14	20.10
`More than 2 years	12.69	35.46	15.48	15.52	22.37	22.64	22.26	27.64	25.59
Who youth lived with before becoming independent (multiple answers)^a									
Own mother (biological or adoptive)	90.44	73.97	83.33	89.66	77.92	80.00	80.41	79.54	79.87
Stepmother	0.74	1.10	2.38	0.00	1.30	0.00	1.35	0.84	1.03
Foster mother	0.00	0.27	0.00	1.72	0.00	1.82	0.00	0.63	0.39
Own father (biological or adoptive)	74.26	26.58	50.00	58.62	42.86	54.55	46.28	41.75	43.48
Stepfather	2.21	7.12	5.95	5.17	12.99	5.45	6.42	6.47	6.45
Sister/half-sister	30.88	27.40	29.76	37.93	15.58	36.36	31.76	26.51	28.52
Stepsister/foster sister	2.94	0.82	0.00	0.00	1.30	5.45	1.69	1.25	1.42
Brother/half-brother	30.15	26.30	29.76	34.48	23.38	25.45	27.70	27.56	27.61
Stepbrother/foster brother	0.74	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.30	0.00	0.34	0.21	0.26
Grandmother	2.21	4.38	2.38	1.72	3.90	0.00	2.36	3.76	3.23
Grandfather	0.00	0.82	2.38	0.00	1.30	0.00	1.69	0.21	0.77
Wife, female de facto partner	0.00	0.82	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.68	0.21	0.39
Husband, male de facto partner	0.74	0.00	1.19	0.00	1.30	0.00	0.00	0.63	0.39
Girlfriend	0.74	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.30	0.00	0.34	0.21	0.26
Boyfriend	0.00	1.37	0.00	0.00	2.60	1.82	0.34	1.46	1.03
Own child	0.00	0.55	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.34	0.21	0.26
Partner's mother/stepmother	0.00	0.82	0.00	0.00	1.30	3.64	0.34	1.04	0.77
Partner's father/stepfather	0.00	0.55	0.00	0.00	1.30	1.82	0.00	0.84	0.52
Partner's sister/half-sister	0.00	0.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.34	0.00	0.13

^a Per cent of those living independently.

Table 11.3
The Household Structure of Youth Living Independently (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total respondents living independently	136	370	86	58	78	56	297	487	784
Partner's brother/half-brother	0.00	0.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.34	0.00	0.13
Aunty/uncle	1.47	3.84	1.19	1.72	1.30	0.00	1.69	2.92	2.45
Cousin	0.00	0.82	0.00	0.00	1.30	0.00	0.34	0.63	0.52
Boss/ work colleague	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.82	0.34	0.00	0.13
Niece/ nephew	0.00	1.10	1.19	0.00	1.30	0.00	0.00	1.25	0.77
Sister's or brother's partner	0.00	0.55	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.68	0.00	0.26
Family friend	0.00	0.55	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.42	0.26
Friend	1.47	2.19	1.19	1.72	3.90	0.00	2.03	1.88	1.94
Friend's mother/father	0.00	0.82	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.34	0.42	0.39
Mother's partner/de facto	0.00	0.55	0.00	1.72	0.00	0.00	0.68	0.21	0.39
Other non-relative	0.74	1.37	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.01	0.63	0.77
Can't say	1.47	0.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.34	0.42	0.39
Reasons for youth moving away (multiple answers)^a									
Wanted to move away and be independent	16.18	26.85	30.59	15.52	28.57	12.73	25.68	22.50	23.71
Wanted to live with partner	5.88	6.58	4.71	1.72	7.79	1.82	2.03	7.92	5.67
Educational reasons	55.15	21.37	36.47	44.83	23.38	43.64	29.39	34.38	32.47
Employment reasons	16.18	9.32	7.06	17.24	15.58	12.73	18.58	7.50	11.73
Must live in an institution	0.00	0.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.34	0.00	0.13
Unable to stay due to economic reasons/space	0.00	3.01	1.18	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.69	1.46	1.55
Unable to stay due to poor relationships	5.15	28.77	9.41	18.97	25.97	16.36	19.59	21.25	20.62
Could not accept the rules there	0.00	1.37	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.68	0.63	0.64
To go travelling	0.00	0.27	1.18	0.00	1.30	0.00	0.34	0.42	0.39
Parent moved out	2.94	4.66	3.53	0.00	1.30	3.64	4.05	3.13	3.48
Fell pregnant/had a baby	0.00	1.92	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.82	0.34	1.46	1.03
Wanted to live with other parent	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.72	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.21	0.13
Wanted to live with other relative(s)	0.00	0.55	0.00	1.72	0.00	1.82	0.00	0.83	0.52
Was asked/told to leave (unspec)	1.47	0.82	0.00	0.00	1.30	1.82	0.68	1.04	0.90
Other reason	0.00	2.47	3.53	0.00	3.90	3.64	1.35	2.71	2.19

^a Per cent of those living independently

Table 11.4
Youths' Relationship to the Administrative Parent

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total youth w/ administrative parent name recorded	1,016	1,454	519	415	399	226	1,900	2,129	4,029
Does recorded administrative parent live with youth?^a									
Yes	84.74	70.15	79.38	84.34	75.44	73.01	79.05	75.48	77.17
No	15.26	29.71	20.62	15.42	24.56	26.99	20.89	24.42	22.76
Administrative parent's relationship to youth:^a									
own mother (biological or adoptive as an infant)	95.87	94.91	93.45	98.31	97.49	96.46	95.32	95.96	95.66
stepmother	0.10	0.28	0.19	0.00	0.75	0.44	0.32	0.19	0.25
foster mother	0.00	0.07	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.02
own father (biological or adoptive as an infant)	3.54	3.37	4.43	1.69	1.00	2.65	3.53	2.72	3.10
stepfather	0.20	0.07	0.19	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.05	0.19	0.12
sister/half-sister	0.00	0.00	0.39	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.11	0.05	0.07
brother/half-brother	0.00	0.00	0.19	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.02
grandmother	0.10	0.76	0.19	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.21	0.42	0.32
grandfather	0.00	0.07	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.02
aunty/ uncle	0.20	0.28	0.58	0.00	0.25	0.44	0.32	0.23	0.27
cousin	0.00	0.00	0.39	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.09	0.05
family friend	0.00	0.07	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.02
can't say	0.00	0.14	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.05	0.05
Total youths who do not now live w/ admin. parent	155	434	107	65	98	61	398	522	920
Did youth ever lived in the same household as admin. parent?									
Yes	100.0	98.62	97.20	98.46	100.0	98.36	98.24	99.23	98.80
No	0.00	1.38	1.87	1.54	0.00	1.64	1.51	0.77	1.09
Total youths who used to live w/ admin. parent:	155	428	104	64	98	60	391	518	909
When did youth move out of admin. parent's home?									
9 mths or less	30.97	22.20	29.81	20.31	26.53	23.33	24.55	25.29	24.97
10 mths to 1 year	34.19	18.69	27.88	32.81	21.43	33.33	22.25	26.45	24.64
13 months to 2.5 y	20.65	25.70	27.88	26.56	23.47	11.67	26.60	22.01	23.98
More than 2.5 year	12.90	32.71	14.42	20.31	27.55	30.00	25.58	25.68	25.63
Can't say	1.29	0.70	0.00	0.00	1.02	1.67	1.02	0.58	0.77

^a Per cent of those with administrative parent's name recorded.

Table 11.5
Youths' Living Arrangements in Childhood

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total respondents living w/ both own parents	772	414	252	288	213	102	1,014	1,027	2,041
Was there ever a time when youth did not live with both own parents?									
Yes, has been such time	6.22	9.66	9.52	10.76	12.21	15.69	9.07	9.06	9.06
No, always lived with mother and father	93.65	90.10	90.48	89.24	87.79	84.31	90.83	90.85	90.84
Total respondents NOT currently living w/ both parents	255	1,058	274	132	190	129	910	1,128	2,038
Before youth turned 18, did youth ever live with both own parents?									
Yes	92.16	71.36	88.69	92.42	78.95	93.80	82.20	77.84	79.78
No	7.45	27.69	10.58	7.58	20.53	6.20	17.03	21.54	19.53
Total respondents who have not always lived with both parents	303	1,098	298	163	216	145	1,002	1,221	2,223
Before 18, did youth ever live with own mother and a stepparent?									
Yes	12.21	32.70	20.81	27.61	41.20	27.59	28.94	28.01	28.43
No	87.46	67.12	79.19	72.39	58.80	72.41	71.06	71.74	71.43
Before 18, did youth ever live with own father and a stepparent?									
Yes	6.93	13.11	9.40	11.04	14.81	17.24	14.37	10.16	12.06
No	92.74	86.70	90.60	88.96	85.19	82.76	85.53	89.68	87.81
Before 18, did youth ever live with own mother in a single-parent family?									
Yes	30.03	74.95	62.08	50.31	50.00	57.93	60.08	63.14	61.76
No	69.64	24.68	37.92	49.69	48.15	42.07	39.52	36.45	37.83
Before 18, did youth ever live with own father in a single-parent family?									
Yes	15.18	18.85	19.13	15.34	18.52	28.28	22.85	15.32	18.71
No	84.49	80.69	80.87	84.05	81.02	70.34	76.65	84.28	80.84

Table 11.5
Youths' Living Arrangements in Childhood (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total respondents not always living w/ both parents	303	1,098	298	163	216	145	1,002	1,221	2,223
Before 18, did youth ever live with other relatives but without own parents?									
Yes	6.60	15.30	12.75	13.50	12.96	13.79	11.98	14.41	13.32
No	93.07	84.70	87.25	86.50	86.57	85.52	87.82	85.50	86.55
Did youth ever live in a foster family, welfare home or an institution?									
Yes	0.99	4.19	0.67	0.61	1.85	2.76	2.20	3.11	2.70
No	98.68	95.63	99.33	99.39	97.69	97.24	97.70	96.64	97.12
Before 18, did youth ever live with a guardian but without own parents?									
Yes	9.24	11.29	7.72	9.20	7.41	9.66	8.28	11.22	9.90
No	90.43	88.62	92.28	90.80	92.13	90.34	91.72	88.53	89.97
Total respondents living w/ parents at one time but not now	140	271	86	59	63	55	263	411	674
Time of moving out of own parents' home									
9 mths or less	25.00	17.71	30.23	15.25	25.40	23.64	22.05	21.65	21.81
10 mths to 1 year	41.43	22.88	34.88	33.90	23.81	38.18	30.42	30.66	30.56
13 months to 2 years	16.43	19.19	12.79	25.42	26.98	10.91	20.91	16.79	18.40
More than 2 years	17.14	40.22	22.09	25.42	23.81	27.27	26.62	30.90	29.23
Total independent youths	136	365	84	58	77	55	296	479	775
How many houses lived in while with parents?									
One	33.09	12.88	25.00	22.41	20.78	18.18	20.95	18.79	19.61
Two	23.53	14.25	17.86	20.69	10.39	18.18	15.54	17.33	16.65
Three or four	31.62	26.03	29.76	27.59	22.08	25.45	25.68	27.97	27.10
Five or more	11.76	41.10	27.38	29.31	44.16	34.55	36.15	31.73	33.42
How many houses lived in since moving out?									
One	63.97	41.37	65.48	44.83	46.75	54.55	49.66	49.69	49.68
Two	20.59	18.90	19.05	25.86	23.38	23.64	20.27	20.67	20.52
Three or more	14.71	39.45	15.48	29.31	28.57	21.82	29.73	29.23	29.42
Total non-independent youths	891	1,108	442	363	328	176	1,628	1,680	3,308
How many houses lived in since birth?									
One	25.81	12.36	20.81	15.98	17.68	14.77	17.57	18.75	18.17
Two	27.38	17.33	19.91	23.42	17.68	17.61	21.44	20.77	21.10
Three or four	29.18	28.52	25.79	30.03	30.18	32.39	28.69	29.05	28.87
Five or more	16.95	39.08	31.22	29.75	33.23	34.66	30.65	29.82	30.23

Section 12:

Youths' Perspectives on their Relationships with their Parents

Overview of Findings:

There are a number of reasons to be interested in the quality of the relationship between young adults and their parents. Developmental psychologists, for example, argue that many aspects of parents' relationships with their children, in particular, parenting style, emotional warmth, cognitive stimulation, and role modelling, are important in understanding child outcomes (Duncan et al. 2005). Moreover, family discord—either between parents or between parents and children—is associated with a range of poorer outcomes for young people (see for example, Piketty 2003; Sheeber et al, 1997; Marsh and Dale 2005). Marital discord in particular has been linked to underlying financial stress in the family (see Fisher and Lyons 2006) making it especially important to take into account the economic circumstances of the family. Finally, the extent to which young people can rely on their parents to provide both the emotional and financial support necessary to successfully enter the labour market or continue their education depends in part on the nature of the relationship with their parents.

The *Youth in Focus* (YIF) project provides an important opportunity to investigate these issues from a different perspective. Although the YIF survey does not ask about parenting style and role modelling directly, both young people and their parents do provide independent information about the nature of their relationship with each other, their aspirations, and their views on the things that are important to getting ahead in life. Specifically, young people are asked whether their parents understand and respect their opinions, make too many demands on them, know who their friends are and where they go in their free time. In this Section we consider youths' perspectives on the relationships they have with the parental figures in their lives, while Section 8 describes how parents—predominately mothers—view their relationships with their 18-year-old children. Parents' and youths' aspirations and work-welfare attitudes are discussed in Sections 9 and 18 respectively.

Information about the nature of youths' relationships with their mothers and fathers is presented in Table 12.1. The results indicate that overall young people have friendly relationships with their mothers that are based on mutual respect. Approximately three in four 18 years olds report that they can respect their mothers' ideas/opinions about life and that their mothers, in turn, respect their ideas. Moreover, the vast majority of young people report that they find it easy to understand their mothers (approximately 70 per cent) and more than half say that their mothers hardly ever or never make too many demands on them. Interestingly, the nature of young peoples' relationships with their mothers does not seem to vary much by economic status. Young people growing up in families with a history of intensive income-support receipt (Category B) are only somewhat less likely to report warm and supportive relationships with their mothers than are youth in families with no interaction with the income-support system (Category A).

Young people's relationships with their fathers appear to be more closely related to the family's economic circumstances. Although young people in families with no interaction with the income-support system see their relationships with their fathers only slightly less positively than their relationships with their mothers, youth in families with a history of intensive income-support receipt view their relationships with their fathers much more negatively than those with their mothers. For example, the proportion of Category A youth who always or often respect their fathers' opinions (75 per cent) is much the same as the proportion respecting their mothers' opinions (77 per cent). On the other hand, while 71 per cent of youth in Category B respect their mothers' opinions, only 55 per cent say that they always or often respect their fathers' opinions. Similarly, only 57 per cent of young

people in income-support families believe their fathers always or often respect their opinions in comparison to 68 per cent who say that their mothers can respect their opinions about the important things in life. On the whole, young people in Category B find it relatively more difficult to understand their fathers.

Given the small numbers of young people who have ever lived with a stepmother, it is difficult to assess the quality of the relationships that 18-year olds have with their stepmothers. Living with a stepfather is somewhat more common—particularly for young people growing up in families with a history of intensive income-support receipt (Category B). Interestingly, our results indicate that young people in Category B report similar levels of satisfaction with their stepfathers as with their fathers. Specifically, 55 per cent report that they always or often can respect their stepfathers' opinions about the important things in life which is the same proportion who report respecting their fathers' opinions. In contrast, young people in non-income-support families (Category A) are much less likely to respect their stepfathers' opinions in comparison to their fathers' opinions (56 versus 75 per cent respectively).

Interestingly, young people in families with no history of income support are somewhat more likely than youth in income-support families to feel that their stepfathers make too many demands on them (19 vs. 15 per cent) and are somewhat less likely to say that their overall relationship with their stepfather is always or often friendly (63 vs. 68 per cent). Despite this, the quality of young peoples' relationships with their parents is remarkably consistent across economic categories. The single exception is youths' relationships with their fathers which appear to be much worse in families with a history of intensive income-support receipt.

In addition to reporting about the extent to which relationships with their parents are friendly and based on mutual respect, young people were also asked to complete a self-completion questionnaire (SCQ) either online or on paper. The SCQ asked young people specific questions about whether their parents know who their friends are, where they go at night, and where they spend their time. Of the 4079 18-year-olds who responded to the YIF survey, 2,977 (73 per cent) also answered questions about their relationship with their parents in the SCQ. These results are presented in Table 12.3 and 12.4.

Approximately 40 per cent of young people (irrespective of their economic status) say that their mothers/mother substitute know all of their friends, while the remainder report that their mothers know some of their friends. Only a small proportion of youth—1 versus 3 per cent in Categories A and B respectively—report that their mothers do not know any of their friends. Moreover, young people report that their mothers take an active interest in where they are at night or after school and to a lesser extent what they do in their free time. Specifically, while 40 per cent of youth in non-income support families (Category A) say that their mothers expect to know where they are after school, fully 63 per cent report that their mothers expect to know where they are at night. Approximately one in four (28 per cent) report that their mothers expect to know where the youth spends his or her time, with the vast majority of young people growing up in non-income support families (66 per cent) say that their mothers want to know a little about how they spend their free time. In contrast, young people growing up in families with an intensive history of income-support receipt are somewhat less likely to report that their mothers expect to know where they are after school (31 per cent), where they are at night (50 per cent), and how they spend their free time (19 per cent). Perhaps not surprisingly, girls are more likely to report that their mothers expect to know where they are and what they are doing than are boys.

In addition to asking what parents expect to know about their children's activities, young people were also asked how much their parents in fact know about where they are and what they are doing. The results indicate that while mothers might not "expect" to know about their children's activities they do in fact often know a great deal. For example, although only 19 per cent of young people in income-support families report that their mothers expect to know how they spend their free time, almost twice as many (37 per cent) say that their mothers really know a lot about what they do in their free time. Similarly, the proportion of mothers who expect to know where their children are after school is lower than the proportion who, in fact, do know where their children are spending their after-school hours. The exception to this general pattern is that mothers in non-income-support families (Category A) are more likely to expect to know (63 per cent) than to actually know (55 per cent) where the young person goes at night.

Although the vast majority (more than 93 per cent) of young people completing the SCQ report that they have a relationship with their mother, young people are much less likely to report having a relationship with their fathers if they grow up in a family with some exposure to the income-support system. This is perhaps not surprising to the extent that income-support receipt is related to sole parenthood. Still, this disparity makes it important to carefully consider the role that the presence (or absence) of a father makes in a young person's life.

Relative to their mothers, young people see their fathers as knowing much less about who their friends are, what they do, and where they go. Young people are approximately half as likely to say that fathers know all their friends (21 per cent in Category A and 16 per cent in Category B) as they are to say that their mothers know all their friends. Similarly, young people report that their fathers are much less likely to expect to know where they are and what they are doing. Moreover, there is very little difference between how much fathers expect to know and what they do know. Specifically, the proportion of youth reporting that their fathers expect to know where they go at night is virtually the same as the proportion reporting that their fathers actually know a lot about where they go at night. For example, young people in non-income-support families report that their mothers and fathers are equally likely to actually know where they go at night (41 per cent) despite mothers being much more likely to expect to know this information.

Table 12.1
The Nature of Youths' Relationships with Their Mothers and Fathers

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total respondents who ever lived with mother	1,025	1,455	524	420	400	230	1,911	2,143	4,054
Can respect mother's ideas/opinions about life?									
Always	48.20	46.25	48.85	50.24	46.25	49.13	45.05	49.98	47.66
Often	29.07	24.95	27.10	27.14	27.75	23.04	28.57	24.97	26.67
Usually	13.85	12.10	12.40	13.57	13.75	16.52	14.08	12.32	13.15
Sometimes	7.02	11.00	6.87	8.10	10.50	8.26	8.74	9.15	8.95
Hardly ever	0.98	2.61	1.72	0.48	1.25	1.30	1.57	1.73	1.65
Never	0.10	1.44	1.15	0.24	0.25	1.30	0.73	0.89	0.81
Can't say	0.29	0.14	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.16	0.09	0.12
Mother deceased	0.39	0.76	1.15	0.24	0.00	0.43	0.52	0.61	0.57
Doesn't want to talk about mother	0.10	0.76	0.76	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.58	0.28	0.42
Total respondents whose mother is alive and who are willing to talk about mother:	1,020	1,433	514	419	399	229	1,890	2,124	4,014
Does youth's mother respect youth's ideas about important things in life?									
Always	47.35	44.10	48.83	48.21	49.12	44.10	44.92	47.83	46.46
Often	26.86	23.73	24.32	24.82	21.05	27.07	26.03	23.40	24.64
Usually	13.53	13.47	11.67	14.08	14.54	13.54	14.13	12.81	13.43
Sometimes	10.20	13.68	12.65	11.46	11.78	11.79	12.17	12.10	12.13
Hardly ever	1.37	2.72	1.36	0.95	2.26	1.31	1.48	2.26	1.89
Never	0.49	2.02	1.17	0.48	0.75	1.75	0.90	1.51	1.22
Does youth find it easy to understand their mother?									
Always	54.71	51.29	54.09	54.65	52.88	53.71	54.66	51.84	53.16
Often	20.49	19.47	20.82	20.76	15.54	20.96	20.63	18.93	19.73
Usually	11.96	9.70	11.09	11.46	12.03	10.92	10.79	11.06	10.94
Sometimes	10.59	13.82	9.92	10.74	15.54	10.92	10.16	13.98	12.18
Hardly ever	1.57	3.07	2.33	1.67	3.01	1.31	2.28	2.40	2.34
Never	0.59	2.44	1.75	0.72	1.00	2.18	1.38	1.69	1.54
How often does youth feel their mother makes too many demands on them?									
Always	2.65	4.82	5.25	4.53	4.26	3.93	4.02	4.33	4.19
Often	8.73	9.14	8.75	8.11	9.52	11.79	8.31	9.75	9.07
Usually	5.10	4.88	5.25	4.30	2.51	4.37	4.34	4.94	4.66
Sometimes	30.78	27.77	25.29	26.01	26.32	24.89	27.41	28.01	27.73
Hardly ever	35.49	30.50	34.05	38.42	34.59	33.62	34.55	32.82	33.63
Never	17.06	22.19	21.40	18.14	22.81	21.40	21.01	19.82	20.38

Table 12.1
The Nature of Youths' Relationships with Their Mothers and Fathers (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total respondents whose mother is alive and who do not refuse to talk about mother:	1,020	1,433	514	419	399	229	1,890	2,124	4,014
Overall characteristic of youth's relationship with their mother:									
Always friendly	55.59	54.57	57.59	59.67	53.88	59.83	57.62	54.52	55.98
Often friendly	29.41	25.68	26.85	25.30	28.32	21.83	26.61	26.93	26.78
Usually friendly	10.98	13.05	9.92	10.98	11.28	12.66	10.95	12.38	11.71
Sometimes friendly	3.24	4.19	3.50	3.58	4.01	3.93	3.17	4.28	3.76
Hardly ever friendly	0.59	1.40	1.56	0.24	1.75	1.31	1.16	1.08	1.12
Never friendly	0.00	0.70	0.39	0.00	0.50	0.44	0.26	0.47	0.37
Mother's overall behavior towards youth:									
Always friendly	59.22	59.25	60.89	63.72	60.15	61.14	61.53	58.85	60.11
Often friendly	27.45	23.80	25.29	23.87	23.56	23.14	25.19	24.58	24.86
Usually friendly	9.61	10.82	9.14	9.31	11.28	10.92	9.15	11.11	10.19
Sometimes friendly	3.04	4.26	2.92	2.86	3.01	3.06	2.91	3.91	3.44
Hardly ever friendly	0.29	0.70	1.17	0.24	1.25	1.31	0.63	0.75	0.70
Never friendly	0.20	0.77	0.39	0.00	0.50	0.44	0.37	0.52	0.45
Total respondents who ever lived with father:	1,016	1,228	500	411	369	227	1,805	1,946	3,751
Does youth respect their father's ideas/opinions about important things in life?									
Always	45.57	32.08	39.00	41.36	42.82	37.00	38.23	39.77	39.03
Often	29.33	22.48	25.00	25.79	25.20	25.11	27.76	23.33	25.46
Usually	12.80	11.73	12.00	13.87	10.03	10.57	13.52	10.69	12.05
Sometimes	9.84	13.93	12.60	12.90	13.82	16.30	11.52	13.72	12.66
Hardly ever	0.69	4.80	4.00	2.43	2.98	5.29	2.49	3.80	3.17
Never	0.10	4.07	2.60	0.73	1.63	3.08	1.66	2.57	2.13
Can't say	0.49	2.52	0.40	0.49	0.81	0.88	1.05	1.34	1.20
Father deceased	0.69	4.72	3.00	1.22	0.54	0.44	1.99	2.67	2.35
Doesn't want to talk about father	0.49	3.66	1.40	1.22	2.17	1.32	1.77	2.11	1.95
Total respondents whose father is alive and who do not refuse to talk about father:	1,004	1,125	478	401	359	223	1,737	1,853	3,590
Does youth's father respect youth's ideas/opinions about important things in life?									
Always	41.43	35.73	39.12	40.40	42.62	36.32	37.94	40.04	39.03
Often	28.59	21.07	26.99	25.94	20.61	23.77	26.19	23.15	24.62
Usually	14.74	13.78	11.72	13.22	14.76	12.56	14.97	12.57	13.73
Sometimes	13.25	15.73	14.64	15.21	14.48	17.49	14.85	14.79	14.82
Hardly ever	1.39	5.16	4.18	3.99	3.90	4.93	2.99	4.37	3.70
Never	0.30	5.96	2.72	0.50	3.06	3.59	2.01	3.72	2.90

Table 12.1
The Nature of Youths' Relationships with Their Mothers and Fathers (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total respondents whose father is alive and who do not refuse to talk about father:	1,004	1,125	478	401	359	223	1,737	1,853	3,590
Does youth find it easy to understand their father?									
Always	48.21	39.02	46.23	47.88	42.62	44.84	49.05	39.77	44.26
Often	21.71	16.98	19.67	19.70	18.38	17.49	18.60	19.64	19.14
Usually	13.45	11.47	10.04	12.72	13.65	11.66	12.49	11.93	12.20
Sometimes	13.75	18.84	16.11	14.71	17.27	16.14	14.16	18.24	16.27
Hardly ever	1.89	5.33	3.35	3.49	4.74	4.48	2.82	4.70	3.79
Never	0.90	6.22	3.77	1.25	2.79	4.93	2.19	4.59	3.43
How often does youth feel that their father makes too many demands on them?									
Always	1.69	4.89	2.93	3.24	5.01	5.38	2.99	4.16	3.59
Often	7.17	7.20	8.79	8.48	6.41	9.42	7.83	7.39	7.60
Usually	4.38	3.91	3.35	4.49	3.90	3.14	4.84	3.18	3.98
Sometimes	24.60	18.31	26.15	25.44	24.79	21.52	23.78	21.80	22.76
Hardly ever	41.14	32.44	30.75	37.41	33.70	34.08	35.69	35.19	35.43
Never	20.72	30.58	26.78	20.20	25.35	25.11	23.78	26.71	25.29
Overall relationship with father:									
Always friendly	52.09	45.33	45.82	50.37	49.58	48.43	49.63	47.38	48.47
Often friendly	30.18	24.09	27.82	28.93	23.68	25.11	27.35	26.39	26.85
Usually friendly	13.75	13.24	15.06	13.97	15.04	13.00	13.76	13.98	13.87
Sometimes friendly	3.09	7.64	5.23	4.74	6.69	8.07	5.30	5.99	5.65
Hardly ever friendly	0.70	3.38	3.14	1.00	3.06	3.14	1.67	2.86	2.28
Never friendly	0.10	3.38	1.88	0.25	1.39	1.79	1.50	1.73	1.62
Father's overall behaviour towards youth:									
Always friendly	56.27	51.02	50.84	53.87	52.37	55.16	53.31	53.05	53.18
Often friendly	28.49	24.00	26.99	25.69	25.35	24.66	27.40	24.72	26.02
Usually friendly	11.35	10.58	12.13	14.21	13.65	9.42	11.46	11.82	11.64
Sometimes friendly	2.79	5.87	5.44	3.74	4.74	6.73	4.20	5.07	4.65
Hardly ever friendly	1.00	3.11	2.30	1.00	2.23	2.24	1.73	2.32	2.03
Never friendly	0.00	2.84	1.26	0.75	1.11	1.35	1.09	1.57	1.34

Table 12.2
The Nature of Youths' Relationships with Their Step Parents

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total respondents who ever lived with stepmother:	3	32	5	2	8	3	34	19	53
Can youth respect their stepmother's ideas/opinions about important things in life?									
Always	33.33	25.00	20.00	0.00	12.50	33.33	26.47	15.79	22.64
Often	33.33	31.25	40.00	0.00	12.50	66.67	26.47	36.84	30.19
Usually	0.00	3.13	20.00	50.00	25.00	0.00	11.76	5.26	9.43
Sometimes	33.33	18.75	20.00	50.00	25.00	0.00	20.59	21.05	20.75
Hardly ever	0.00	3.13	0.00	0.00	12.50	0.00	2.94	5.26	3.77
Never	0.00	6.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.94	5.26	3.77
Doesn't want to talk about stepmother	0.00	6.25	0.00	0.00	12.50	0.00	5.88	5.26	5.66
Total respondents whose stepmother is alive and are willing to talk about stepmother:	3	30	5	2	7	3	32	18	50
Does youth's stepmother respect youth's opinions about important things in life?									
Always	0.00	23.33	40.00	0.00	14.29	0.00	12.50	33.33	20.00
Often	66.67	26.67	20.00	50.00	14.29	66.67	40.63	11.11	30.00
Usually	0.00	10.00	20.00	0.00	28.57	0.00	12.50	11.11	12.00
Sometimes	33.33	13.33	20.00	50.00	28.57	33.33	15.63	27.78	20.00
Hardly ever	0.00	13.33	0.00	0.00	14.29	0.00	12.50	5.56	10.00
Never	0.00	6.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.13	5.56	4.00
Does youth find it easy to understand their stepmother?									
Always	0.00	33.33	20.00	0.00	14.29	0.00	21.88	27.78	24.00
Often	33.33	20.00	20.00	0.00	0.00	33.33	21.88	11.11	18.00
Usually	0.00	6.67	40.00	50.00	42.86	0.00	12.50	22.22	16.00
Sometimes	66.67	10.00	20.00	0.00	14.29	66.67	21.88	11.11	18.00
Hardly ever	0.00	6.67	0.00	50.00	28.57	0.00	15.63	0.00	10.00
Never	0.00	16.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.13	22.22	10.00
How often does youth feel that their stepmother makes too many demands on them?									
Always	33.33	13.33	0.00	0.00	0.00	66.67	15.63	11.11	14.00
Often	33.33	6.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.25	5.56	6.00
Usually	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	14.29	0.00	0.00	5.56	2.00
Sometimes	33.33	23.33	40.00	0.00	28.57	0.00	25.00	22.22	24.00
Hardly ever	0.00	26.67	20.00	50.00	57.14	33.33	28.13	33.33	30.00
Never	0.00	23.33	40.00	50.00	0.00	0.00	21.88	16.67	20.00

Table 12.2
The Nature of Youths' Relationships with Their Step Parents (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total respondents whose stepmother is alive and who are willing to talk about stepmother:	3	30	5	2	7	3	32	18	50
Overall relationship with stepmother:									
Always friendly	0.00	43.33	60.00	0.00	14.29	33.33	28.13	50.00	36.00
Often friendly	66.67	16.67	40.00	0.00	28.57	66.67	34.38	11.11	26.00
Usually friendly	33.33	13.33	0.00	100.0	28.57	0.00	21.88	11.11	18.00
Sometimes friendly	0.00	6.67	0.00	0.00	14.29	0.00	6.25	5.56	6.00
Hardly ever friendly	0.00	10.00	0.00	0.00	14.29	0.00	6.25	11.11	8.00
Never friendly	0.00	3.33	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.56	2.00
Stepmother's overall behavior towards youth:									
Always friendly	0.00	36.67	60.00	0.00	28.57	66.67	31.25	44.44	36.00
Often friendly	100.0	23.33	20.00	50.00	28.57	33.33	37.50	16.67	30.00
Usually friendly	0.00	13.33	0.00	50.00	14.29	0.00	12.50	11.11	12.00
Sometimes friendly	0.00	10.00	20.00	0.00	14.29	0.00	9.38	11.11	10.00
Hardly ever friendly	0.00	3.33	0.00	0.00	14.29	0.00	6.25	0.00	4.00
Never friendly	0.00	6.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	11.11	4.00
Can't say	0.00	6.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.13	5.56	4.00
Total respondents who ever lived with stepfather:	16	114	23	20	44	19	117	119	236
Can youth respect their stepfather's ideas/opinions about important things in life?									
Always	50.00	33.33	30.43	20.00	34.09	31.58	32.48	33.61	33.05
Often	6.25	21.05	30.43	45.00	25.00	31.58	29.06	20.17	24.58
Usually	18.75	17.54	17.39	5.00	11.36	15.79	13.68	16.81	15.25
Sometimes	18.75	12.28	8.70	20.00	11.36	5.26	9.40	15.13	12.29
Hardly ever	0.00	7.02	4.35	10.00	9.09	10.53	6.84	7.56	7.20
Never	0.00	5.26	0.00	0.00	4.55	0.00	3.42	3.36	3.39
Can't say	6.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.27	5.26	1.71	0.84	1.27
Deceased	0.00	1.75	4.35	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.85	1.68	1.27
Doesn't want to talk about stepfather	0.00	1.75	4.35	0.00	2.27	0.00	2.56	0.84	1.69

Table 12.2
The Nature of Youths' Relationships with Their Step Parents (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total respondents whose stepfather is alive and who are willing to talk about stepfather:	16	110	21	20	43	19	113	116	229
Does youth's stepfather respect youth's opinions about important things in life?									
Always	37.50	27.27	38.10	35.00	34.88	52.63	27.43	38.79	33.19
Often	31.25	23.64	23.81	25.00	30.23	15.79	30.09	19.83	24.89
Usually	18.75	19.09	14.29	10.00	9.30	15.79	16.81	14.66	15.72
Sometimes	6.25	20.00	19.05	25.00	11.63	5.26	15.93	17.24	16.59
Hardly ever	6.25	6.36	0.00	0.00	6.98	5.26	6.19	4.31	5.24
Never	0.00	3.64	4.76	5.00	4.65	0.00	2.65	4.31	3.49
Does youth find it easy to understand their stepfather?									
Always	31.25	37.27	33.33	35.00	37.21	47.37	38.05	36.21	37.12
Often	12.50	20.91	28.57	30.00	13.95	21.05	22.12	18.97	20.52
Usually	18.75	11.82	9.52	5.00	11.63	26.32	15.93	9.48	12.66
Sometimes	37.50	20.91	19.05	15.00	20.93	5.26	15.04	25.00	20.09
Hardly ever	0.00	3.64	4.76	5.00	9.30	0.00	4.42	4.31	4.37
Never	0.00	5.45	4.76	10.00	4.65	0.00	4.42	5.17	4.80
Can't say	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.33	0.00	0.00	0.86	0.44
How often does youth feel that their stepfather makes too many demands on them?									
Always	6.25	7.27	4.76	0.00	2.33	0.00	2.65	6.90	4.80
Often	12.50	7.27	4.76	0.00	16.28	5.26	7.96	8.62	8.30
Usually	6.25	5.45	0.00	5.00	4.65	10.53	5.31	5.17	5.24
Sometimes	6.25	16.36	33.33	25.00	16.28	15.79	19.47	16.38	17.90
Hardly ever	25.00	35.45	23.81	50.00	30.23	26.32	35.40	31.03	33.19
Never	43.75	28.18	33.33	20.00	27.91	42.11	29.20	31.03	30.13
Overall relationship with stepfather:									
Always friendly	37.50	35.45	42.86	45.00	41.86	31.58	36.28	39.66	37.99
Often friendly	25.00	32.73	42.86	25.00	18.60	57.89	36.28	27.59	31.88
Usually friendly	31.25	13.64	9.52	10.00	20.93	0.00	14.16	14.66	14.41
Sometimes friendly	6.25	10.00	4.76	15.00	9.30	10.53	7.96	11.21	9.61
Hardly ever friendly	0.00	6.36	0.00	0.00	2.33	0.00	3.54	3.45	3.49
Never friendly	0.00	1.82	0.00	5.00	4.65	0.00	1.77	2.59	2.18
Stepfather's overall behaviour towards youth:									
Always friendly	43.75	40.00	57.14	55.00	46.51	47.37	43.36	46.55	44.98
Often friendly	31.25	32.73	38.10	15.00	18.60	42.11	33.63	25.86	29.69
Usually friendly	12.50	11.82	0.00	10.00	20.93	0.00	12.39	10.34	11.35
Sometimes friendly	12.50	10.00	4.76	15.00	4.65	5.26	6.19	11.21	8.73
Hardly ever friendly	0.00	3.64	0.00	5.00	2.33	5.26	3.54	2.59	3.06
Never friendly	0.00	1.82	0.00	0.00	4.65	0.00	0.88	2.59	1.75

Table 12.3
Mothers' Knowledge about Youths' Friends, Free Time, and Whereabouts

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Respondents with a relationship with mother/mother substitute	836	1,006	379	322	280	154	1,305	1,672	2,977
Type of Relationship									
Relationship with Mother	97.73	93.44	97.10	96.89	96.79	95.45	96.02	95.81	95.90
Mother substitute:									
Stepmother	0.12	0.30	0.53	0.00	0.00	0.65	0.15	0.30	0.24
Grandmother	0.12	1.49	0.00	0.31	0.71	0.00	0.69	0.60	0.64
Aunt	0.24	0.30	0.26	0.62	0.36	0.00	0.15	0.42	0.30
Sister	0.12	0.30	0.26	0.00	0.71	1.30	0.15	0.42	0.30
Family friend	0.00	0.10	0.26	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.08	0.06	0.07
Foster mother	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.31	0.00	0.00	0.08	0.00	0.03
Stepfather	0.48	0.89	0.26	0.93	0.36	0.00	0.84	0.42	0.60
Does not have a relationship with mother	1.44	3.18	1.58	1.24	1.43	2.60	1.99	2.15	2.08
Does mother/mother substitute know who youth's friends are?									
does not know any of youth's friends	0.97	2.97	1.88	0.00	1.44	2.63	2.35	1.34	1.78
knows some of youth's friends	58.47	58.79	60.32	60.76	56.83	55.26	63.77	54.83	58.74
knows all of youth's friends	40.56	38.24	37.80	39.24	41.73	42.11	33.88	43.83	39.48
How much does youth's mother/mother substitute want to know about:									
Where youth goes at night?									
Doesn't want to know	1.09	8.81	2.14	1.58	5.76	4.61	4.46	4.50	4.48
Wants to know a little	35.47	41.09	42.09	37.97	42.09	44.08	46.64	34.02	39.54
Expects to know	63.44	50.10	55.76	60.44	52.16	51.32	48.90	61.47	55.97
What youth does in their free time?									
Doesn't want to know	5.45	15.37	10.22	6.03	9.71	4.64	11.06	8.83	9.80
Wants to know a little	66.42	65.47	66.94	67.94	71.22	71.52	69.10	65.47	67.06
Expects to know	28.12	19.16	22.85	26.03	19.06	23.84	19.84	25.70	23.14
Where youth is most days after school/ in the afternoon?									
Doesn't want to know	6.20	16.46	11.02	8.54	12.32	13.25	13.29	10.02	11.45
Wants to know a little	53.53	52.37	56.18	50.95	56.16	53.64	56.68	50.95	53.45
Expects to know	40.27	31.17	32.80	40.51	31.52	33.11	30.03	39.03	35.10

Table 12.3
Mothers' Knowledge about Youths' Friends, Free Time, and Whereabouts
(continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
How much does the youth's mother/mother substitute really know about:									
Where youth goes at night?									
Doesn't know	2.43	9.63	5.63	5.71	7.19	7.89	6.81	5.97	6.34
Knows a little	42.96	40.06	41.55	43.81	39.57	38.16	49.41	35.04	41.33
Knows a lot	54.61	50.31	52.82	50.48	53.24	53.95	43.77	58.99	52.33
What youth does in their free time?									
Doesn't know	5.46	11.19	7.26	6.98	8.63	8.61	8.48	8.05	8.24
Knows a little	53.52	51.95	53.23	56.19	53.24	52.32	58.32	49.15	53.16
Knows a lot	41.02	36.86	39.52	36.83	38.13	39.07	33.20	42.80	38.61
Where youth is most days after school/ in the afternoon?									
Doesn't know	5.37	12.16	8.06	6.03	8.66	8.61	8.98	8.20	8.54
Knows a little	45.12	44.64	44.35	49.21	46.57	41.72	50.24	41.41	45.27
Knows a lot	49.51	43.20	47.58	44.76	44.77	49.67	40.79	50.40	46.20

Table 12.4
Fathers' Knowledge about Youths' Friends, Free Time, and Whereabouts

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Respondents with a relationship with mother/mother substitute	836	1,003	378	322	280	154	1,304	1,669	2,973
Type of Relationship									
Relationship with father	96.29	73.98	85.19	92.55	87.86	88.31	87.42	84.42	85.74
Father substitute:									
Stepfather	0.24	3.09	1.32	1.86	3.57	1.30	1.61	2.10	1.88
Grandfather	0.24	1.30	0.00	0.00	0.36	0.00	0.46	0.60	0.54
Uncle	0.24	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.71	0.00	0.31	0.60	0.47
Brother	0.00	0.60	0.53	0.00	0.36	0.00	0.31	0.30	0.30
Family friend	0.00	0.30	0.26	0.00	0.36	0.00	0.15	0.18	0.17
Foster father	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.31	0.00	0.00	0.08	0.00	0.03
Stepmother	1.44	7.08	6.35	2.80	2.86	3.90	4.06	4.61	4.37
Does not have a relationship with father	1.56	12.86	6.35	2.48	3.93	6.49	5.67	7.25	6.56

Table 12.4
Fathers' Knowledge about Youths' Friends, Free Time, and Whereabouts
(continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Does youth's father/father substitute know who youth's friends are?									
does not know any of youth's friends	3.91	16.61	11.57	6.51	7.52	13.48	8.36	11.15	9.91
knows some of youth's friends	75.18	67.39	72.70	75.24	70.68	63.83	72.24	70.83	71.46
knows all of youth's friends	20.90	16.00	15.73	18.24	21.80	22.70	19.40	18.02	18.63
How much does youth's father/father substitute want to know about:									
Where youth goes at night?									
Doesn't want to know	6.00	22.75	12.76	9.45	15.79	19.29	14.13	13.93	14.02
Wants to know a little	53.12	48.66	56.38	48.53	51.13	47.86	57.19	46.35	51.17
Expects to know	40.88	28.59	30.86	42.02	33.08	32.86	28.68	39.72	34.81
What youth does in their free time?									
Doesn't want to know	8.81	25.67	19.35	14.33	18.05	19.86	15.98	18.54	17.40
Wants to know a little	72.71	59.73	66.67	66.45	66.17	58.87	69.37	63.12	65.90
Expects to know	18.48	14.60	13.99	19.22	15.79	21.28	14.64	18.34	16.70
Where youth is most days after school/ in the afternoon?									
Doesn't want to know	14.02	29.63	23.81	16.94	24.15	24.29	20.79	22.78	21.89
Wants to know a little	61.99	52.07	57.74	57.65	54.72	53.57	61.27	53.16	56.77
Expects to know	23.99	18.29	18.45	25.41	21.13	22.14	17.94	24.06	21.34
How much does youth's father/ father substitute really know about:									
Where youth goes at night?									
Doesn't know	9.19	28.07	18.69	16.94	18.42	19.29	16.57	20.01	18.48
Knows a little	54.04	43.74	52.23	50.81	48.87	51.43	53.56	46.52	49.65
Knows a lot	36.76	28.19	29.08	32.25	32.71	29.29	29.87	33.47	31.87
What youth does in the free time?									
Doesn't know	12.75	27.84	22.92	18.89	19.17	22.70	17.53	22.84	20.48
Knows a little	64.09	52.50	56.85	59.93	58.27	56.03	61.83	55.26	58.18
Knows a lot	23.16	19.66	20.24	21.17	22.56	21.28	20.64	21.90	21.34
Where youth is most days after school/ in the afternoon?									
Number of observations	813	820	335	307	265	140	1,190	1,490	2,680
Doesn't know	16.24	32.20	27.76	21.82	22.64	27.14	21.51	26.71	24.40
Knows a little	57.93	46.34	49.85	54.40	50.19	47.86	55.80	48.39	51.68
Knows a lot	25.83	21.46	22.39	23.78	27.17	25.00	22.69	24.90	23.92

Section 13:
Youths' Educational Outcomes

Overview of Findings:

The educational choices that individuals make (or have made for them) as children and young adults are closely linked to a wide range of outcomes in adulthood including income levels, labour market outcomes, family formation, health status, and economic and social wellbeing generally. Thus, if economic disadvantage while growing up limits a child's ability to achieve the same educational outcomes as more advantaged children this educational disadvantage becomes a mechanism through which economic disadvantage is passed from one generation to the next.

In light of the importance of education in understanding youths' life chances, the *Youth in Focus* (YIF) survey collects a vast amount of detailed data on the educational experience and achievement of the young people in our sample. Section 5 presents information gathered from parents about their children's educational experiences while growing up. Here we focus on youths' reports of their own educational outcomes.

Our results indicate that youth who grow up in income-support families attend more schools over the course of their academic career than do young people in non-income-support families (see Table 13.1). More than half (55 per cent) of young people in families with no interaction with the income-support system (Category A) report attending two or fewer schools by age 18, this is true of only slightly more than one third (35 per cent) of youth in families with histories of intensive income-support receipt (Category B).

At the same time, the school enrolment rate of the 18-year-olds in our sample is largely independent of their families' income-support histories (see Table 13.1). More than 90 per cent of youth had left school at the time of the wave 1 interview. Of the less than one in ten still in school, the vast majority were enrolled in Year 12 (see Table 13.2). The remainder of young people are generally enrolled in either Year 11 or Year 13. The patterns of enrolments across year levels for those individuals who have not yet left school do appear to vary slightly across economic categories. Year 12 enrolment rates range from 100 in Category F to 85 per cent in Category C. Given the relatively small numbers of young people still enrolled at school at the time of wave 1, these differences may not be statistically significant.

By and large the young people still completing Year 12 at the time of our first interview are much more likely to have repeated a year at school or been suspended than young people who have left school by wave 1. Specifically, more than one quarter (26 per cent) of youths in Category A and more than one half (51 per cent) of youths in Category B who have not yet left school report that they have repeated a year (see Table 13.2). This is much higher than the proportion of parents reporting that their child ever repeated a year in school (see Table 5.2). Moreover, it is much higher than the proportion of school leavers who report ever having repeated a year at school (see Table 13.3). Many young people appear to be still in school at wave 1 because they have repeated a school year at some point in the past.

The future plans of youth still in school differ across the economic status of their families. Specifically, while 63 per cent of Category A youth still in school intend to go to university, this is true of only 40 per cent of youth in Category B. Young people in income-support families are more likely than youth in non-income-support families to say that they intend to look for work or get a job after leaving school (18 versus 9 per cent respectively). Finally, on the whole young people still in school rate their own academic achievement

very highly with more than 94 per cent of young people rating their own school performance as average or above – irrespective of their families' income-support histories.

Information about the educational outcomes of all youth who had left school by the time of the first interview is presented in Table 13.3. Wave 1 interviews were conducted in the late spring/early summer of 2006. At this time, almost half of the 1,359 (92 per cent) of youth in income-support families reported that they had left school more than 12 months earlier, i.e., before November 2005. A further 39 per cent reported leaving in November 2005. In contrast, youth in non-income-support families are much more likely to report having left school in November 2005 (59 per cent) rather than earlier. Thus, the timing of school leaving seems to differ across economic categories. These differences are reflected in the academic year in which young people leave school. Fully 85 per cent of young people in families with no history of income-support receipt report having completed year 12 before leaving school, while this is true of only 60 per cent of youth in income-support families (category B), the percentages ranging between 69 and 80 per cent for the other categories. These results point to important differences in the educational outcomes of young people who do and do not have a family history of income-support receipt and its intensity.

In order to better understand young people's decisions to leave school early, focal youth who left school before completing year 12 were asked a series of questions about their potential reasons for making this decision. This information allows us to consider the relative importance of "push" factors (i.e., poor academic performance, financial constraints, health reasons, dislike of school) versus "pull" factors (getting a job, the desire to earn money) in the decision to leave school before completing year 12. Specifically, individuals were asked to rate the importance of each as a factor in their decision on a 1 (not important) - 5 (very important) scale. These results are presented in Table 13.4.

Our results indicate that the getting a job or apprenticeship is an important factor in most young people's decisions to leave school early. Fully 62 per cent of youth in Category B and 74 per cent of youth in Category A rate getting a job/apprenticeship as important or very important in their decision to leave school before completing year 12. Interestingly, boys are much more likely than girls (77 per cent versus 54 per cent) to say that they left school early in order to pursue a job or apprenticeship. Consistent with this, more than half of early school leavers report that the desire to earn money was also an important factor in their decision to leave school. Youth are much less likely to cite poor academic performance, financial problems, or health reasons as important factors in their decision to leave school before completing year 12. These patterns across economic status and gender are interesting and suggest that more detailed analyses of the reasons that young people report leaving school early could be useful in understanding the extent to which economic disadvantage in childhood manifests itself in early school leaving.

The educational outcomes of all those leaving school before completing year 12 are shown in Table 13.5. These results indicate that approximately one third of those leaving school early received some certificate upon the completion of their studies. Similar information on the educational outcomes of youth leaving school after years 12 or 13 is presented in Table 13.6. Of the 798 youth in non-income-support families who left school after year 12 or 13, 752 (94 per cent) received either a Year 12 Certificate or an International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma. Similarly, 92 percent of youth in income-support families received either a Year 12 Certificate or IB Diploma upon the completion of their studies. While the likelihood of school leavers receiving a formal credential does not depend on the economic status of their family, the probability of receiving a university

entrance score does vary substantially across economic categories. Specifically, while 81 per cent of youth in non-income-support families received a university entry score, this was true of only 62 per cent of young people in families with a history of intensive income-support receipt. Moreover, amongst those who receive them, entry scores are higher on average for young people in non-income-support families. Just under two thirds (62 per cent) of youth in Category A reported entry scores of 70 or higher. Amongst youth in Category B less than half (47 per cent) reported having an entry score of 70 and above. Thus, while the probability of receiving a credential upon completing years 12 or 13 is much the same for young people in a range of economic circumstances, the nature of that credential may differ in important ways.

Finally, the YIF survey asked school leavers about their current educational and training activities (see Table 13.7). The majority (70 per cent) of school leavers in non-income-support families reported in wave 1 that they were currently undertaking a traineeship/apprenticeship or studying for an educational qualification. Fully 53 per cent of these young people expect to receive a university degree upon the completion of their studies. Young people in families with a history of intensive reliance on income support are much less likely (48 per cent) to say that they are currently studying and – amongst those who are – much less likely to be studying for a university degree. Rather, they are relatively more likely to report that they are studying for a trade degree or certificate. In fact, youth in income-support families are almost twice as likely (22 versus 12 per cent) to have completed a trade certificate or educational qualification since leaving school. These results are also related to the intensity of income-support receipt: youths growing up in families with a more sporadic history of income-support use, are more likely to be currently studying and to be studying towards a university degree, than their category B counterparts.

Taken together, the results in this section suggest that it is important to investigate the ways in which economic disadvantage might flow from one generation to the next by limiting the educational attainment of youth who grow up in disadvantage.

Table 13.1
The Educational Outcomes of Youth

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Respondents	1,027	1,472	526	420	403	231	1,924	2,155	4,079
Number of schools youth attended^a									
Two or less	55.40	34.99	43.54	43.33	39.70	37.23	43.30	42.13	42.68
Three	28.53	27.58	30.04	31.19	30.52	35.50	29.57	28.96	29.25
Four or more	15.87	36.82	26.24	25.48	29.78	27.27	26.82	28.63	27.78
Can't say	0.19	0.61	0.19	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.31	0.28	0.29
Is youth still going to secondary school or has left school?^a									
Still going to school	8.67	7.68	9.89	9.76	7.69	12.99	9.51	8.03	8.73
Left school	91.33	92.32	90.11	90.24	92.31	87.01	90.49	91.97	91.27

^a Per cent of strata total.

Table 13.2
The Educational Outcomes of Youth Still in School

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total respondents still going to school	89	113	52	41	31	30	183	173	356
Type of school:^a									
government	60.67	76.11	73.08	56.10	83.87	56.67	68.31	68.79	68.54
catholic	23.60	12.39	13.46	21.95	6.45	16.67	18.03	14.45	16.29
other non-government	15.73	9.73	13.46	17.07	6.45	23.33	12.02	15.03	13.48
none of these/ can't say	0.00	1.77	0.00	4.88	3.23	3.33	1.64	1.73	1.69
Current year in school:^a									
year 10	0.00	0.00	1.92	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.58	0.28
year 11	3.37	7.08	9.62	2.44	6.45	0.00	6.01	4.62	5.34
year 12	93.26	91.15	84.62	87.80	90.32	100.0	89.62	92.49	91.01
year 13	2.25	0.88	3.85	7.32	3.23	0.00	2.73	2.31	2.53
can't say	1.12	0.88	0.00	2.44	0.00	0.00	1.64	0.00	0.84
Has youth ever repeated a year at school?^a									
yes	25.84	51.33	34.62	46.34	54.84	40.00	38.80	43.93	41.29
no	74.16	48.67	65.38	53.66	45.16	60.00	61.20	56.07	58.71
Has youth ever been suspended from school?^a									
yes	8.99	23.89	13.46	12.20	32.26	16.67	26.78	7.51	17.42
no	91.01	76.11	86.54	87.80	67.74	83.33	73.22	92.49	82.58
Has youth ever been expelled from school?^a									
yes	1.12	0.88	0.00	0.00	9.68	0.00	1.64	1.16	1.40
no	98.88	98.23	100.0	100.0	90.32	100.0	98.36	98.27	98.31

^a Per cent of those still attending school.

Table 13.2 (continued)
The Educational Outcomes of Youth Still in School

	Economic Categories						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Plans after leaving school^a:									
go to university	62.92	39.82	51.92	56.10	29.03	50.00	45.36	53.18	49.16
get an apprenticeship	4.49	8.85	3.85	7.32	9.68	3.33	10.38	2.31	6.46
get a traineeship	2.25	5.31	1.92	7.32	19.35	10.00	4.92	6.94	5.90
go to a TAFE/college	11.24	17.70	21.15	9.76	16.13	20.00	15.30	16.18	15.73
do some other course	3.37	3.54	3.85	0.00	3.23	0.00	2.73	2.89	2.81
look for work/get a job	8.99	17.70	9.62	12.20	19.35	10.00	12.57	13.87	13.20
go travelling	3.37	1.77	3.85	2.44	0.00	3.33	2.73	2.31	2.53
join the armed forces	2.25	0.00	0.00	2.44	3.23	0.00	1.64	0.58	1.12
other	0.00	2.65	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.09	0.58	0.84
can't say	1.12	2.65	3.85	2.44	0.00	3.33	3.28	1.16	2.25
How good is youth in English compared to other students?^a									
well above average	10.11	8.85	3.85	9.76	19.35	10.00	7.65	11.56	9.55
above average	44.94	30.09	30.77	51.22	16.13	26.67	39.34	30.06	34.83
average	39.33	46.90	57.69	34.15	48.39	43.33	40.98	49.13	44.94
below average	5.62	9.73	5.77	2.44	0.00	20.00	9.84	4.62	7.30
well below average	0.00	0.88	0.00	0.00	6.45	0.00	0.55	1.16	0.84
can't say	0.00	3.54	1.92	2.44	9.68	0.00	1.64	3.47	2.53
How good is youth in mathematics compared to other students?^a									
well above average	11.24	8.85	5.77	9.76	3.23	6.67	9.29	7.51	8.43
above average	29.21	15.93	21.15	17.07	19.35	30.00	25.68	17.34	21.63
average	26.97	38.05	38.46	36.59	29.03	26.67	34.97	31.79	33.43
below average	7.87	19.47	17.31	14.63	9.68	16.67	14.21	15.03	14.61
well below average	0.00	0.00	3.85	2.44	6.45	3.33	1.09	2.31	1.69
can't say	0.00	2.65	0.00	2.44	9.68	0.00	2.73	1.16	1.97
not studied math	24.72	15.04	13.46	17.07	22.58	16.67	12.02	24.86	18.26
How good is youth at school overall?^a									
well above average	10.11	2.65	5.77	7.32	16.13	6.67	6.56	7.51	7.02
above average	42.70	38.94	26.92	41.46	32.26	43.33	40.98	35.26	38.20
average	47.19	52.21	61.54	48.78	45.16	36.67	47.54	52.60	50.00
below average	0.00	5.31	5.77	2.44	3.23	13.33	4.92	3.47	4.21
well below average	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.23	0.00	0.00	0.58	0.28
can't say	0.00	0.88	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.58	0.28

^a Per cent of those still attending school.

Table 13.3
The Educational Outcomes of Youth Who Have Left School

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total school leavers	938	1,359	474	379	372	201	1,741	1,982	3,723
When did youth leave school?^a									
Before November 2005	29.64	47.90	35.02	39.58	40.86	42.79	43.08	36.98	39.83
In November 2005	59.28	38.56	51.27	49.34	47.04	44.28	44.34	50.55	47.65
After November 2005	10.98	12.80	13.50	10.82	11.56	11.94	12.00	12.11	12.06
Can't say	0.11	0.74	0.21	0.26	0.54	1.00	0.57	0.35	0.46
Type of last school attended:^a									
government	54.80	79.47	68.57	58.05	75.27	69.65	68.81	68.67	68.73
catholic	26.76	11.41	20.25	26.65	15.86	18.41	18.50	19.02	18.78
other non-government	17.80	7.95	10.34	15.04	8.33	11.94	12.12	11.35	11.71
none of these/ can't	0.64	1.18	0.84	0.26	0.54	0.00	0.57	0.96	0.78
Did youth ever repeat a year at school?^a									
yes	4.05	13.02	7.81	7.12	11.02	10.45	10.74	7.77	9.16
no	95.95	86.90	91.98	92.61	88.98	89.55	89.20	92.13	90.76
can't say	0.00	0.07	0.21	0.26	0.00	0.00	0.06	0.10	0.08
Year when left school^a									
year 9 or lower	0.75	5.52	1.27	1.32	2.69	4.48	3.68	2.42	3.01
year 10	3.62	14.05	7.59	6.60	11.02	8.96	11.32	7.47	9.27
year 11	6.93	14.05	11.39	9.76	11.56	12.44	13.33	9.23	11.15
year 12 (not complete)	3.52	6.77	3.59	2.11	5.38	3.48	5.34	4.24	4.75
year 12 (completed)	84.97	59.46	76.16	80.21	69.35	70.15	66.28	76.44	71.69
year 13	0.11	0.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.06	0.15	0.11
ungraded	0.11	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.03
How good was youth at English in the final year of secondary school?^a									
well above average	15.03	11.04	10.13	9.23	12.63	8.96	10.11	13.27	11.79
above average	39.23	29.07	33.33	33.51	35.75	34.83	29.98	36.78	33.60
average	40.09	50.55	49.58	51.45	44.35	44.78	49.86	44.40	46.95
below average	4.69	7.51	5.27	4.75	5.91	10.45	8.33	4.39	6.23
well below average	0.53	1.10	0.21	0.53	0.54	0.50	1.09	0.35	0.70
How good was youth at mathematics in the final year of school?^a									
well above average	11.41	6.70	8.86	7.65	8.87	11.94	10.34	7.37	8.76
above average	31.45	22.37	26.37	29.02	26.08	23.88	29.64	23.36	26.30
average	38.38	43.71	42.41	41.95	42.20	36.82	40.03	42.79	41.50
below average	10.98	17.73	15.40	13.72	15.05	16.92	13.61	16.25	15.01
well below average	1.92	4.12	0.84	2.11	1.34	2.49	2.30	2.83	2.58
did not study maths	5.76	4.86	5.27	5.54	5.65	7.96	3.79	6.91	5.45

^a Per cent of those who have left school.

Table 13.3
The Educational Outcomes of Youth Who Have Left School (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total school leavers:	938	1,359	474	379	372	201	1,741	1,982	3,723
How good was youth overall in the final year of school?^a									
well above average	11.41	5.67	5.91	7.92	7.26	7.96	7.12	8.12	7.66
above average	42.11	28.62	36.71	35.36	30.38	32.34	32.74	35.32	34.11
average	42.32	56.07	50.84	51.45	54.84	51.24	51.12	51.06	51.09
below average	3.84	7.87	5.27	5.28	5.65	6.47	7.75	4.39	5.96
well below average	0.11	1.18	0.21	0.00	0.54	1.00	0.86	0.35	0.59
Did youth ever wag school?^a									
yes	41.36	58.28	52.32	49.34	56.18	55.72	51.81	52.17	52.00
no	58.42	41.35	47.68	50.66	43.82	43.78	47.90	47.68	47.78
How often did youth wag school?^b									
3+ days a week	6.19	15.78	6.45	4.81	9.57	8.04	9.53	11.32	10.49
1 day a week	12.63	18.06	12.10	11.76	21.05	20.54	16.63	15.57	16.06
2 - 3 days a month	20.88	18.18	18.95	21.39	17.70	19.64	18.40	19.83	19.16
1 day a month	18.56	15.53	20.16	22.46	14.83	13.39	19.62	15.09	17.20
1 day a term	17.53	14.14	12.90	17.11	11.00	16.07	14.75	14.70	14.72
< 1 day a term	23.45	16.41	28.23	21.93	24.88	22.32	19.84	22.24	21.13
Was youth ever suspended from school?^a									
yes	12.47	31.05	17.51	15.57	21.51	22.89	29.41	14.88	21.68
no	87.53	68.58	82.49	84.17	78.23	77.11	70.30	85.02	78.14
Was youth ever expelled from school?^a									
yes	0.75	5.37	2.11	0.79	4.30	2.99	4.42	1.92	3.09
no	99.25	94.48	97.89	99.21	95.70	97.01	95.46	98.08	96.86

^a Per cent of those having left school.

^b Per cent of those who wagged school.

Table 13.4
Reasons for Leaving School before Completing Year 12

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total who left school before year 12:	140	549	113	75	114	59	586	464	1,050
Reason for leaving school:									
To get a job/apprenticeship?^a									
1 - not important	13.57	20.95	14.16	10.67	21.05	10.17	11.77	25.65	17.90
2	5.00	4.55	4.42	4.00	2.63	3.39	3.41	5.39	4.29
3	7.14	12.20	14.16	6.67	10.53	13.56	8.36	14.87	11.24
4	16.43	14.21	21.24	12.00	14.04	10.17	15.70	13.79	14.86
5 - very important	57.14	47.72	46.02	66.67	51.75	62.71	60.58	39.87	51.43
Not doing well at school:^a									
1 - not important	32.14	32.42	32.74	20.00	37.72	25.42	26.96	37.72	31.71
2	19.29	13.66	15.04	21.33	14.91	8.47	16.04	13.58	14.95
3	27.14	22.40	23.89	25.33	22.81	28.81	25.26	21.98	23.81
4	9.29	14.57	11.50	13.33	7.89	18.64	12.80	13.15	12.95
5 - very important	10.71	16.58	16.81	18.67	16.67	13.56	18.09	12.93	15.81
Financially hard to stay at school:^a									
1 - not important	70.71	59.38	60.18	68.00	68.42	72.88	62.97	63.79	63.33
2	10.71	8.38	7.96	12.00	4.39	8.47	8.70	8.19	8.48
3	7.14	14.21	15.93	8.00	9.65	5.08	13.14	10.56	12.00
4	5.00	5.83	11.50	5.33	6.14	3.39	6.14	6.25	6.19
5 - very important	4.29	10.75	3.54	6.67	11.40	10.17	7.68	10.34	8.86
Teachers thought youth should leave:^a									
1 - not important	65.71	66.30	64.60	57.33	60.53	61.02	57.34	73.49	64.48
2	9.29	7.47	7.96	16.00	9.65	8.47	10.92	5.82	8.67
3	11.43	8.74	12.39	16.00	15.79	8.47	12.97	7.97	10.76
4	6.43	5.10	2.65	1.33	4.39	13.56	6.48	3.45	5.14
5 - very important	6.43	11.48	9.73	5.33	8.77	3.39	10.92	7.54	9.43
Parents thought youth should leave:^a									
1 - not important	57.86	76.14	69.03	64.00	65.79	64.41	63.82	78.45	70.29
2	12.86	8.01	6.19	18.67	14.91	15.25	12.46	7.76	10.38
3	17.14	7.47	13.27	10.67	9.65	11.86	13.65	5.60	10.10
4	5.00	2.73	6.19	5.33	1.75	0.00	4.27	2.16	3.33
5 - very important	5.71	4.74	3.54	1.33	7.02	8.47	4.78	5.17	4.95

^a Per cent of those leaving school before completing year 12.

Table 13.4
Reasons for Leaving School before Completing Year 12 (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total who left school before year 12	140	549	113	75	114	59	586	464	1,050
Reason for leaving school (continued)									
Youth wanted to earn money:^a									
1 - not important	15.71	18.58	15.93	12.00	12.28	11.86	10.24	24.14	16.38
2	10.00	6.38	7.08	2.67	7.89	3.39	5.80	7.76	6.67
3	17.14	15.30	15.93	14.67	17.54	16.95	14.16	18.10	15.90
4	18.57	15.85	16.81	21.33	21.05	16.95	18.77	15.52	17.33
5 - very important	37.14	42.81	44.25	49.33	41.23	50.85	50.00	34.05	42.95
The school didn't offer subjects/courses youth wanted^a									
1 - not important	40.00	43.72	42.48	34.67	47.37	40.68	42.83	42.46	42.67
2	17.14	8.93	7.08	17.33	8.77	13.56	11.43	9.70	10.67
3	22.14	17.85	23.01	20.00	16.67	10.17	18.60	18.53	18.57
4	8.57	11.11	13.27	8.00	7.89	13.56	9.73	11.64	10.57
5 - very important	11.43	17.67	14.16	18.67	19.30	20.34	16.55	17.24	16.86
Youth's friends did not do Year 12:^a									
1 - not important	67.86	69.03	69.91	66.67	75.44	69.49	65.70	74.35	69.52
2	11.43	6.92	8.85	6.67	7.02	8.47	10.24	4.74	7.81
3	10.71	9.47	9.73	10.67	12.28	8.47	10.92	8.84	10.00
4	5.00	4.19	6.19	2.67	0.00	6.78	4.44	3.66	4.10
5 - very important	4.29	8.38	4.42	13.33	4.39	3.39	6.66	7.54	7.05
Health reasons:^a									
1 - not important	75.00	73.22	76.11	82.67	82.46	79.66	80.38	70.04	75.81
2	7.14	5.46	3.54	1.33	5.26	3.39	5.46	4.53	5.05
3	2.14	5.28	7.96	6.67	2.63	5.08	4.10	6.03	4.95
4	5.71	4.19	7.08	2.67	1.75	5.08	3.41	5.60	4.38
5 - very important	9.29	10.56	5.31	6.67	7.89	5.08	5.29	13.58	8.95
Youth was expelled:^a									
1 - not important	90.71	85.43	86.73	92.00	87.72	91.53	85.15	90.09	87.33
2	1.43	0.91	1.77	0.00	1.75	0.00	1.37	0.65	1.05
3	2.86	2.73	4.42	2.67	3.51	0.00	3.58	1.94	2.86
4	0.71	1.82	1.77	1.33	0.88	1.69	1.88	1.08	1.52
5 - very important	3.57	8.38	3.54	1.33	6.14	5.08	6.66	5.82	6.29

^a Per cent of those leaving school before completing year 12.

Table 13.4
Reasons for Leaving School before Completing Year 12 (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total who left school before Year 12:	140	549	113	75	114	59	586	464	1,050
Reason for leaving school (continued)									
Year 12 not needed for the work youth wanted to do:^a									
1 - not important	29.29	46.27	36.28	28.00	38.60	49.15	36.86	46.12	40.95
2	9.29	7.29	5.31	2.67	9.65	1.69	7.34	6.47	6.95
3	12.14	16.21	19.47	13.33	15.79	15.25	16.04	15.30	15.71
4	7.86	7.47	6.19	16.00	6.14	6.78	9.22	6.03	7.81
5 - very important	37.86	20.22	30.97	38.67	27.19	25.42	28.16	23.49	26.10
Youth was often in trouble at school:^a									
1 - not important	50.00	45.54	52.21	48.00	50.88	49.15	41.13	56.25	47.81
2	17.86	12.93	10.62	18.67	10.53	10.17	14.33	12.07	13.33
3	16.43	14.39	15.93	17.33	19.30	16.95	17.92	12.93	15.71
4	6.43	8.38	7.96	6.67	5.26	11.86	8.36	7.11	7.81
5 - very important	8.57	17.67	13.27	9.33	14.04	11.86	17.58	10.99	14.67
Additional reasons mentioned by respondents:^a									
Bullying at school	2.86	3.10	2.65	1.33	0.88	5.08	2.39	3.23	2.76
Got bored with school	10.00	7.83	6.19	4.00	3.51	8.47	8.19	6.03	7.24
Fell pregnant/had a baby	0.71	2.73	0.00	0.00	0.88	3.39	0.34	3.66	1.81
Family problems/issues	0.71	2.91	2.65	0.00	0.88	0.00	0.51	3.88	2.00
Family illness/death	0.00	1.46	1.77	0.00	0.00	1.69	0.68	1.51	1.05
Homeless/needed to support themselves	0.00	1.46	0.88	0.00	0.88	0.00	0.51	1.51	0.95
Moved house/state and didn't want to start again	0.71	2.19	0.88	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.68	2.16	1.33
Disliked school/problems with teachers/students	5.00	4.19	1.77	2.67	5.26	3.39	4.27	3.66	4.00
Did not like quality of school/teachers	0.71	1.09	0.88	1.33	1.75	0.00	1.19	0.86	1.05
Learning disability (dyslexia/dyspraxia etc)	0.00	0.55	0.88	1.33	0.00	1.69	0.51	0.65	0.57
Did not think would pass/do well	0.00	0.73	0.00	0.00	0.88	0.00	0.51	0.43	0.48
Wanted to start career/work/apprenticeship/earn money	5.71	3.64	5.31	4.00	1.75	5.08	4.95	2.80	4.00
Wanted to go to TAFE/other tertiary education	0.00	1.64	2.65	0.00	3.51	0.00	1.37	1.72	1.52
Was asked to leave/expelled	0.00	1.64	0.00	0.00	0.88	1.69	1.37	0.65	1.05
Other	2.86	6.92	2.65	9.33	4.39	3.39	4.27	7.33	5.62

^a Per cent of those leaving school before completing year 12.

Table 13.5
Educational Outcomes for Those Leaving School before Completing Year 12

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total who left school before Year 12:	140	549	113	75	114	59	586	464	1,050
Did youth receive any certificate as a result of school studies?^a									
yes	32.14	37.34	34.51	37.33	33.33	35.59	36.18	35.34	35.81
no	61.43	61.20	64.60	62.67	65.79	61.02	61.95	62.50	62.19
can't say	6.43	1.46	0.88	0.00	0.88	3.39	1.88	2.16	2.00
Total respondents who received a certificate:	45	206	39	28	38	21	212	165	377
Type of certificate:^b									
TAFE certificate	28.89	32.04	30.77	21.43	21.05	28.57	31.13	27.27	29.44
Secondary college record	4.44	5.83	0.00	7.14	0.00	0.00	4.72	3.64	4.24
Employment course certificate	0.00	3.88	2.56	3.57	2.63	0.00	3.30	2.42	2.92
Certificate of completion awarded by the school	20.00	24.76	28.21	7.14	28.95	33.33	24.53	23.64	24.14
Certificate in vocational (VET) studies	4.44	6.80	2.56	10.71	13.16	14.29	8.02	6.67	7.43
Statement of attainment of VET subjects completed	11.11	6.80	10.26	10.71	23.68	9.52	9.43	10.30	9.81
Academic achievement award	20.00	17.96	20.51	17.86	7.89	9.52	17.45	16.36	16.98
Sporting achievement award	11.11	3.88	5.13	10.71	0.00	4.76	5.19	4.85	5.04
Dux of class/year/school	6.67	0.49	2.56	0.00	2.63	4.76	1.89	1.82	1.86
Additional certificates mentioned by respondents:^b									
In-school encouragement/achievement award (nonacademic)	0.00	2.43	0.00	7.14	2.63	0.00	2.83	1.21	2.12
Extracurricular award	0.00	0.49	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.47	0.00	0.27
Non-academic certificate (RSA/First aid/Worksafe etc)	0.00	1.46	0.00	3.57	7.89	4.76	1.89	2.42	2.12
Music/drama/arts award/cert/scholarship	0.00	0.97	0.00	3.57	0.00	9.52	1.42	1.21	1.33
VCAL certificate	2.22	0.97	2.56	0.00	2.63	0.00	0.94	1.82	1.33
Other	0.00	1.46	5.13	0.00	2.63	0.00	2.36	0.61	1.59

^a Per cent of those leaving school before completing year 12.

^b Per cent of those who received certificate when leaving school.

Table 13.6
Educational Outcomes for Those Leaving School after Year 12 or 13

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total leaving school after Year 12 or 13:	798	810	361	304	258	142	1,155	1,518	2,673
State or territory that youth last went to school in:^a									
ACT	2.63	0.86	0.28	1.64	2.33	1.41	2.08	1.19	1.57
NSW	30.45	30.99	30.19	25.33	30.62	29.58	28.40	31.16	29.97
Victoria	25.19	23.95	28.25	29.61	27.52	28.17	25.71	26.42	26.11
Queensland	20.43	24.44	21.33	23.36	20.54	24.65	24.85	20.42	22.33
South Australia	8.52	7.65	6.93	5.59	5.81	7.04	7.01	7.64	7.37
Western Australia	10.90	9.88	11.08	11.84	8.14	7.04	10.30	10.21	10.25
Tasmania	1.13	1.98	0.83	1.64	3.88	2.11	1.04	2.24	1.72
Northern Territory	0.38	0.00	0.28	0.66	1.16	0.00	0.26	0.40	0.34
other (e.g. abroad)	0.38	0.25	0.83	0.33	0.00	0.00	0.35	0.33	0.34
Did youth study for the International Baccalaureate (IB) in the last year of school?^a									
yes	1.63	0.49	1.11	0.66	0.00	2.11	1.04	0.92	0.97
no	96.37	96.79	96.12	95.72	95.74	92.96	96.36	95.98	96.15
can't say	2.01	2.72	2.77	3.62	4.26	4.93	2.60	3.10	2.88
Total not studying for/not obtaining IB:									
	790	807	358	302	258	139	1,148	1,506	2,654
Did youth obtain the Year 12 certificate?^b									
yes	94.18	91.82	94.41	91.06	94.57	93.53	93.03	93.23	93.14
no	4.43	6.32	4.75	6.29	4.26	5.04	5.40	5.18	5.28
can't say	1.39	1.86	0.84	2.65	1.16	1.44	1.57	1.59	1.58
Did youth receive any other certificate as a result of Year 12 studies?^b									
yes	43.86	50.25	45.15	38.82	42.25	42.96	42.94	46.90	45.19
no	54.26	47.28	53.46	60.53	56.59	54.93	55.41	51.19	53.01
can't say	1.88	2.47	1.39	0.66	1.16	2.11	1.65	1.91	1.80

^a Per cent of those who left school after year 12 or 13.

^b Per cent of those who did not study for/did not receive IB.

Table 13.6
Educational Outcomes for Those Leaving School after Year 12 or 13 (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total respondents who received additional certificate:	351	408	163	119	109	61	497	714	1,211
Name of certificate:^c									
TAFE certificate	17.38	20.10	20.86	21.85	20.18	26.23	21.13	19.05	19.90
Secondary college record	1.14	0.00	0.61	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.20	0.56	0.41
Employment course certificate	0.85	2.45	1.23	2.52	0.92	0.00	2.01	1.26	1.57
Certificate of completion awarded by the school	10.83	9.80	9.20	8.40	13.76	8.20	12.27	8.68	10.16
Certificate in vocational (VET) studies	9.40	16.67	13.50	15.97	15.60	14.75	14.89	13.17	13.87
Statement of attainment of VET subjects completed	13.11	14.22	12.88	13.45	15.60	16.39	16.70	11.90	13.87
Academic achieve. award	49.29	37.99	46.01	31.93	46.79	34.43	36.82	46.22	42.36
Sporting achieve. award	5.13	4.41	2.45	3.36	4.59	0.00	5.03	3.36	4.05
Dux of class/year/school	3.70	1.47	2.45	3.36	0.92	4.92	2.62	2.52	2.56
In-school achievement award (nonacademic)	5.98	7.60	6.75	10.92	8.26	11.48	6.84	8.12	7.60
Extracurricular award	5.98	4.17	4.29	5.88	6.42	3.28	5.63	4.62	5.04
Additional certificates mentioned by respondents:^c									
Non-academic certificate (RSA/First aid/Worksafe)	0.57	1.23	1.23	2.52	0.00	1.64	1.21	0.98	1.07
Music/drama/arts award/cert/scholarship	1.71	0.98	2.45	0.84	0.92	1.64	1.41	1.40	1.40
Premiers award	1.14	0.49	1.23	0.00	0.92	0.00	0.40	0.98	0.74
VCAL certificate	0.00	1.23	0.00	1.68	0.92	0.00	1.21	0.28	0.66
Other	2.85	1.96	1.84	0.84	2.75	3.28	1.41	2.80	2.23
Total Year 12/IB diploma	752	744	341	277	244	133	1,075	1,416	2,491
Did youth obtain a university entrance score?^d									
yes	85.51	67.61	76.54	79.42	74.59	73.68	73.21	79.10	76.56
no	13.96	29.57	21.11	19.86	24.59	24.81	24.65	19.77	21.88
Total receiving university entrance score:	643	503	261	220	182	98	787	1,120	1,907
Youth's University entrance score:									
94+	12.91	6.56	8.43	8.18	8.24	9.18	7.88	10.54	9.44
70-93.99	49.46	39.96	47.13	47.73	46.15	46.94	44.35	47.14	45.99
40-69.99	30.02	32.60	33.72	33.18	31.87	32.65	34.31	30.18	31.88
39.99 or lower	2.95	7.16	5.36	3.18	2.75	4.08	5.72	3.57	4.46
Can't say/refuse	4.67	13.72	5.36	7.73	10.99	7.14	7.75	8.57	8.23

^c Per cent of those who received additional certificate.

^d Per cent of those who received year 12 or IB diploma.

Table 13.7
Post-School Studies of All School Leavers

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total school leavers	938	1,359	474	379	372	201	1,741	1,982	3,723
Currently undertaking a traineeship/apprenticeship or studying for educational qualification?^a									
yes	70.15	48.12	61.60	61.74	58.06	65.17	58.70	58.68	58.69
no	26.97	50.40	37.97	35.62	40.05	33.33	39.40	39.51	39.46
no, deferred	2.88	1.47	0.42	2.64	1.88	1.49	1.90	1.82	1.85
Total who are studying or deferred:	685	675	294	245	223	134	1,056	1,200	2,256
Type of qualification youth will receive upon completion:^b									
year 10	0.00	0.59	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.33	0.18
year 11	0.00	0.15	0.00	0.00	0.45	0.00	0.00	0.17	0.09
year 12	0.29	0.74	0.00	0.00	0.90	1.49	0.28	0.67	0.49
traineeship	3.36	5.93	5.10	4.90	7.62	5.97	4.92	5.25	5.10
trade certificate or degree	11.68	13.63	13.95	13.06	18.39	13.43	25.28	3.08	13.48
Technicians certificate	0.00	0.30	0.34	0.00	0.00	1.49	0.38	0.08	0.22
TAFE certif. level I	0.44	1.48	1.02	1.22	1.35	1.49	1.52	0.67	1.06
TAFE certif. level II	0.58	3.26	0.68	2.04	0.90	3.73	1.61	1.92	1.77
TAFE certif. level III	7.59	12.89	8.84	8.98	6.73	13.43	9.19	10.25	9.75
TAFE certif. level IV	4.67	5.93	6.12	2.45	6.28	5.97	4.73	5.67	5.23
TAFE certif. unknown	0.44	2.37	1.36	1.22	1.79	0.75	1.23	1.50	1.37
TAFE diploma	5.99	7.26	5.78	8.16	4.04	5.22	5.11	7.42	6.34
TAFE advanced diploma	2.48	2.22	2.38	2.45	3.14	2.24	2.65	2.25	2.44
associate diploma/diploma	0.88	1.19	1.02	2.04	2.24	0.75	1.23	1.25	1.24
associate degree	0.58	0.44	0.68	0.41	1.79	2.24	0.38	1.08	0.75
university/ undergraduate diploma or advanced diploma	4.82	4.00	2.72	4.08	4.93	2.24	3.31	4.75	4.08
university bachelor or honours	53.43	33.33	47.62	44.90	35.87	38.06	34.85	50.33	43.09
graduate certificate	0.73	0.30	0.34	0.82	0.45	0.00	0.47	0.50	0.49
post-graduate qualification	0.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.45	0.00	0.00	0.17	0.09
short-course	0.00	0.59	0.00	0.00	0.45	0.00	0.38	0.08	0.22
hospitality qualification	0.00	0.30	0.00	0.00	0.45	0.00	0.09	0.17	0.13
hairdressing/ beautician qualification	0.29	0.00	0.00	0.41	0.00	0.75	0.09	0.25	0.18
real estate qualification	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.41	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.08	0.04
something else	1.31	2.22	2.04	2.04	1.35	0.75	1.70	1.75	1.73

^a Per cent of those who have left school.

^b Per cent of those who are studying or have deferred.

Table 13.7 (continued)
Post-School Studies of All School Leavers

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total in current study:	658	654	292	234	216	131	1,022	1,163	2,185
Is youth studying full-time or part-time?^c									
full-time	86.93	79.36	84.59	84.62	85.19	78.63	81.90	84.78	83.43
part-time	13.07	20.64	15.41	15.38	14.81	21.37	18.10	15.22	16.57
Did youth obtain any trade certificate or educational qualification since leaving school?^a									
yes	11.51	21.71	14.77	15.04	18.82	18.91	16.26	17.91	17.14
no	88.17	78.07	85.02	84.96	80.91	80.60	83.57	81.79	82.62
The highest qualification the youth completed:^d									
year 10 or lower at TAFE	0.93	2.37	2.86	0.00	2.86	0.00	1.77	1.97	1.88
year 11 or lower at TAFE	0.00	0.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.28	0.16
year 12 or lower at TAFE	1.85	1.36	1.43	1.75	0.00	0.00	1.77	0.85	1.25
traineeship	0.93	4.41	2.86	5.26	1.43	5.26	4.59	2.54	3.45
trade certif or degree	8.33	8.81	8.57	7.02	15.71	5.26	14.84	4.51	9.09
technicians certificate	0.00	1.36	0.00	0.00	2.86	0.00	1.41	0.56	0.94
TAFE certif. level I	10.19	8.14	8.57	8.77	10.00	13.16	11.66	7.04	9.09
TAFE certif. level II	19.44	25.76	14.29	17.54	22.86	15.79	20.85	22.54	21.79
TAFE certif. level III	21.30	19.66	31.43	28.07	22.86	21.05	16.25	27.32	22.41
TAFE certif. level IV	11.11	6.10	7.14	8.77	5.71	2.63	6.01	7.89	7.05
TAFE certif. unknown	6.48	3.73	2.86	1.75	5.71	5.26	3.53	4.79	4.23
TAFE diploma	4.63	1.02	1.43	1.75	1.43	0.00	1.06	2.25	1.72
TAFE advanced diploma associate	0.00	0.34	2.86	0.00	1.43	2.63	0.71	0.85	0.78
diploma/diploma	0.93	0.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.63	0.00	0.85	0.47
university/ undergraduate diploma or advanced diploma	0.00	0.34	0.00	1.75	0.00	0.00	0.35	0.28	0.31
short-course	8.33	8.14	4.29	5.26	4.29	21.05	7.42	8.17	7.84
hospitality qualification	1.85	2.71	5.71	3.51	1.43	2.63	2.83	2.82	2.82
hairdressing/ beautician qualification	0.00	0.68	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.56	0.31
retail qualifications	0.00	0.68	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.63	0.00	0.85	0.47
real estate qualification	0.00	0.34	0.00	1.75	0.00	0.00	0.35	0.28	0.31
something else	3.70	2.37	2.86	1.75	1.43	0.00	3.53	1.41	2.35
Total left school/not deferring:	911	1,339	472	369	365	198	1,708	1,946	3,654
Since school, was youth ever enrolled in study they did not complete?^e									
yes	12.95	22.78	16.74	16.26	19.45	17.17	17.62	18.81	18.25
no	87.05	77.22	82.84	83.74	80.55	82.83	82.38	81.09	81.69

^a Per cent of those who have left school.

^b Per cent of those who are studying or have deferred.

^c Per cent of those currently studying.

^d Per cent of those obtaining qualification since leaving school.

^e Per cent of those leaving school, but not deferring.

Table 13.7 (continued)
Post-School Studies of All School Leavers

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total currently studying:	280	705	182	145	156	70	719	819	1,538
Does youth intend to study in the future?									
yes	85.00	76.45	80.22	83.45	84.62	80.00	76.22	83.52	80.10
no	10.00	15.46	13.19	12.41	8.97	18.57	16.97	10.26	13.39
can't say	5.00	8.09	6.59	4.14	6.41	1.43	6.82	6.23	6.50
The highest level of education the youth is planning to obtain in the future:^f									
year 10	0.00	1.34	0.23	0.56	0.29	0.53	0.57	0.65	0.61
year 11	0.11	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.29	0.53	0.13	0.22	0.18
year 12	0.56	4.85	0.68	1.13	0.86	2.13	2.35	2.16	2.25
traineeship	0.78	1.34	0.91	0.28	1.72	2.13	1.21	1.03	1.11
trade certificate or degree	8.13	9.69	8.22	8.45	11.17	8.51	16.98	2.32	9.05
technicians certificate	0.78	0.33	0.68	0.56	0.86	1.06	1.08	0.22	0.61
TAFE certif., level I	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.28	0.00	0.00	0.32	0.11	0.20
TAFE certif., level II	0.11	0.84	0.68	0.00	0.57	0.53	0.76	0.27	0.50
TAFE certif., level III	2.78	4.09	2.74	2.82	1.15	3.72	3.75	2.59	3.12
TAFE certif. level IV	2.23	4.09	4.11	3.10	2.58	4.26	4.07	2.75	3.36
TAFE certif.. unknown	1.78	5.93	2.74	3.10	6.02	1.60	3.18	4.53	3.91
TAFE diploma	4.23	7.18	5.02	4.51	8.60	8.51	4.77	7.18	6.07
TAFE advanced diploma	1.78	3.17	3.88	1.69	2.01	2.13	2.23	2.86	2.57
associate diploma/diploma	1.34	1.09	0.68	1.97	2.58	1.06	1.27	1.40	1.34
associate degree	0.67	0.92	1.14	1.69	1.43	1.06	0.76	1.24	1.02
university/ undergraduate diploma or advanced diploma	5.90	4.51	6.16	4.79	4.01	4.26	3.88	6.04	5.05
university bachelor or honours	43.88	29.57	40.18	38.87	29.80	31.38	31.93	39.02	35.77
graduate certificate	1.34	0.92	0.91	0.85	1.72	1.06	0.83	1.35	1.11
post-graduate qualification	12.47	5.35	8.45	12.11	9.74	9.57	7.51	10.25	8.99
short-course	0.11	0.33	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.13	0.16	0.15
hospitality qualification	0.00	0.08	0.00	0.28	0.29	0.00	0.06	0.11	0.09
hairdressing/ beautician qualification	0.00	0.08	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.03
real estate qualification	0.11	0.08	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.06	0.05	0.06
something else	1.56	1.17	0.91	1.13	2.29	1.60	1.27	1.46	1.37
can't say	9.24	12.20	11.64	11.83	12.03	13.83	10.88	11.82	11.39

^a Per cent of those who have left school.

^b Per cent of those who are studying or have deferred.

^c Per cent of those currently studying.

^d Per cent of those obtaining qualification since leaving school.

^e Per cent of those leaving school, but not deferring.

^f Per cent of those currently studying or intending to study in the future.

Section 14:
Youths' Employment, Earnings and Job Search

Overview of Findings:

In order to measure current employment characteristics of the selected 18-year olds and track their gradual transition into the labour force, the first wave *Youth in Focus* (YIF) questionnaire for the focal youths asks such questions as the weekly hours and earnings of the respondents, number of jobs they hold, the type of their work contracts, and occupation. The summary of results is presented in this section, similar to the section for parent respondents, for three separate groups of people: those currently employed, those last employed less than one year before wave 1 interviewing, and those last employed a longer time ago. In addition, the youth respondents were asked to provide information about their first ever job and career aspirations, as well as any job search activities they might be currently involved in.

Of all young people surveyed, about 72 per cent were employed at the time of the interview. The proportion of employed is much lower for the focal youths whose parents have a history of intensive income-support use (Category B) than for the youths in Category A whose families never received income-support payments. Male respondents are also slightly more likely to be working, and their female counterparts are more likely to have never had a job.

Among currently employed youth, there are also big disparities in the number of jobs held between categories A and B and between male and female respondents. Young people whose parents did not have a history of any income-support receipt, and females are less likely to have more than one job.

A closer analysis of the hours worked and the earnings of the young adults seems to indicate that working youths in Category B tend to work longer hours on average and earn more (as shown by both before- and after-tax earnings). For example, almost half of all employed youths in Category A work less than 20 hours a week, in contrast to less than 40 per cent of employed youths in Category B. Moreover, only 34 per cent of youths whose parents have never received income support (Category A) earn more than \$350 a week before tax, compared to 42 per cent of young adults in Category B who receive this amount. This, however, is probably due to the fact that young people belonging to Category A are more likely to combine work and study and, therefore, work in part-time or casual jobs. This is confirmed by the types of contract the youths hold: more than 60 per cent of Category A young job-holders are working in casual positions (as opposed to 54 per cent for Category B) and 28 per cent – in permanent positions (35 per cent for Category B). Girls are also much more likely to work fewer hours in casual positions than boys.

The occupational distribution is very similar across economic categories, due to the fact that the young people are still very much in the beginning of their working careers. Youths whose families did not have any history of income-support receipt (category A) are, perhaps, slightly more likely to work in clerical or sales occupations and less likely to work as tradespersons or labourers than the respondents whose families have intensively used income support (category B).

The picture is quite similar for the young respondents who have last been employed less than one year before wave 1 interviewing. The overwhelming majority have had only one job, have received wages rather than being self-employed and, for the most part, worked casually. The most likely occupations for the recently-employed respondents were clerical, sales and services, or labourers' positions.

Only about a quarter of all young people interviewed said that their current (or most recent) job is the one they would like to have as a career. This figure is higher for boys and for income-support dependent categories. This seems in line with the conclusions made earlier in this section that young adults whose families have never accessed the income-support system are more likely to look upon their current job as a temporary source of supplementary income.

Another argument in favour of this conclusion can be found in the information provided by young adults who were not working at the time of the survey. Among the non-working young adults in category B, more people were looking for jobs, and many more were looking for full-time or any work, in comparison with the youth respondents in category A, who were mostly looking specifically for a part-time position.

The channels used for job search differ significantly across the stratification categories. Young adults from the families that used to rely heavily on income support (category B) were much more likely to use Centrelink-related channels of job search or be registered with an employment agency than youths from non-income-support dependent families (category A) who may lack the knowledge or be more reluctant about using these means of job search. However, although the youths from category B seem to be more informed about various available ways of finding a job, they are less successful in securing one: in comparison with respondents from category A, they spend more time on average in the process of looking for a position.

There were only a few young adult respondents who, at the time of the survey, were neither in school, full-time education, working nor looking for work. Since the numbers of such youths in each economic category are very small, it is not possible to make any conclusions about the significance of the cross-category differences, however, it can be observed that most of the young people who reported looking after children as their main activity tend to belong to the categories associated with more intensive income-support history.

**Table 14.1
Employment Status**

	Economic Categories						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Respondents	1,027	1,472	526	420	403	231	1,924	2,155	4,079
Employment status^a									
Currently employed	80.72	63.99	70.91	81.90	77.92	66.67	74.27	70.86	72.47
Recently employed	9.54	16.37	11.03	7.86	11.66	19.05	12.99	12.58	12.77
Employed in the past	2.73	6.52	5.70	3.81	4.47	3.03	4.37	5.15	4.78
Never/can't say	7.01	13.11	12.36	6.43	5.96	11.26	8.37	11.42	9.98

^a Per cent of strata total.

**Table 14.2
Employment Outcomes for Youth Currently Employed**

	Economic Categories						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Youth Currently Employed	829	942	373	344	314	154	1,429	1,527	2,956
Does youth have more than one job?^a									
No	79.86	88.22	82.84	83.72	80.89	87.01	87.19	80.68	83.83
Yes	20.14	11.68	17.16	16.28	18.47	12.99	12.74	19.19	16.07
Weekly hours worked in ALL jobs:^a									
20 hrs or less	47.77	38.22	40.75	44.48	36.31	35.06	33.66	48.98	41.58
>20 to 30 hrs	14.96	14.54	15.28	15.41	14.33	15.58	10.43	19.06	14.88
>30 to 40 hrs	22.07	31.63	25.74	23.26	30.89	33.12	31.56	23.18	27.23
>40 hrs	14.35	14.86	17.43	16.28	17.83	14.29	23.44	8.06	15.49
Before tax weekly earnings from all jobs^a									
\$150 or less	22.20	21.02	20.38	20.64	18.15	20.13	17.35	24.17	20.87
\$151 to \$250	22.20	16.14	18.50	18.90	19.75	14.29	15.40	21.87	18.74
\$251 to \$350	18.70	16.99	20.11	19.48	17.52	20.78	17.42	19.32	18.40
\$351 to \$550	20.87	26.11	23.06	24.71	22.61	25.32	26.59	20.96	23.68
\$551 or more	12.67	16.14	12.87	12.50	19.11	14.94	19.73	9.76	14.58
Incomparable payment	0.00	0.11	0.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.07	0.07
Refuse/can't say	3.38	3.50	4.83	3.78	2.87	4.55	3.43	3.86	3.65
After tax weekly earnings from all jobs^a									
\$145 or less	22.80	19.53	19.84	21.80	17.83	20.13	18.05	22.99	20.60
\$146 to \$230	21.47	15.71	18.50	17.15	17.52	14.94	14.35	21.41	18.00
\$231 to \$315	18.46	17.62	20.11	18.60	18.15	21.43	17.07	19.91	18.54
\$316 to \$465	19.90	24.42	21.72	25.29	21.97	24.03	25.96	19.52	22.63
\$466 or more	11.94	15.92	13.67	11.63	18.15	16.23	19.31	9.56	14.28
Incomparable payment	0.12	0.11	0.54	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.28	0.00	0.14
Refuse/can't say	5.31	6.69	5.63	5.52	6.37	3.25	4.97	6.61	5.82

^a Per cent of youth currently employed.

Table 14.2
Employment Outcomes for Youth Currently Employed (continued)

	Economic Categories						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Youth Employed	829	942	373	344	314	154	1,429	1,527	2,956
Is youth paid wages, self-employed, or other?^a									
wages/ salary	96.02	93.84	97.86	94.19	94.90	96.10	95.17	95.28	95.23
self-employed	2.05	2.97	1.07	2.62	2.55	2.60	2.59	2.16	2.37
other	1.57	2.65	1.07	2.91	1.91	1.30	1.89	2.16	2.03
Total youth who work for wages (or other):									
	809	909	369	334	304	150	1,387	1,488	2,875
Type of Contract:									
fixed-term	9.39	8.03	7.59	8.68	8.22	10.67	11.90	5.51	8.59
casual	60.69	53.80	54.47	56.59	51.64	53.33	48.09	63.17	55.90
permanent	27.94	35.42	36.86	33.23	37.17	33.33	37.56	29.37	33.32
unpaid in family business	0.49	0.44	0.54	0.00	0.33	0.00	0.36	0.40	0.38
other (specify)	0.74	1.43	0.00	1.20	0.66	2.00	0.94	1.01	0.97
can't say	0.74	0.88	0.54	0.30	1.97	0.67	1.15	0.54	0.83
Occupation^a									
Manager	1.09	0.32	0.54	1.74	0.96	0.00	0.84	0.72	0.78
Farmer/farm manager	0.72	0.42	0.27	0.58	0.32	1.95	0.98	0.20	0.58
Professional	6.03	4.35	2.41	3.78	3.82	4.55	3.50	5.37	4.47
Associate professional	4.70	5.84	4.83	6.40	6.69	6.49	4.97	6.16	5.58
Tradesperson	14.96	16.77	15.82	16.28	14.65	18.18	29.18	3.54	15.93
Clerical, sales or services worker	59.23	54.78	58.45	60.17	56.05	52.60	38.77	74.33	57.14
Labourer	10.74	14.97	15.28	9.01	16.56	12.34	18.89	7.79	13.16
Other/Can't say	2.41	2.44	2.41	2.03	0.96	3.90	2.80	1.83	2.30
Unemployed	0.12	0.11	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.07	0.07

^a Per cent of youth currently employed.

Table 14.3
Employment Outcomes for Youth Recently Employed

	Economic Categories						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Youth Recently Employed	98	241	58	33	47	44	250	571	521
More than one job when last working?^a									
No	94.90	95.02	87.93	90.91	89.36	86.36	93.20	92.25	92.71
Yes	5.10	4.98	12.07	9.09	10.64	13.64	6.80	7.75	7.29
Is youth paid wages, self-employed, or other?^a									
wages/ salary	97.96	92.95	94.83	90.91	93.62	88.64	92.80	94.46	93.67
self-employed	0.00	3.73	1.72	3.03	0.00	0.00	2.80	1.48	2.11
other way	2.04	3.32	3.45	3.03	6.38	9.09	4.40	3.32	3.84
Total who worked for wages (or other):	98	232	57	31	47	43	243	265	508
Type of Contract:									
fixed-term	5.10	4.74	1.75	12.90	6.38	4.65	6.17	4.15	5.12
casual	86.73	79.31	78.95	64.52	68.09	67.44	76.54	78.87	77.76
permanent	6.12	14.22	15.79	16.13	23.40	20.93	13.58	15.09	14.37
unpaid in family business	1.02	0.43	1.75	3.23	2.13	4.65	1.65	1.13	1.38
other (specify)	1.02	0.86	1.75	3.23	0.00	2.33	1.65	0.75	1.18
can't say	0.00	0.43	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.41	0.00	0.20
Occupation^a									
Manager	0.00	0.41	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.37	0.19
Farmer/farm manager	0.00	1.66	1.72	6.06	2.13	0.00	1.60	1.48	1.54
Professional	3.06	2.90	0.00	0.00	2.13	0.00	2.00	2.21	2.11
Associate professional	2.04	1.66	1.72	0.00	12.77	6.82	2.40	3.69	3.07
Tradesperson	5.10	5.39	5.17	9.09	8.51	6.82	9.60	2.58	5.95
Clerical, sales or services worker	67.35	61.83	65.52	48.48	51.06	59.09	45.60	75.65	61.23
Labourer	20.41	23.65	24.14	27.27	21.28	25.00	35.60	11.81	23.22
Other/Can't say	2.04	2.49	1.72	6.06	2.13	2.27	2.80	2.21	2.50
Unemployed	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.03	0.00	0.00	0.40	0.00	0.19

^a Per cent of youth recently employed.

Table 14.4
Occupations of Youth Employed Long Ago

	Economic Categories						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Youth Employed Long Ago	28	96	30	16	18	7	84	111	195
Occupation^a									
Professional	7.14	3.13	3.33	6.25	0.00	0.00	2.38	4.50	3.59
Associate professional	7.14	3.13	0.00	0.00	5.56	0.00	4.76	1.80	3.08
Tradesperson	7.14	0.00	3.33	0.00	0.00	28.57	3.57	1.80	2.56
Clerical, sales or services worker	64.29	58.33	70.00	75.00	72.22	42.86	47.62	74.77	63.08
Labourer	14.29	29.17	20.00	18.75	16.67	28.57	36.90	13.51	23.59
Other/Can't say	0.00	5.21	3.33	0.00	5.56	0.00	4.76	2.70	3.59
Unemployed	0.00	1.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.90	0.51

^a Per cent of youth employed long ago.

Table 14.5
Employment Outcomes and Goals of Youth Who Ever Worked

	Economic Categories						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Youth Ever Employed	955	1,279	461	393	379	205	1,763	1,909	3,672
Is the youth's current/recent job the kind of job they would like as a career?^a									
Yes	21.26	25.72	23.86	24.43	26.65	31.22	31.48	18.23	24.59
No	76.75	71.70	73.75	74.30	69.92	65.85	66.42	79.15	73.04
Can't say	1.99	2.58	2.39	1.27	3.43	2.93	2.10	2.62	2.37
Age when first started working^a									
Below 14	9.32	9.30	8.24	8.91	7.65	12.68	10.15	8.22	9.15
Fourteen	19.27	19.08	19.74	23.66	29.55	17.07	17.98	23.15	20.67
Fifteen	29.11	26.74	28.20	27.74	23.22	27.80	26.09	28.50	27.34
Sixteen	20.63	20.48	21.91	22.39	19.00	20.98	21.84	19.80	20.78
Seventeen and over	21.36	23.22	21.26	16.79	20.32	20.49	23.14	19.70	21.35
Refused/can't say	0.31	1.17	0.65	0.51	0.26	0.98	0.79	0.63	0.71
Hours per week worked in the first job^a									
< 6 hours per week	18.85	13.92	15.18	19.59	15.04	14.63	16.73	15.56	16.12
6 – <10 hours per week	20.63	15.72	18.44	18.83	15.57	14.15	15.54	19.43	17.57
10 – <15 hours per week	23.77	20.64	24.30	20.61	21.90	25.85	19.63	24.83	22.33
15 - <30 hours per week	22.30	25.41	26.46	25.95	26.12	26.34	23.14	26.56	24.92
30+ hours per week	11.73	18.45	10.85	11.70	16.36	15.61	20.08	9.64	14.65
Refused/can't say	2.72	5.86	4.77	3.31	5.01	3.41	4.88	3.98	4.41

^a Per cent of youth ever employed.

Table 14.6
Job Search Activities of Those Not Currently Working

	Economic Categories						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total youth not working:	198	530	153	76	89	77	495	628	1,123
Was youth looking for paid work during the last 4 weeks?^a									
Yes	48.99	57.74	52.29	43.42	52.81	42.86	54.95	51.59	53.07
No	51.01	42.08	47.06	56.58	47.19	57.14	45.05	48.09	46.75
Total looking for work:	97	306	80	33	47	33	272	324	596
Seeking full-time or part-time work?^b									
full-time work	19.59	27.45	18.75	30.30	31.91	18.18	26.10	24.07	25.00
part-time work	71.13	41.18	60.00	54.55	34.04	42.42	46.32	50.93	48.83
any work	9.28	31.37	21.25	15.15	34.04	39.39	27.57	25.00	26.17
Job search channels used:^b									
In writing, by phone or in person to employer	73.20	75.16	75.00	66.67	76.60	78.79	74.63	74.69	74.66
Answering ad for job	58.76	60.13	62.50	60.61	53.19	63.64	57.35	62.04	59.90
Factory notice boards, touchscreens at Centrelink Access	15.46	43.46	31.25	15.15	25.53	33.33	33.09	34.26	33.72
Registered w/ Centrelink	10.31	52.29	41.25	27.27	34.04	36.36	42.65	38.27	40.27
Checked/ registered w/ employ. agency	21.65	47.71	36.25	30.30	40.43	42.42	44.85	36.11	40.10
None of the above	9.28	9.15	8.75	6.06	14.89	0.00	9.56	8.33	8.89
Additional job search channels mentioned by respondents:^b									
Advertised/tendered for work	8.25	13.40	3.75	6.06	14.89	9.09	9.19	12.04	10.74
Contacted friends/relatives	19.59	12.42	21.25	12.12	17.02	18.18	18.75	12.65	15.44
Checked newspapers; did not answer any ads	17.53	25.49	22.50	9.09	19.15	27.27	22.79	22.22	22.48
Checked Internet; did not answer any ads	30.93	33.66	38.75	36.36	27.66	27.27	34.93	31.79	33.22
Went to Centrelink/job networks	0.00	1.63	1.25	0.00	0.00	3.03	1.84	0.62	1.17
Contacted school career advisor	0.00	0.65	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.03	0.74	0.31	0.50
Looked at notices in shop windows	1.03	0.33	1.25	3.03	0.00	0.00	0.37	0.93	0.67
Looked in phonebook (Yellowpages)	0.00	0.33	1.25	0.00	0.00	3.03	0.74	0.31	0.50
Searched through university	1.03	0.33	3.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.74	0.93	0.84
Applied for a job	2.06	0.65	1.25	3.03	0.00	0.00	1.47	0.62	1.01

^a Per cent of youth ever not working.

^b Per cent of youth looking for work.

^c Per cent of youth not in school, full-time education, working or looking for work.

Table 14.6
Job Search Activities of Those Not Currently Working (continued)

	Economic Categories						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total youth not working:	198	530	153	76	89	77	495	628	1,123
Additional job search channels mentioned by respondents (continued):^b									
Attended a job interview	1.03	1.31	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.03	0.37	1.54	1.01
Did unpaid/volunteer work	0.00	0.33	2.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.37	0.62	0.50
Other	0.00	0.00	5.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.23	0.67
Can't say	2.06	1.96	0.00	6.06	0.00	6.06	1.84	2.16	2.01
When did youth begin looking for work?^b									
< 1 year ago	88.66	81.05	82.50	90.91	87.23	93.94	85.66	83.02	84.23
1 - < 2 years ago	8.25	11.76	16.25	9.09	10.64	3.03	9.93	12.04	11.07
2+ years ago	3.09	6.21	1.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.68	4.01	3.86
Total not in school, full-time education, working and or looking for work:									
	17	76	12	10	11	6	38	94	132
Main activity at present:^c									
looking after children	0.00	38.16	8.33	30.00	45.45	66.67	0.00	44.68	31.82
own illness/injury/disability	0.00	6.58	8.33	10.00	9.09	0.00	7.89	5.32	6.06
looking after ill/disabled	0.00	1.32	0.00	10.00	0.00	0.00	2.63	1.06	1.52
travel or on holiday	5.88	10.53	16.67	30.00	0.00	0.00	21.05	6.38	10.61
in an unpaid voluntary job	5.88	5.26	0.00	0.00	9.09	0.00	5.26	4.26	4.55
studying	0.00	3.95	8.33	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.63	3.19	3.03
looking for work	0.00	1.32	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.06	0.76
pregnant/waiting for baby to arrive	17.65	3.95	16.67	0.00	9.09	16.67	2.63	9.57	7.58
home duties/ housework	11.76	2.63	0.00	0.00	0.00	16.67	2.63	4.26	3.79
hang around the house	5.88	6.58	8.33	10.00	0.00	0.00	7.89	5.32	6.06
hang around with friends	5.88	3.95	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.26	2.13	3.03
nothing	17.65	3.95	16.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	15.79	2.13	6.06
waiting for uni or TAFE offers/start	5.88	1.32	8.33	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.63	2.13	2.27
preparing to move interstate/overseas	5.88	1.32	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.26	0.00	1.52
other	5.88	5.26	8.33	0.00	18.18	0.00	10.53	4.26	6.06
can't say	11.76	3.95	0.00	10.00	9.09	0.00	7.89	4.26	5.30

^a Per cent of youth ever not working.

^b Per cent of youth looking for work.

^c Per cent of youth not in school, full-time education, working or looking for work.

Section 15:
Youths' Family Formation

Overview of Findings:

One of the very important outcomes for the young people is their fertility decisions, including early fertility. These decisions could significantly affect education and employment opportunities and, as a result, the youth's present and future income, lifestyle and health. The *Youth in Focus* (YIF) survey addresses the fertility choices of the young adults as far as possible within the scope of the study. In wave 1, the focal youth respondents were asked about their relationship history, children, and characteristics of their partners. These data would provide a fuller picture of the choices made by young adults and the effect these choices have.

About 5 per cent of all surveyed young adults were married or in de facto relationship at the time of wave 1 interview. The percentage is higher for girls than for boys (7 per cent against 3 per cent), and the young people whose parents had no history of income-support receipt (category A) reported lower numbers than the youths whose families were heavily reliant on income support (category B). The economic category also matters for length and number of relationships young adults have: among partnered young people, almost 70 per cent in category A have started living with their current partner less than a year ago, while in category B the proportion of respondents living with their current partner for longer than one year was about 50 per cent. Category B respondents were also more likely to have had another relationship/marriage before the current one (almost 8 per cent against 2 per cent in category A), and to have started living with a partner earlier.

The partnered respondents were also asked about education and employment characteristics of their current partner, their occupation, earnings, and main activity if unemployed. Since only 5 per cent of the surveyed youths were partnered, the sample numbers are quite low in some cases, which could prevent running statistical tests but nevertheless provides a rough picture of the young adults' family formation.

The partners' educational and employment characteristics vary both across the economic categories and between genders. About three quarters of the young adults in category A have partners who have completed Year 12, in contrast to only one third of the focal youths belonging to category B. This category also reports one of the highest percentages of partners whose highest educational qualification was year 10, 9, or lower.

Around 90 per cent of young adults in category A have working partners, as opposed to 68 per cent in category B. The partners of the male respondents are also less likely to be employed than the girls' partners or spouses. The most prevalent activities for partners who are not employed include looking for work, studying and looking after children. Of the employed, boys' partners tend to work fewer hours and earn not as much as the girls' partners. Occupationally, the most common partner's positions are tradespersons, clerical or sales staff, or labourer.

There are 98 youths among those surveyed (2.4 per cent) who have children. The largest youth group with children (both in absolute and relative terms) belongs to category B. In addition, higher proportion of female than male respondents reported having children.

The overwhelming majority (95 per cent) of the young adults with children have only one child; however, there are single cases (all among category B respondents and girls) who have two or even four children. The respondents' children were mostly born in 2004-2006; most of the first-born children live with their mothers (96 per cent of female respondents live with their first child), however, this is much rarer for fathers (42 per cent of male

respondents reported living with their first child, and 16 per cent more reported living with their first child half the time). Most of the respondents reported neither paying nor receiving any financial support for the child.

**Table 15.1
Family Formation**

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Respondents	1,027	1,472	526	420	403	231	1,924	2,155	4,079
Currently Married/in De Facto Relationship^a									
Yes	2.73	7.20	3.61	2.62	6.45	7.79	2.81	7.15	5.10
No	97.27	92.80	96.39	97.38	93.55	92.21	97.19	92.85	94.90
Total married or in de facto relationship:									
	28	106	19	11	26	18	54	154	208
When did youth marry/ begin living with current partner?									
< 6 months	32.14	24.53	26.32	18.18	34.62	22.22	25.93	26.62	26.44
6 months to < 1 year	35.71	24.53	36.84	36.36	26.92	22.22	27.78	27.92	27.88
1 year to 18 months	10.71	16.98	10.53	27.27	11.54	16.67	20.37	13.64	15.38
18+ months	17.86	33.02	26.32	18.18	19.23	38.89	22.22	30.52	28.37
Never lived w/ partner	3.57	0.94	0.00	0.00	3.85	0.00	1.85	1.30	1.44
Ever live with someone (other than current partner) in a marriage or de facto relationship?^a									
Yes	2.14	7.68	3.23	4.05	3.47	5.19	3.38	6.03	4.78
No	97.86	92.19	96.77	95.95	96.28	94.37	96.57	93.83	95.12
Total w/ previous marriage/de facto relationship:									
	22	113	17	17	14	12	65	130	195
When did youth first live in de facto relationship/marriage?									
< 1 year	40.91	26.55	23.53	35.29	35.71	33.33	36.92	26.15	29.74
1 - < 2 years	22.73	20.35	23.53	41.18	50.00	25.00	23.08	26.15	25.13
2 - <3 years	27.27	34.51	35.29	5.88	7.14	16.67	24.62	30.00	28.21
3+ years	9.09	18.58	17.65	17.65	7.14	16.67	13.85	17.69	16.41
Total currently married/ de facto AND had previous marriages/ relationships									
	8	24	3	3	4	1	12	31	43
How many marriages/relationships did youth have (including the current relationship)?									
1	62.50	62.50	66.67	0.00	75.00	100.0	75.00	54.84	60.47
2	25.00	25.00	0.00	66.67	25.00	0.00	16.67	29.03	25.58
3	12.50	8.33	33.33	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	12.90	9.30
5	0.00	0.00	0.00	33.33	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.23	2.33
7	0.00	4.17	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	8.33	0.00	2.33

^a Per cent of strata total.

**Table 15.1
Family Formation (continued)**

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total NOT currently married/de facto AND had previous marriages/relationships	14	89	14	14	10	11	53	99	152
How many marriages/relationships did youth have?									
1	92.86	88.76	78.57	92.86	90.00	90.91	84.91	90.91	88.82
2	7.14	11.24	21.43	7.14	0.00	0.00	11.32	9.09	9.87
3	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	9.09	1.89	0.00	0.66
5	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10.00	0.00	1.89	0.00	0.66

Table 15.2
The Characteristics of Youths' Partners

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total currently married or in de facto relationship:	28	106	19	11	26	18	54	154	208
Has youth's partner/spouse completed Year 12?^a									
yes	75.00	33.02	47.37	45.45	42.31	33.33	51.85	38.31	41.83
no	25.00	63.21	52.63	54.55	53.85	66.67	44.44	59.74	55.77
can't say	0.00	3.77	0.00	0.00	3.85	0.00	3.70	1.95	2.40
The highest qualification partner completed:^a									
year 9 or lower	3.57	10.38	0.00	9.09	11.54	0.00	3.70	9.09	7.69
year 10	10.71	27.36	15.79	18.18	26.92	44.44	24.07	25.32	25.00
year 11	10.71	12.26	15.79	9.09	7.69	11.11	18.52	9.09	11.54
year 12	53.57	16.04	21.05	45.45	19.23	5.56	33.33	18.83	22.60
traineeship	0.00	1.89	10.53	0.00	0.00	5.56	3.70	1.95	2.40
trade certificate/ degree	7.14	7.55	10.53	9.09	15.38	11.11	1.85	11.69	9.13
TAFE certificate, level I	3.57	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.65	0.48
TAFE certificate, level II	3.57	1.89	5.26	0.00	3.85	5.56	3.70	2.60	2.88
TAFE certificate, level III	3.57	1.89	5.26	0.00	0.00	5.56	1.85	2.60	2.40
TAFE certificate, level IV	0.00	3.77	0.00	0.00	3.85	0.00	0.00	3.25	2.40
TAFE certificate, level unknown	3.57	3.77	5.26	0.00	7.69	0.00	3.70	3.90	3.85
TAFE diploma associate	0.00	0.94	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.65	0.48
diploma/diploma	0.00	1.89	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.30	0.96
associate degree	0.00	0.00	5.26	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.65	0.48
university bachelor or honours degree	0.00	1.89	0.00	0.00	3.85	0.00	0.00	1.95	1.44
short-course	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.56	1.85	0.00	0.48
can't say	0.00	7.55	5.26	9.09	0.00	5.56	3.70	5.84	5.29
Does partner work?^a									
yes	89.29	67.92	89.47	72.73	65.38	72.22	59.26	77.92	73.08
no	7.14	31.13	10.53	27.27	34.62	27.78	37.04	22.08	25.96
can't say	3.57	0.94	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.70	0.00	0.96

^a Per cent of youth currently married or in de facto relationship.

Table 15.2
The Characteristics of Youths' Partners (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total whose partner is unemployed:	3	34	2	3	9	5	22	34	56
Main activity of partner:									
looking for work	66.67	41.18	0.00	33.33	66.67	80.00	31.82	58.82	48.21
studying	0.00	11.76	0.00	33.33	11.11	0.00	4.55	14.71	10.71
looking after children	0.00	17.65	100.0	0.00	0.00	20.00	27.27	8.82	16.07
pregnant/ waiting for baby to arrive	0.00	8.82	0.00	0.00	11.11	0.00	18.18	0.00	7.14
has a disability	0.00	5.88	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.88	3.57
other	0.00	8.82	0.00	0.00	11.11	0.00	4.55	8.82	7.14
can't say	33.33	5.88	0.00	33.33	0.00	0.00	13.64	2.94	7.14
Did partner ever work for pay?									
yes	33.33	82.35	100.0	66.67	88.89	80.00	72.73	85.29	80.36
no	33.33	11.76	0.00	33.33	11.11	0.00	13.64	11.76	12.50
can't say	33.33	5.88	0.00	0.00	0.00	20.00	13.64	2.94	7.14
Total w/ unemployed partner but worked for pay in the past:	1	28	2	2	8	4	16	29	45
Occupation									
Professional	0.00	3.57	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.25	0.00	2.22
Tradesperson	0.00	17.86	0.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	6.25	24.14	17.78
Clerical, sales or services worker	100.0	0	100.0	50.00	12.50	25.00	75.00	24.14	42.22
Labourer	0.00	17.86	0.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	6.25	37.93	26.67
Other occupation	0.00	7.14	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.25	3.45	4.44
Can't say	0.00	7.14	0.00	0.00	12.50	0.00	0.00	10.34	6.67
Total w/ employed partners	25	72	17	8	17	13	32	120	152
How many hours per week does partner work in all jobs?									
30 hours or less	12.00	19.44	11.76	25.00	17.65	7.69	37.50	10.83	16.45
More than 30 to 40	56.00	43.06	64.71	37.50	41.18	30.77	46.88	45.83	46.05
More than 40 hours	32.00	27.78	23.53	25.00	41.18	53.85	9.38	37.50	31.58
Refuse/can't say	0.00	9.72	0.00	12.50	0.00	7.69	6.25	5.83	5.92
Partner's weekly earnings before deductions:									
Less than \$400	12.00	26.39	11.76	25.00	11.76	15.38	50.00	11.67	19.74
\$400 to less than \$600	12.00	16.67	29.41	25.00	35.29	23.08	12.50	22.50	20.39
\$600 to less than \$800	20.00	19.44	29.41	12.50	23.53	15.38	12.50	22.50	20.39
\$800 or more	36.00	13.89	0.00	12.50	11.76	23.08	3.13	20.00	16.45
Refuse/can't say	20.00	23.61	29.41	25.00	17.65	23.08	21.88	23.33	23.03

Table 15.2
The Characteristics of Youths' Partners (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total whose partner is employed:	25	72	17	8	17	13	32	120	152
Partner's weekly earnings after deductions:									
Less than \$360	20.00	20.83	17.65	50.00	29.41	15.38	46.88	15.83	22.37
\$360 to less than	4.00	15.28	23.53	0.00	17.65	23.08	6.25	16.67	14.47
\$500 to less than	24.00	18.06	29.41	12.50	11.76	15.38	9.38	21.67	19.08
\$640 or more	32.00	15.28	0.00	25.00	23.53	15.38	9.38	20.00	17.76
Refuse/can't say	20.00	30.56	29.41	12.50	17.65	30.77	28.13	25.83	26.32
Partner's occupation:									
1a. Manager	0.00	2.74	0.00	0.00	5.88	0.00	3.13	1.65	1.96
1b. Farmer/farm manager	0.00	2.74	5.88	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.13	1.65	1.96
1c. Professional	4.00	4.11	5.88	12.50	0.00	7.69	6.25	4.13	4.58
1d. Associate profess	4.00	4.11	5.88	0.00	11.76	0.00	3.13	4.96	4.58
1f. Tradesperson	20.00	28.77	23.53	37.50	35.29	23.08	3.13	33.88	27.45
1g. Clerical, sales a	52.00	38.36	47.06	25.00	29.41	38.46	68.75	32.23	39.87
1h. Labourer	16.00	15.07	11.76	25.00	17.65	30.77	12.50	18.18	16.99
4.Other occupation	4.00	2.74	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.48	1.96
6.Can't say	0.00	1.37	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.83	0.65

**Table 15.3
Youths' Children**

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Respondents	1,027	1,472	526	420	403	231	1,924	2,155	4,079
Youth who have children ^a	0.49	4.69	0.76	0.71	2.23	3.46	1.04	3.62	2.40
Total w/ have children:	5	69	4	3	9	8	20	78	98
How many children does youth have?									
1	80.00	94.20	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	95.00	94.87	94.90
2	0.00	4.35	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.85	3.06
4	0.00	1.45	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.28	1.02
Refuse/can't say	20.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.00	0.00	1.02
Year of birth of first child:									
2002	0.00	1.45	0.00	0.00	11.11	0.00	0.00	2.56	2.06
2003	0.00	8.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10.53	5.13	6.19
2004	25.00	14.49	0.00	33.33	11.11	25.00	5.26	17.95	15.46
2005	25.00	34.78	0.00	0.00	44.44	37.50	42.11	30.77	32.99
2006	50.00	39.13	75.00	66.67	33.33	37.50	36.84	42.31	41.24
Refuse/can't say	0.00	1.45	25.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.26	1.28	2.06
Does the first child live with youth?									
yes	75.00	86.96	75.00	66.67	77.78	100.0	42.11	96.15	85.57
no	25.00	10.14	25.00	0.00	22.22	0.00	42.11	3.85	11.34
Half the time	0.00	2.90	0.00	33.33	0.00	0.00	15.79	0.00	3.09
Total who are married/in de facto relationship:									
	3	28	0	2	5	6	9	35	44
Is current spouse/partner the other parent of the child?									
yes	66.67	89.29	-	100.0	80.00	100.0	77.78	91.43	88.64
no	33.33	10.71	-	0.00	20.00	0.00	22.22	8.57	11.36
Does youth pay/receive/both any financial support for the child?									
yes, pay	0.00	13.04	0.00	33.33	0.00	0.00	42.11	2.56	10.31
yes, receive	25.00	18.84	25.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	19.23	15.46
both pays and receive	0.00	1.45	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.28	1.03
no	75.00	66.67	75.00	66.67	100.0	100.0	57.89	76.92	73.20

^a Per cent of strata total.

Section 16:
Youths' Income

Overview of Findings:

In addition to information about employment earnings of the young adult respondents, the *Youth in Focus* (YIF) survey also collected information about other possible income, like the income from their own business or from interest or dividends, that the young adults may have received. Moreover, a large section of the survey is devoted to finding out the youths' living arrangements, such as the cost of renting or mortgage repayments on their dwellings, and financial assistance received from the youths' families.

As explained earlier in this Report (Section 7), co-residence of parents and their young adult children and financial transfers from parents act as an important mechanism through which advantage or disadvantage can be passed from one generation to the next. At this stage in their lives, when young people have to make a range of choices about completing their education and entering the labour force, financial support from parents can provide additional means for them to rely on and thus influence these decisions. It is therefore important to understand, from both parental and young adults' perspective, how the economic circumstances of their families affect the presence and the size of these transfers.

Our results show that the economic circumstances of the family make a difference in the prevalence and the amount of support provided to the youths by their parents. For the two groups of young people – those who live at home with their parents and those who live on their own and not in share or group accommodation (such as student residence halls) – the possibility of living rent free is much higher for the youths whose parents have no history of income support (category A). On the other end of the scale are the young respondents whose families have a history of intensive income-support receipt (category B). Around half of the category B respondents who resided with their parents at the time of the wave 1 interview were paying money for rent or board, in contrast to only one fifth of their category A counterparts. Moreover, among the focal youths who lived independently, 34 per cent of category A respondents were living rent free (in some cases, in their parents' investment properties) while less than 9 per cent of the category B respondents were doing so.

The amounts paid for rent (or mortgage) by the focal youths who either do or do not live independently are summarised in the two sets of numbers at the end of the Table 16.1. For the 784 youths who live independently (including share and group accommodation), the average weekly payments are slightly higher for category A than for category B: in particular, the proportions of respondents paying \$140 a week or more are 35 per cent for category A and 23 per cent for category B. On the other hand, the young adults in category B who do not live independently and pay for their room and board tend to pay more: around 27 per cent of respondents in this group pay more than \$70 a week, compared to 14 per cent in category A.

In line with youth employment data from another section of the survey, the proportions of the interviewed young adults who receive income from wages differ across economic categories, with the youths belonging to category A reporting much higher incidence (81 per cent) than the respondents from category B (68 per cent). There did not seem to be any significant difference in the amounts of the wages income earned across the categories. As regards other sources of income, such as income from their own business, workers' compensation, rental property, or interest and dividends, only a few of the young adults report having received those and cross-category comparisons would not be significant.

The YIF survey results also confirm that the family's economic circumstances matter greatly in the amount of financial assistance provided by parents to the 18-year-olds. Among the 6 economic categories, the proportions of the young people who did not receive any financial assistance from their parents range from 20 per cent (category A, no family income-support history) to 43 per cent (category B, intensive income-support history). Parents who never received income support are much more likely to help their children with the purchase of a car, to pay for their accommodation while they study, to help pay tuition fees, bills and fines, to provide living allowance and to pay off their debt. Parents who have no history of income-support use also tend to pay more, on average, than those who were heavily dependent on income support: about 54 per cent of young adults in category A have received \$2,000 or more, while the share of category B respondents who have received that much is only 34 per cent.

About a third of all young people interviewed believe they are expected to pay back the assistance provided to them by their families. This percentage is relatively stable across the economic categories; and, in all the categories, about 50 per cent of respondents reported that they are expected to pay back the full amount of assistance.

Future research will need to address in more details other possible determinants of the parental financial transfers. It would also be interesting to look at the matched parent-youth data to gain insight into circumstances that affect these transfers.

**Table 16.1
Youths' Living Arrangements**

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Youth who live with parents and do not live in share or group accommodation:	878	1,075	436	355	325	173	1,592	1,650	3,242
Is youth paying rent or board?									
living rent free	78.25	48.00	62.61	72.68	67.08	63.01	59.42	67.58	63.57
paying rent or board	21.41	50.88	36.47	26.48	32.31	36.42	39.51	31.94	35.66
other	0.34	1.02	0.92	0.56	0.62	0.58	1.01	0.42	0.71
Youth who live independently and not in share or group accommodation:	31	138	24	10	24	12	80	159	239
Current housing arrangements:									
lodger/ boarder	12.90	25.36	16.67	20.00	20.83	25.00	33.75	16.35	22.18
renting own place	45.16	57.97	58.33	40.00	66.67	58.33	46.25	61.64	56.49
buying own place	6.45	2.17	4.17	0.00	4.17	8.33	1.25	4.40	3.35
own place outright	0.00	2.17	8.33	0.00	4.17	0.00	2.50	2.52	2.51
live rent free in parents' investment property	9.68	1.45	8.33	0.00	4.17	0.00	5.00	2.52	3.35
living rent free no fixed address/ stay with friends	22.58	7.25	4.17	40.00	0.00	8.33	11.25	8.81	9.62
other (specify)	0.00	1.45	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.26	0.84
other (specify)	3.23	2.17	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.52	1.67
Youth who live in group accommodation:	40	43	19	13	9	13	48	89	137
Amount of weekly rent/board for youth(and partner):									
Less than \$110	15.00	51.16	42.11	7.69	22.22	23.08	37.50	26.97	30.66
\$110 to less than \$180	32.50	34.88	21.05	30.77	33.33	38.46	33.33	31.46	32.12
\$180 or more	45.00	11.63	36.84	53.85	44.44	30.77	22.92	38.20	32.85
Refuse/can't say	7.50	2.33	0.00	7.69	0.00	7.69	6.25	3.37	4.38
Youth who live in share accommodation:	78	216	47	42	45	33	204	257	461
Amount of weekly rent for youth (and partner):									
Less than \$50	19.23	11.57	10.64	14.29	13.33	18.18	13.73	13.62	13.67
\$50 to less than \$80	19.23	37.50	36.17	30.95	22.22	36.36	35.29	29.57	32.10
\$80 to less than \$100	25.64	15.28	17.02	19.05	11.11	6.06	14.22	18.29	16.49
\$100 or more	33.33	33.80	34.04	33.33	51.11	39.39	34.31	36.96	35.79
Refuse/can't say	2.56	1.85	2.13	2.38	2.22	0.00	2.45	1.56	1.95

Table 16.1
Youths' Living Arrangements (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Youth who pay rent/board and do not live in share/group accommodation:	192	580	163	96	110	66	655	552	1,207
Amount of weekly rent/board for youth (and partner):									
Less than \$40	29.17	21.03	19.63	25.00	28.18	18.18	22.60	23.37	22.95
\$40 to less than \$70	52.60	47.76	51.53	58.33	48.18	40.91	49.92	49.09	49.54
\$70 or more	15.63	29.14	26.38	15.63	23.64	40.91	25.80	25.54	25.68
Refuse/can't say	2.60	2.07	2.45	1.04	0.00	0.00	1.68	1.99	1.82
Youth renting their own place:	14	80	12	4	15	7	36	96	132
Amount of weekly rent for youth (and partner):									
Less than \$110	35.71	28.75	41.67	0.00	13.33	71.43	38.89	27.08	30.30
\$110 to less than \$170	35.71	40.00	16.67	50.00	33.33	28.57	33.33	37.50	36.36
\$170 or more	28.57	30.00	41.67	50.00	53.33	0.00	25.00	35.42	32.58
Refuse/can't say	0.00	1.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.78	0.00	0.76
Youth who live independently	136	370	86	58	78	56	297	487	784
Youth who live independently and pay for rent/board:	125	347	79	54	75	55	280	455	735
Per cent of youth who live independently	91.91	93.78	91.86	93.10	96.15	98.21	94.28	93.43	93.75
Weekly rent/board/mortgage payments:									
Less than \$40	7.20	6.92	3.80	1.85	5.33	9.09	7.50	5.49	6.26
\$40 to less than \$50	2.40	2.02	5.06	0.00	1.33	0.00	1.79	2.20	2.04
\$50 to less than \$70	9.60	18.73	16.46	12.96	10.67	14.55	20.71	12.09	15.37
\$70 to less than \$100	22.40	22.77	29.11	27.78	16.00	18.18	22.50	22.86	22.72
\$100 to less than \$140	20.80	24.78	21.52	24.07	30.67	29.09	25.36	24.18	24.63
\$140 or more	35.20	22.77	24.05	29.63	34.67	27.27	19.29	31.87	27.07
Refuse/can't say	2.40	2.02	0.00	3.70	1.33	1.82	2.86	1.32	1.90
Youth who do not live independently	891	1,102	440	362	325	175	1,627	1,668	3,295

Table 16.1
Youths' Living Arrangements (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Youth who do not live independently and pay rent /board:	201	575	163	101	105	65	664	546	1,210
Per cent of youth who do not live independently	22.56	52.18	37.05	27.90	32.31	37.14	40.81	32.73	36.72
Weekly rent/board/mortgage payments:									
Less than \$40	30.35	22.43	19.63	28.71	30.48	21.54	23.80	25.46	24.55
\$40 to less than \$50	7.46	5.22	5.52	11.88	10.48	3.08	6.78	6.23	6.53
\$50 to less than \$70	44.28	42.78	45.40	44.55	40.00	40.00	43.22	43.04	43.14
\$70 to less than \$100	3.48	12.52	8.59	5.94	8.57	16.92	9.94	9.71	9.83
\$100 to less than \$140	6.47	12.00	11.66	5.94	9.52	15.38	11.60	9.16	10.50
\$140 or more	4.48	2.96	6.13	1.98	0.95	3.08	2.86	4.03	3.39
Refuse/can't say	3.48	2.09	3.07	0.99	0.00	0.00	1.81	2.38	2.07

**Table 16.2
Youths' Income**

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Respondents	1,027	1,472	526	420	403	231	1,924	2,155	4,079
Did youth (and/or partner) receive income from wages?									
yes	81.50	68.07	74.14	80.48	77.17	75.32	76.30	73.50	74.82
no	17.72	30.71	24.90	19.05	21.84	24.68	23.08	25.34	24.27
Youth who received income from wages:									
	837	1,002	390	338	311	174	1,468	1,584	3,052
Amount of income from wages:									
Under \$5,000	35.60	35.73	36.15	33.43	32.48	33.33	31.68	38.13	35.03
\$5,000 to \$9,999	29.27	22.36	24.36	28.70	26.69	27.59	25.34	26.52	25.95
\$10,000 to \$14,999	15.41	16.27	14.10	15.68	16.40	13.22	15.46	15.59	15.53
\$15,000 or more	17.20	18.86	20.00	18.93	18.97	21.84	23.37	14.46	18.74
Refuse/can't say	2.51	6.79	5.38	3.25	5.47	4.02	4.16	5.30	4.75
Did youth (and/or partner) receive income from own business?									
yes	2.92	2.51	1.71	2.38	3.23	1.30	2.91	2.13	2.50
no	96.98	97.08	97.72	97.62	96.77	98.70	96.99	97.49	97.25
Youth who received income from own business:									
	30	37	9	10	13	3	56	46	102
Amount of income from own business:									
Under \$1,200	46.67	24.32	22.22	30.00	38.46	0.00	25.00	41.30	32.35
\$1,200 to \$4,999	23.33	35.14	33.33	40.00	23.08	100.0	28.57	36.96	32.35
\$5,000 or more	20.00	35.14	33.33	30.00	30.77	0.00	39.29	15.22	28.43
Refuse/can't say	10.00	5.41	11.11	0.00	7.69	0.00	7.14	6.52	6.86
Did youth (and/or partner) receive income from workers' compensation?									
yes	1.27	1.97	1.71	1.67	1.99	1.73	2.23	1.25	1.72
no	98.44	97.42	97.53	98.33	97.77	97.40	97.45	98.14	97.82
Youth who received income from workers' compensation:									
	13	29	9	7	8	4	43	27	70
Amount of income from workers' compensation:									
Under \$400	69.23	48.28	22.22	57.14	25.00	100.0	51.16	48.15	50.00
\$400 or more	15.38	41.38	66.67	42.86	50.00	0.00	39.53	37.04	38.57
Incomparable	15.38	10.34	0.00	0.00	12.50	0.00	6.98	11.11	8.57
Refuse/can't say	0.00	0.00	11.11	0.00	12.50	0.00	2.33	3.70	2.86

Table 16.2
Youths' Income (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Respondents	1,027	1,472	526	420	403	231	1,924	2,155	4,079
Did youth (and/or partner) receive income from interest/dividends?									
yes	9.15	2.11	3.61	5.00	4.47	6.06	5.87	3.90	4.83
no	90.36	97.69	95.82	94.52	95.04	93.51	93.92	95.55	94.78
Youth who received income from interest/dividends:									
	94	31	19	21	18	14	113	84	197
Amount of income from interest/dividends:									
Under \$100	25.53	12.90	15.79	28.57	44.44	35.71	25.66	25.00	25.38
\$100 to \$499	41.49	58.06	68.42	47.62	44.44	50.00	47.79	48.81	48.22
\$500 or more	26.60	22.58	10.53	19.05	11.11	7.14	21.24	20.24	20.81
Refuse/can't say	6.38	6.45	5.26	4.76	0.00	7.14	5.31	5.95	5.58
Did youth (and/or partner) receive income from rental property?									
yes	0.29	0.00	0.19	0.00	0.00	0.43	0.05	0.19	0.12
no	99.61	99.80	99.62	100.0	99.75	99.57	99.84	99.63	99.73
Did anyone (incl. parents) provide any assistance?									
Real estate purchase	0.97	1.15	0.57	0.95	0.25	0.87	0.94	0.88	0.91
Purchase car or similar	34.27	19.77	26.05	31.43	28.04	25.54	27.13	26.08	26.58
Paying accommodation while studying	11.59	5.43	7.41	8.33	6.45	10.39	6.34	9.33	7.92
Paying HECS/tuition fees	35.74	18.75	26.62	30.24	24.81	21.65	21.99	29.56	25.99
Paying bills (telephone, electricity, credit card etc)	36.71	23.71	27.00	27.86	29.03	31.17	26.92	30.44	28.78
Paying fines	9.06	7.88	8.75	6.43	8.19	10.82	10.19	6.68	8.34
General living allowance	37.10	24.05	30.42	31.19	24.81	29.00	28.33	30.07	29.25
Paying off debt (other than credit card)	3.99	3.67	4.37	5.00	5.46	6.49	4.42	4.22	4.31
Living in investment property for low rent	4.38	5.37	3.61	2.62	3.72	3.90	4.52	4.22	4.36
Other	0.78	0.54	0.00	0.95	0.50	1.30	0.47	0.74	0.61
No financial assistance	20.35	43.21	31.75	26.67	33.00	29.44	34.10	31.04	32.48
Youth who received assistance									
	818	836	359	308	270	163	1,268	1,486	2,754
Total amount of assistance:									
Under \$500	12.59	21.89	16.16	14.94	20.74	20.25	16.96	17.77	17.39
\$500 to \$1,999	29.71	35.77	30.64	35.06	28.15	30.67	31.86	32.44	32.17
\$2,000 to \$4,999	23.23	18.90	24.23	21.75	25.19	20.25	23.66	20.39	21.90
\$5,000 or more	30.68	15.43	21.45	21.75	18.15	21.47	21.14	22.88	22.08
Refuse/can't say	3.79	8.01	7.52	6.49	7.78	7.36	6.39	6.53	6.46

Table 16.2
Youths' Income (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Is youth expected to pay back any of this money?									
yes	34.56	31.21	32.23	31.60	35.34	36.42	37.24	29.59	33.11
no	64.29	67.62	66.57	67.36	63.05	63.58	61.42	69.47	65.76
Youth who are expected to pay back the money:									
	272	240	107	91	88	55	442	411	853
How much is youth expected to pay back?									
a small portion	18.01	14.58	17.76	15.38	12.50	10.91	14.25	17.27	15.71
about half the amount	15.44	11.67	17.76	14.29	17.05	18.18	11.76	18.25	14.89
most of the amount	12.87	11.25	12.15	19.78	12.50	10.91	12.22	13.63	12.90
the full amount	51.10	57.92	48.60	46.15	52.27	56.36	58.14	46.72	52.64
the full amount plus interest	1.47	2.92	1.87	3.30	4.55	3.64	2.71	2.43	2.58
Receive income from any other source?^a									
yes	12.27	14.88	12.17	11.67	12.16	9.52	13.25	12.71	12.97
no	87.63	84.99	87.64	88.33	87.59	90.48	86.64	87.15	86.91
Youth who received income from other sources:									
	126	219	64	49	50	22	256	274	530
Amount of income:									
Negative amount	1.59	3.65	0.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	3.13	1.46	2.26
Under \$500	33.33	16.89	18.75	24.49	38.00	13.64	23.83	23.36	23.58
\$500 to \$1,999	28.57	17.81	31.25	36.73	34.00	27.27	28.91	22.63	25.66
\$2,000 to \$9,999	30.95	47.49	35.94	30.61	18.00	22.73	33.98	39.42	36.79
\$10,000 or more	3.97	6.85	7.81	6.12	4.00	31.82	4.69	9.12	6.98
Refuse/can't say	1.59	7.31	6.25	2.04	2.00	4.55	5.47	4.01	4.72

^a Per cent of strata total

Section 17:
Youths' Health

Overview of Findings

There is a growing consensus that the roots of adult health lie in childhood. Children who experience poor health have significantly poorer health as adults even after the effects of family background are taken into account. Childhood health factors appear to operate mainly by limiting educational attainment and reducing initial adult health (see Case, et al., 2003). Moreover, as Currie and Stabile (2002) note “the relationship between socio-economic status and health is one of the most well documented and robust relationships in social sciences”. Children growing up in disadvantaged circumstances experience worse health outcomes which tend to become more pronounced as children age (see Case, et al 2002; Currie and Stabile 2002). A recent review of the Australian literature finds clear evidence that socio-economic status underpins a large component of the inequality in health outcomes for Australian children and youth (Nicholson et al., 2004).

The *Youth in Focus* (YIF) survey collects detailed information on a range of health outcomes and health behaviours from focal youth and their parents. In this section, we consider the results of young people’s reports of their own health and health-related behaviours. Parents’ reports of the own health outcomes, their own health-related behaviours, and the health outcomes of their children while growing up are explicitly considered in Section 6.

Information about young people’s mental and physical health is reported in Table 17.1. Consistent with previous evidence, these results suggest that there is a relationship between economic status in childhood and health at age 18. Specifically, young people growing up in families with a history of intensive income-support receipt (Category B) are less likely than youth in income-support families (Category A) to report that there are in excellent or very good health – 61 versus 70 per cent respectively. Although the proportion of employed young people who report that their health limits the type or amount of work they can do is much the same across economic categories, young people who are not employed are much more likely to say that they would be limited in their employment if their family has a history of intensive income-support receipt (17 versus 10 per cent). Young people in income-support families are also much more likely to report that a health professional has told them that they have asthma, ADD/ADHD, or depression/anxiety. Finally, youth in income–support families are somewhat less likely to have a body mass index (BMI) between 18.5 and 24.99 indicating that they are at a normal weight.⁹ Taken together, these results suggest that physical health may be related to economic and social disadvantage while growing up.

There is also some evidence that mental health may be worse amongst young people in income-support families. While 18 per cent of youth in Category B report having had problems with work or regular activities in the past four weeks because of emotional problems, this is true of only 13 per cent of young people in Category A. Similarly, those in income-support families are much more likely to report that they feel down “all the time”. Still, young people growing up in families with a history of intensive income-support receipt are somewhat more likely to report “feel calm and peaceful” and to say that they “have a lot of energy”. Given these differences, more research will be necessary to assess the extent to which mental health outcomes for young people are related to the economic circumstances of their families.

⁹ BMI is calculated as weight in kilos divided by height in meters squared. See Section 6 for the full classification of BMI into underweight, normal weight, over weight, and obesity.

Health-related behaviours including tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana use also seem to be related to economic and social disadvantage. Youth in income-support families are more than twice as likely as young people in families with no history of income-support receipt to report that they smoke regularly for example (see Tables 17.1 and 17.2). This is consistent with a history of more intensive smoking behaviour. Specifically, while fully three-quarters of young people in families with no history of income-support receipt report that they have never smoked, less than two-thirds (62 per cent) of youth in income-support families say the same. Almost one in five (19 per cent), on the other hand, report that they smoke at least daily. Finally, the cigarette consumption of current smokers is also strongly related to the economic circumstances of a young person's family. Young smokers in income-support families are less than half as likely (14 versus 34 per cent) to say they smoke six or less cigarettes per week and about twice as likely (31 versus 16 per cent) to report smoking in excess of 70 cigarettes each week.

Interestingly, alcohol consumption appears to be somewhat more frequent amongst young people growing up in non-income-support families. Specifically, 7 per cent of young people in Category A report never having drunk alcohol in comparison to 11 per cent of youth in Category B. Moreover, young people in non-income-support families are somewhat more likely to report drinking alcohol on a weekly basis and somewhat less likely to report that they rarely drink. Drinking intensity, on the other hand, appears to have little relationship with a young person's economic circumstances. The proportion of young people saying that when they drink they normally consume 1 – 2 standard drinks is much the same (20 versus 21 per cent) irrespective of whether the youth's family has a history of income support or not. At the other extreme, the proportion reporting that they usually consume more than nine standard drinks on a typical drinking day is virtually identical. These patterns stand in stark contrast to the alcohol consumption of parents which is much more closely linked to economic and social disadvantage.

Finally, Table 17.2 presents information on the marijuana consumption of young Australians. Fully 42 per cent of young people in families heavily dependent on income support and approximately one-third of youth in non-income-support families report having ever tried marijuana. Young people growing up in economic and social disadvantage are more likely to have first tried marijuana at an early age and to use marijuana intensively. In particular, nearly a quarter of those youth in income-support families who ever tried marijuana did so for the first time at age 13 or younger. Similarly, amongst current users in Category B, almost a quarter (22 per cent) report using the drug once a week or more. Young people growing up in families with no interaction with the income-support system are much more likely to have first tried marijuana in their late teens and to use the drug less than twice a year.

Taken together, these results point to some important differences in the physical health and health-related behaviours of young people growing up in different economic circumstances. Given the differences in educational outcomes, life events, etc. described in other sections of this report it is important for future research to consider the extent to which health is the channel through which economic and social disadvantage in childhood translates into more limited opportunities in adulthood.

Table 17.1
Youths' Physical and Mental Health

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Respondents	1,027	1,472	526	420	403	231	1,924	2,155	4,079
General health:^a									
excellent	29.41	24.05	25.67	25.48	26.05	24.68	30.61	21.86	25.99
very good	40.21	37.09	38.97	43.10	39.21	31.60	38.51	38.75	38.64
good	24.63	27.85	28.14	24.29	25.06	33.33	23.44	29.70	26.75
fair	4.38	8.97	6.65	5.24	7.94	7.79	6.19	7.66	6.96
poor	1.36	1.83	0.57	1.90	1.74	2.60	1.20	1.95	1.59
During the past 4 weeks, did youth accomplish less than they would have liked due to emotional problems?^a									
Yes	18.11	25.41	20.91	18.81	23.57	29.00	18.56	25.71	22.33
No	81.69	74.05	78.71	80.24	76.18	70.13	81.03	73.78	77.20
Can't say	0.19	0.54	0.38	0.95	0.25	0.87	0.42	0.51	0.47
During the past 4 weeks, did youth have problems with work or other regular activities due to emotional problems?^a									
Yes	13.15	17.93	16.54	14.05	14.64	19.05	13.88	17.68	15.89
No	86.66	81.39	82.89	85.24	85.36	80.09	85.65	81.81	83.62
During the past 4 weeks, how much time did youth feel calm and peaceful?^a									
All the time	7.40	9.44	11.98	8.57	11.41	11.69	12.58	6.73	9.49
Most of the time	44.50	42.19	40.49	46.19	42.93	43.72	47.56	39.16	43.12
A good bit of the time	24.15	17.73	20.72	18.57	20.10	17.32	18.61	21.30	20.03
Some of the time	16.36	18.89	18.82	20.00	13.15	16.88	13.31	21.58	17.68
A little of the time	6.43	9.31	7.22	5.00	10.92	9.52	6.60	9.33	8.04
None of the time	1.17	2.31	0.57	1.67	1.24	0.87	1.30	1.76	1.54
How much time during the past 4 weeks did youth have a lot of energy?^a									
All the time	10.42	13.59	13.50	9.29	13.90	11.69	15.70	9.19	12.26
Most of the time	43.23	37.57	40.11	41.43	40.45	39.83	42.72	37.82	40.13
A good bit of the time	18.40	14.06	15.97	20.00	17.37	17.75	16.48	16.61	16.55
Some of the time	18.40	20.18	19.58	19.05	18.11	16.02	16.32	21.58	19.10
A little of the time	7.79	11.28	9.51	8.57	6.70	12.12	6.91	11.79	9.49
None of the time	1.46	3.06	1.14	1.67	3.47	2.60	1.61	2.88	2.28

^a Per cent of strata total.

Table 17.1
Youths' Physical and Mental Health (continued)

	Economic Categories						Male	Female	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Respondents	1,027	1,472	526	420	403	231	1,924	2,155	4,079
How much time during the past 4 weeks did youth feel down?^a									
All the time	0.39	2.11	0.57	0.48	1.74	1.73	0.62	1.81	1.25
Most of the time	3.80	7.27	6.08	4.52	4.47	7.79	3.79	7.42	5.71
A good bit of the time	4.77	6.45	3.61	5.24	6.70	4.76	3.90	6.87	5.47
Some of the time	18.79	19.63	21.67	22.38	19.60	19.91	15.90	23.62	19.98
A little of the time	43.43	37.84	39.54	42.62	40.20	36.36	40.23	40.00	40.11
None of the time	28.72	26.63	28.33	24.76	27.05	29.44	35.45	20.19	27.38
Total employed:	829	942	373	344	314	154	1,429	1,527	2,956
Is youth limited in the type/amount of work they do due to health?^b									
Yes	4.34	4.56	4.83	3.78	6.69	6.49	3.85	5.63	4.77
No	95.54	95.22	94.91	96.22	92.99	93.51	95.94	94.24	95.06
Total not employed:	198	530	153	76	89	77	495	628	1,123
If youth worked, would they be limited in the type/amount of work due to health?^c									
Yes	9.60	16.60	15.69	14.47	14.61	18.18	12.73	16.88	15.05
No	89.90	81.70	82.35	82.89	84.27	79.22	86.26	81.05	83.35
Was youth ever told by a health professional that they have asthma?^a									
Yes	25.02	30.71	24.71	27.14	28.04	27.27	28.27	27.15	27.68
No	74.68	69.16	75.10	72.62	71.96	72.73	71.73	72.53	72.15
Was youth ever told by a health professional that they have ADD/ADHD?^a									
Yes	2.24	5.03	2.85	4.29	5.21	3.46	6.44	1.62	3.90
No	97.66	94.70	96.77	95.48	94.54	96.10	93.35	98.10	95.86
Was youth ever told by a health professional that they suffer from depression/anxiety?^a									
Yes	10.81	16.24	10.46	10.24	13.90	17.32	7.85	18.24	13.34
No	89.19	83.56	89.35	89.76	86.10	82.68	92.10	81.62	86.57
Does youth smoke regularly?^a									
Yes	11.68	27.31	17.49	16.19	22.08	22.08	20.06	20.23	20.15
No	88.32	72.69	82.51	83.81	77.92	77.92	79.94	79.77	79.85

^a Per cent of strata total.

^b Per cent of total employed.

^c Per cent of total unemployed.

Table 17.1
Youths' Physical and Mental Health (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Female	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total who report both weight and height:	992	1,350	497	400	382	218	1,855	1,984	3,839
Body Mass Index^d									
1. Underweight	8.37	8.67	7.85	7.25	9.69	6.42	4.91	11.49	8.31
2. Normal weight	70.16	64.59	65.59	69.00	63.35	69.72	65.93	67.59	66.79
3. Overweight	16.63	19.48	18.51	17.25	19.37	18.35	21.35	15.47	18.31
4. Obese (class 1)	3.63	5.33	5.43	4.75	4.97	5.05	5.77	3.88	4.79
5. Obese (class 2)	0.91	1.26	1.41	1.25	1.31	0.00	1.24	1.01	1.12
6. Morbidly obese	0.30	0.67	1.21	0.50	1.31	0.46	0.81	0.55	0.68

^a Per cent of strata total.

^b Per cent of total employed.

^c Per cent of total unemployed.

^d Per cent reporting both weight and height.

Table 17.2
Youths' Health Behaviours

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Respondents	1,027	1,472	526	420	403	231	1,924	2,155	4,079
Does youth smoke any cigarettes/tobacco products?^a									
no, I have never smoked	75.30	61.51	67.81	72.67	67.38	62.34	70.41	66.09	67.99
no, I no longer smoke	9.67	11.11	9.76	9.01	9.93	14.29	9.33	11.16	10.36
yes, I smoke daily	6.80	19.35	12.93	11.49	15.96	14.29	12.61	14.33	13.58
yes, I smoke at least weekly (but not daily)	3.22	3.97	3.43	3.11	4.26	5.19	3.29	4.00	3.69
yes, I smoke less often than weekly	5.01	3.77	5.54	3.73	2.48	3.90	4.20	4.24	4.22
Total respondents	838	1,008	379	322	282	154	1,308	1,675	2,983
Number of cigarettes (or equivalent) smoked weekly^b									
6 or less	34.13	14.49	25.88	23.73	14.06	25.00	23.02	19.95	21.21
More than 6 to 30	32.54	26.09	27.06	23.73	32.81	30.56	24.91	30.45	28.17
More than 30 to 70	16.67	25.00	22.35	18.64	17.19	11.11	18.87	22.31	20.90
More than 70	15.87	31.16	20.00	32.20	34.38	33.33	31.32	24.41	27.24
No answer	0.79	3.26	4.71	1.69	1.56	0.00	1.89	2.89	2.48
Does youth smoke more than they want to?^b									
Yes	56.03	57.93	48.84	58.73	55.38	58.97	50.86	60.31	56.29
No	43.97	42.07	51.16	41.27	44.62	41.03	49.14	39.69	43.71
Does youth drink alcohol?^a									
Number of observations	837	1,008	379	322	282	154	1,307	1,675	2,982
never drunk alcohol	6.69	11.31	10.82	4.66	4.96	7.14	7.73	8.96	8.42
no longer drink alcohol	2.51	2.48	4.75	4.97	3.55	4.55	3.14	3.34	3.25
drink alcohol every day	0.60	0.69	0.53	0.31	1.06	0.65	0.99	0.36	0.64
drink alcohol 5-6 days per week	2.03	1.09	1.58	1.55	0.35	3.25	2.22	0.96	1.51
drink alcohol 3-4 days per week	5.73	6.55	6.86	8.39	7.80	5.19	9.64	4.24	6.61
drink alcohol 1-2 days a week	35.84	26.98	26.12	32.30	30.85	35.06	32.98	28.96	30.72
drink alcohol 2-3 days per month	20.67	18.95	19.79	22.05	17.73	18.18	18.97	20.30	19.72
only rarely	25.93	31.94	29.55	25.78	33.69	25.97	24.33	32.90	29.14
Total respondents	837	1,008	379	322	282	154	1,307	1,675	2,982

^a Per cent of respondents to this question

^b Per cent of current smokers responding to this question

^c Per cent of current drinkers responding to this question

^d Multiple responses allowed

^e Per cent of marijuana users responding to this question

Table 17.2
Youths' Health Behaviours (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Respondents	1,027	1,472	526	420	403	231	1,924	2,155	4,079
On a day youth drink alcohol, how many standard drinks does youth usually have?^c									
13+ standard drinks	6.84	8.40	5.97	5.86	6.59	6.67	12.65	2.72	7.11
11-12 standard drinks	3.82	5.64	5.97	2.76	5.43	8.15	7.40	3.00	4.94
9-10 standard drink	11.84	9.32	12.89	9.31	11.24	7.41	13.08	8.58	10.57
7-8 standard drinks	13.16	15.30	11.64	14.83	11.24	16.30	15.58	12.47	13.84
5-6 standard drinks	20.92	20.02	20.13	21.72	22.48	22.96	18.42	22.82	20.87
3-4 standard drinks	22.37	21.52	23.58	25.17	24.81	18.52	16.78	27.18	22.59
1-2 standard drinks	21.05	19.79	19.81	20.34	18.22	20.00	16.09	23.23	20.08
Total Respondents	760	869	318	290	258	135	1,162	1,468	2,630
Does youth drink more often than they want to?^c									
yes	7.23	8.03	5.31	8.65	6.98	10.37	7.64	7.48	7.55
no	92.77	91.97	94.69	91.35	93.02	89.63	92.36	92.52	92.45
Total Respondents	761	872	320	289	258	135	1,165	1,470	2,635
Places where youth usually drinks:^d									
Youth's home	56.84	61.54	52.50	54.48	57.36	62.50	60.00	56.33	57.95
Relative's home	21.97	23.88	21.25	19.31	18.99	23.53	21.97	22.04	22.01
Friend's home	65.13	64.52	66.56	65.17	64.73	61.76	67.21	63.06	64.90
Parties	72.11	67.74	72.19	71.38	69.38	67.65	72.36	68.30	70.09
Pub, bar, club etc.	86.58	79.10	85.94	86.21	87.98	86.03	83.18	84.83	84.10
Restaurant	34.74	31.34	30.94	34.48	30.62	37.50	30.39	34.83	32.87
Park or street	4.61	7.81	5.94	3.79	6.59	5.88	9.70	3.06	6.00
Total Respondents	760	871	320	290	258	136	1,165	1,470	2,635
Other places mentioned by respondents:^c									
In car/tram/train	0.13	0.34	0.31	0.69	0.39	0.74	0.69	0.07	0.34
Boyfriend's/girlfriend's/ partner's house	0.13	0.46	0.31	0.00	0.39	0.00	0.09	0.41	0.27
Weddings/birthdays/ special occasions	0.26	0.34	0.00	0.69	0.39	0.00	0.17	0.41	0.30
Holidays/ holiday house	0.00	0.11	0.00	0.00	0.39	0.00	0.00	0.14	0.08
Community events	0.00	0.11	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.04
Sport events/sport club	0.53	0.57	0.00	1.03	0.39	0.00	0.77	0.27	0.49
Beach/ river	0.26	0.69	0.94	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.69	0.20	0.42
Movies/ theatre/ concerts	0.00	0.57	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.34	0.07	0.19
Work	0.92	0.23	0.00	0.34	0.00	0.74	0.26	0.54	0.42
University	0.13	0.23	0.94	0.34	1.16	1.47	0.34	0.54	0.46
Camping	0.00	0.11	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.09	0.00	0.04

^a Per cent of respondents to this question.

^b Per cent of current smokers responding to this question.

^c Per cent of current drinkers responding to this question.

^d Per cent of current drinkers responding to this question, multiple responses allowed.

^e Per cent of marijuana users responding to this question.

Table 17.2
Youths' Health Behaviours (continued)

	Economic Categories						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Respondents	1,027	1,472	526	420	403	231	1,924	2,155	4,079
People youth usually drinks with:^c									
Parents	34.65	30.00	31.25	33.45	32.17	38.69	30.73	33.97	32.54
Partner	28.19	33.45	30.94	31.03	34.11	34.31	23.00	38.19	31.47
Friends	97.50	93.68	97.50	97.93	96.51	96.35	96.31	95.98	96.13
Workmates	29.51	28.74	29.06	36.90	34.11	25.55	35.19	26.34	30.26
Alone	5.27	12.76	5.63	6.90	10.47	8.03	12.19	5.79	8.62
Family/ relatives	2.64	3.10	1.88	3.10	1.16	4.38	2.58	2.79	2.70
Siblings	0.13	0.23	0.94	0.00	0.78	0.73	0.60	0.14	0.34
Other	1.05	2.76	1.56	3.79	1.16	4.38	2.23	2.11	2.16
Total Respondents	759	870	320	290	258	137	1,165	1,469	2,634
Did youth ever try marijuana?^a									
yes	31.66	42.35	34.13	34.78	41.13	41.18	37.44	37.20	37.31
no	68.34	57.65	65.87	65.22	58.87	58.82	62.56	62.80	62.69
Total Respondents	837	1,006	378	322	282	153	1,306	1,672	2,978
Age when first tried marijuana^e									
12 or younger	3.02	9.15	6.20	4.46	12.07	4.76	8.38	5.79	6.93
13	10.19	13.62	9.30	7.14	5.17	7.94	10.63	10.29	10.44
14	11.70	17.14	18.60	11.61	18.97	14.29	15.75	15.27	15.48
15	21.89	20.66	18.60	15.18	8.62	22.22	17.18	20.42	18.99
16	20.75	19.95	19.38	19.64	24.14	17.46	21.47	19.45	20.34
17	16.98	12.21	16.28	24.11	23.28	20.63	16.36	16.88	16.65
18(19)	14.72	6.34	11.63	16.96	7.76	12.70	9.61	11.25	10.53
Total Respondents	265	426	129	112	116	63	489	622	1,111
Did youth use marijuana in the past 12 months?^e									
yes	52.01	51.21	52.94	59.65	53.39	60.32	55.88	51.00	53.15
no	47.99	48.79	47.06	40.35	46.61	39.68	44.12	49.00	46.85
Total Respondents	273	453	136	114	118	63	510	647	1,157
How often does youth use marijuana?^e									
once a week or more	9.82	22.43	20.00	14.29	20.59	4.65	19.75	14.67	17.00
once a month	6.75	7.98	13.75	5.19	5.88	4.65	10.66	5.07	7.64
every 2-4 months	10.43	13.31	11.25	12.99	5.88	6.98	12.23	10.40	11.24
once or twice a year	26.38	19.39	17.50	23.38	27.94	37.21	22.26	24.00	23.20
less often or no more	46.63	36.88	37.50	44.16	39.71	46.51	35.11	45.87	40.92
Total Respondents	163	263	80	77	68	43	319	375	694

^a Per cent of respondents to this question.

^b Per cent of current smokers responding to this question.

^e Per cent of marijuana users responding to this question.

Section 18:

Youths' Attitudes and Locus of Control

Overview of Findings:

Even after controlling for a vast array of productivity-related skills – for example ability, education, training, experience, etc. – a large proportion of the variance in labour market outcomes often remains unexplained. Consequently, there is growing interest in understanding the extent to which non-cognitive skills, psychological factors, or attitudes towards work might affect the economic and social outcomes that individuals achieve. There is mounting evidence, for example, that individuals' who have "internal" outlooks (which are argued to reflect initiative) have more successful labour market experiences particularly early in their careers (Andrisani, 1977). Moreover, teenagers' human capital investment decisions are strongly related to their locus of control (Coleman and DeLeire, 2003), while wage rates have been shown to depend on a range of personal traits including locus of control, aggression, and withdrawal (Osborn Groves, 2005).

The *Youth in Focus* (YIF) survey collects information on two specific psycho-social factors – attitudes towards work-welfare and locus of control – thought to be related to a range of important economic and outcomes.¹⁰ These concepts were measured in a parallel for parents and youth. Results for parents are discussed in Section 9, while results for youth are discussed here.

Our results indicate that, like their parents, young people growing up in families with an intensive history of income-support receipt (category B) are more likely than young people in non-income-support families (category A) to believe that unemployment benefits are too low rather than too high (see Table 18.1). Moreover, while young people in income-support families are evenly split between those who feel it is the government's responsibility to look after the unemployed and those who think it is the responsibility of individuals themselves, young people in families with no interaction with the income-support system are somewhat more likely (56 vs. 41 per cent) to believe that unemployed individuals should be responsible for providing for themselves.

Views about what it takes to get ahead in life appear to be somewhat less closely related to an individual's income-support history than are views about the appropriate social policy for the unemployed. In particular, there is widespread support – irrespective of economic category – for the view that having a good education, ambition, and a job are necessary for getting ahead. More than 95 per cent of the young people in economic categories A and B view these as either extremely or fairly important to getting ahead in life. Still, while 56 per cent of youth in category B believe that it is extremely or fairly important to have well-educated parents, this is true of 63 per cent of youth in category A indicating that there may be some differences in the extent to which young people believe that family background is closely linked to future success.

Young people were also asked about their friends' and parents' views on the importance of working hard in school, university or TAFE (see Table 18.2). While just over half of young people report that they themselves see working hard at school as very important, they are much less likely (approximately 28 per cent) to report that their friends agree with them. At the same time, close to three-fourths of youth believe that their mothers and fathers view working hard in school as very important. Consistent with the results in Table 18.1, there

¹⁰ The specific questions in the Youth in Focus survey come from the Pearlin Mastery Scale. For more information, see Berry et. al., 2005.

are only relatively minor differences in views about the importance of hard work at school across economic categories.

Finally, differences across economic categories in youths' responses to the locus of control questions are reported in Table 18.3. These results indicate that youths believe that they have a great deal of control over life events irrespective of their families' income-support history. Only 25 per cent of youths in families with a history of intensive income-support receipt agree or strongly agree with the notion that there is really no way that they can solve some of the problems that they have. In contrast, fully 41 per cent of category B parents said the same. Interestingly, the disparity in the proportion of category A youths and parents – 20 vs. 27 per cent – who believe that they cannot solve some of their problems appears to be much smaller. Moreover, 87 per cent of youth in category A and 82 per cent of youth in category B disagree or strongly disagree with the view that they have little control over the things that happen to them. The gap amongst parents in categories A and B (87 vs. 72 per cent) was again considerably larger.

Thus, taken together, these results suggest the following. First, there is widespread agreement amongst young people that a good education, one's own ambition, and a job are important in getting ahead in life. Second, with the exception of opinions regarding the appropriate social policy for the unemployed, youths' attitudes towards work-welfare do not appear to depend substantially on their families' interaction with the income-support system. Third, the link between economic category and youths' locus of control is much weaker than that between parents' locus of control and their interaction with the income-support system. Finally, the vast majority of young people believe that they can do whatever they set their minds to and that what happens to them in the future depends mostly on themselves.

Table 18.1
Youth Perspectives on Unemployment Benefits and Getting Ahead in Life

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Respondents	1,027	1,472	526	420	403	231	1,924	2,155	4,079
Opinions on unemployment benefits:^a									
benefits for unemployed are too low and cause hardship	34.47	49.59	42.40	34.05	43.42	41.99	40.85	43.43	42.22
benefits for unemployed are too high and discourage job search	57.45	40.56	50.38	57.14	49.38	51.52	50.52	48.17	49.28
can't say	8.08	9.85	7.22	8.81	7.20	6.49	8.63	8.40	8.51
Who should be responsible to ensure that unemployed people have enough to live on?^a									
mainly the government	40.51	46.81	46.20	41.43	44.42	45.89	42.62	45.80	44.30
mainly a person themselves	55.99	46.88	49.05	53.81	49.63	50.65	52.23	49.23	50.65
can't say	3.51	6.32	4.75	4.76	5.96	3.46	5.15	4.97	5.05
To get ahead in life how important is it to have well-educated parents?^a									
Extremely important	14.51	17.80	20.34	16.43	16.13	16.02	18.09	15.82	16.89
Fairly important	48.10	38.38	36.50	45.71	44.67	43.72	43.61	41.07	42.27
Not too important	30.96	31.59	33.27	28.57	29.53	26.84	28.48	32.99	30.87
Does not matter at all	6.23	11.75	9.70	8.81	9.68	13.42	9.41	9.93	9.68
Can't say	0.19	0.48	0.19	0.48	0.00	0.00	0.42	0.19	0.29
To get ahead in life how important is it to have a good education?^a									
Extremely important	51.70	52.65	53.42	50.48	46.40	47.62	47.30	55.03	51.39
Fairly important	42.45	40.63	40.11	43.57	44.42	45.02	44.23	39.91	41.95
Not too important	4.87	5.16	5.70	5.24	6.20	6.49	6.70	4.13	5.34
Does not matter at all	0.88	1.09	0.57	0.48	2.23	0.87	1.40	0.65	1.01
Can't say	0.10	0.48	0.19	0.24	0.74	0.00	0.36	0.28	0.32
To get ahead in life how important is a person's own ambition?^a									
Extremely important	76.92	74.05	75.48	74.52	72.46	71.00	73.44	75.78	74.68
Fairly important	22.49	23.64	23.57	24.76	25.06	27.27	25.00	22.74	23.80
Not too important	0.49	1.22	0.57	0.48	1.99	0.43	0.78	1.02	0.91
Does not matter at all	0.10	0.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.16	0.14	0.15
Can't say	0.00	0.75	0.38	0.24	0.50	1.30	0.62	0.32	0.47
To get ahead in life how important is it to have a job?^a									
Extremely important	59.01	61.82	57.60	61.67	56.58	61.04	62.73	57.54	59.99
Fairly important	37.29	34.10	38.40	34.52	39.70	36.36	33.11	38.93	36.19
Not too important	3.21	3.46	3.23	3.81	3.23	2.60	3.69	3.02	3.33
Does not matter at all	0.49	0.27	0.38	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.36	0.28	0.32
Can't say	0.00	0.34	0.38	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.23	0.17

^a Per cent of strata total.

Table 18.2
Youth Perspectives on the Importance of Education

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
How important do youth's friends think it is to work hard at school/university/TAFE?^a									
Not important	2.15	3.79	1.32	2.18	3.90	2.63	3.91	1.92	2.79
A bit important	14.10	16.25	13.72	16.20	14.89	15.79	17.73	13.17	15.16
Fairly important	54.96	52.94	54.88	52.02	57.80	55.26	56.33	52.60	54.24
Very important	28.79	27.02	30.08	29.60	23.40	26.32	22.03	32.32	27.81
Total respondents	837	1,003	379	321	282	152	1,303	1,671	2,974
How important does youth think it is to work hard at school/university/TAFE?^a									
Not important	0.48	1.49	0.53	0.62	0.71	0.00	1.38	0.42	0.84
A bit important	3.58	5.68	6.33	5.59	6.03	7.24	7.13	3.83	5.28
Fairly important	41.58	39.14	41.95	42.24	41.84	38.82	45.55	37.02	40.76
Very important	54.36	53.69	51.19	51.55	51.42	53.95	45.94	58.73	53.13
Total respondents	837	1,004	379	322	282	152	1,304	1,672	2,976
How important does youth's mother think it is important to work hard at school/university/TAFE?^a									
No relationship with mother	0.24	1.50	0.80	0.62	0.00	0.00	0.46	0.96	0.74
Not important	0.24	1.20	0.27	0.00	0.36	0.00	0.31	0.72	0.54
A bit important	1.32	2.90	1.86	2.18	4.63	3.95	2.54	2.40	2.46
Fairly important	21.77	26.10	24.73	23.36	25.27	29.61	25.79	23.52	24.51
Very important	76.44	68.30	72.34	73.83	69.75	66.45	70.90	72.41	71.75
Total respondents	836	1,000	376	321	281	152	1,299	1,667	2,966
How important does youth's father think it is important to work hard at school/university/TAFE?^a									
No relationship with father	1.20	6.38	4.29	2.19	3.60	2.65	3.14	4.13	3.69
Not important	0.24	3.51	1.61	0.63	0.72	1.32	1.57	1.66	1.62
A bit important	2.87	5.31	3.75	3.13	6.47	4.64	4.40	4.13	4.25
Fairly important	23.11	24.44	22.79	21.63	25.18	31.13	25.14	23.03	23.96
Very important	72.57	60.36	67.56	72.41	64.03	60.26	65.75	67.06	66.48
Total respondents	835	941	373	319	278	151	1,273	1,624	2,897

^a Per cent of total respondents.

Table 18.3
Youths' Locus of Control

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
There is really no way I can solve some of the problems I have^a									
Strongly disagree	26.73	25.02	29.10	31.06	31.21	29.22	29.56	25.85	27.48
Disagree	53.58	50.35	54.76	53.42	50.00	52.60	52.68	51.89	52.23
Agree	17.18	20.24	13.23	14.91	15.96	14.29	14.78	19.09	17.20
Strongly agree	2.51	4.39	2.91	0.62	2.84	3.90	2.99	3.17	3.09
Total respondents	838	1,003	378	322	282	154	1,306	1,671	2,977
Sometimes I feel that I am being pushed around in life^a									
Strongly disagree	19.98	17.13	17.20	21.50	24.11	13.73	19.95	18.07	18.90
Disagree	43.18	39.64	42.86	39.25	36.17	47.71	43.05	39.56	41.09
Agree	33.49	37.45	36.24	35.83	36.17	32.68	33.69	37.16	35.64
Strongly agree	3.35	5.78	3.70	3.43	3.55	5.88	3.30	5.21	4.37
Total respondents	836	1,004	378	321	282	153	1,303	1,671	2,974
I have little control over the things that happen to me^a									
Strongly disagree	31.98	29.01	30.24	26.79	29.89	31.13	30.51	29.52	29.96
Disagree	54.65	53.04	53.85	59.50	54.09	52.32	54.04	54.61	54.36
Agree	11.46	15.55	14.06	13.08	14.59	14.57	14.22	13.47	13.80
Strongly agree	1.91	2.39	1.86	0.62	1.42	1.99	1.23	2.40	1.88
Total respondents	838	1,003	377	321	281	151	1,301	1,670	2,971
I can do just about anything I really set my mind to^a									
Strongly disagree	1.43	1.60	1.33	1.55	1.42	1.31	1.46	1.50	1.48
Disagree	7.41	10.31	8.51	6.21	5.69	7.84	8.38	8.15	8.25
Agree	56.87	52.95	51.60	58.07	56.58	56.86	54.38	55.46	54.99
Strongly agree	34.29	35.14	38.56	34.16	36.30	33.99	35.77	34.89	35.28
Total respondents	837	999	376	322	281	153	1,300	1,668	2,968
I often feel helpless dealing with the problems of life^a									
Strongly disagree	19.21	16.52	20.69	18.94	19.93	19.74	21.69	16.12	18.56
Disagree	51.67	48.85	49.60	54.97	45.91	48.03	53.00	47.81	50.08
Agree	24.46	29.13	24.40	22.05	29.89	27.63	21.85	30.02	26.44
Strongly agree	4.65	5.51	5.31	4.04	4.27	4.61	3.46	6.05	4.92
Total respondents	838	999	377	322	281	152	1,300	1,669	2,969
What happens to me in the future mostly depends on me^a									
Strongly disagree	1.79	1.00	0.53	1.24	2.48	0.65	1.38	1.26	1.31
Disagree	3.70	6.39	5.29	4.97	6.74	5.88	4.60	5.92	5.35
Agree	50.06	48.20	47.35	53.42	47.16	46.41	49.73	48.41	48.99
Strongly agree	44.44	44.41	46.83	40.37	43.62	47.06	44.28	44.40	44.35
Total respondents	837	1,002	378	322	282	153	1,303	1,671	2,974

^a Per cent of total respondents.

Table 18.3
Youths' Locus of Control (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
There is little I can do to change many of the important things in my life^a									
Strongly disagree	31.70	29.20	27.25	27.64	28.37	31.37	30.08	29.08	29.52
Disagree	55.62	52.60	57.41	54.35	55.67	53.59	53.80	55.22	54.59
Agree	10.89	15.80	13.76	15.84	13.48	11.11	14.43	13.13	13.70
Strongly agree	1.79	2.40	1.59	2.17	2.48	3.92	1.69	2.58	2.19
Total respondents	836	1,000	378	322	282	153	1,303	1,668	2,971

^a Per cent of total respondents.

Section 19:
Youth's Life Style and Health

Overview of Findings

This section of the report assesses the data gathered from young people about their health and life style choices. Specifically, young people answering the self-completion questionnaire (SCQ) of the *Youth in Focus* (YIF) survey were asked which recreational activities they participate in, their exercise behaviour and their access to transportation.

These are important issues for a number of reasons. First, many Australian youth experience social and economic circumstances that place them at greater risk of poor health. For example, information from parents about their children's activities (see Section 5) suggests that participation in sporting activities in childhood is strongly related to income-support histories. Children growing up in disadvantaged families are much less likely to participate in many organised sports. Little is known about how the exercise behaviours established in childhood influence exercise behaviour in adulthood. Health experts agree, however, that exercise is a fundamental aspect of developing a healthy lifestyle and combating the rise in obesity. Second, information about youths' recreational activities and access to transportation are important for understanding youths' social capital and the extent to which they are engaged in (rather than isolated from) their local communities.¹¹ Finally, limited access to transportation may constrain young people's opportunities to find employment or continue their education.

Information about a broad range of possible leisure and recreational activities is presented in Table 19.1. Not surprisingly, these results indicate that there are large gender differences in the types of activities that young people engage in. For example, while 56 per cent of 18-year-old women report that they often go shopping, only 14 per cent of 18-year-old men say the same. In contrast, 36 per cent of young men report often watching sport on TV in contrast to 14 per cent of young women who often spend their time watching sporting events on TV. Though these gender differences may not be particularly surprising, they do point to potential differences in the healthy life-style choices and social capital of young men and women who are transitioning out of school and into the work place or higher education.

There also appear to be some differences in leisure activities across economic categories. Youth growing up in families with a history of intensive income-support receipt (Category B) appear to be less likely than youth in non-income-support families (Category A) to participate in sports like surfing, sailing, skiing, snowboarding, tennis, golf, netball, etc. These differences in activities at age 18 are broadly consistent with parental reports of the activities that children participated in during school. Moreover, youth in Category B are much less likely to say that they often go to pubs or clubs. Future research assessing the extent to which a lack of income limits the recreational activities of children and youth would be useful. Other activities – for example, going to the beach, bushwalking, playing board games, etc – do not appear to differ much across economic categories. Interestingly, there are only two activities (hobbies and playing games) that young people in income-support families are relatively more likely to engage in. This suggests that – consistent with their parents' reports (see Section 5) – economic disadvantage may be associated with youths' lower engagement in recreational and leisure activities.

Interestingly, youths' exercise behaviour does not appear to be closely linked to the income-support histories of their families. Young people growing up in families with a history of intensive interaction with the income-support system (Category B) are only

¹¹ Information in this section of the report is drawn exclusively from the self-completion questionnaire. Sample size will vary slightly depending on the item response rate for each question.

slightly more likely (5 versus 4 per cent) to respond that they never exercise and are only slightly less likely (14 versus 16 per cent) to say that they exercise every day. This is particularly interesting because there are large disparities in the proportion of young people who are active members of a sporting, hobby, or community-based club or organization. Specifically, while half (50 per cent) of youth in non-income-support families are club members, this is true of less than one third (31 per cent) of young people growing up in income-support families.

Finally, young people in income-support families are much less likely than other youth (43 versus 56 per cent) to have access to their own car or to a car belonging to a family member (21 versus 28 per cent). Moreover, more than one quarter (26 per cent) of 18-year-olds in income-support families do not have their driver's licenses. Future research should assess the extent to which limited access to transportation might also constrain young people's educational, employment, and recreational activities.

Table 19.1
Youths' Leisure and Recreation Activities

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Respondents	840	1,009	379	322	282	154	1,309	1,677	2,986
Watching TV/videos^a									
Never	1.31	1.39	0.79	1.24	1.06	0.65	1.53	0.95	1.21
Sometimes	32.02	35.88	36.68	36.65	34.40	36.36	36.52	33.57	34.86
Often	66.55	62.24	62.01	61.80	64.54	62.99	61.73	65.12	63.63
No answer	0.12	0.50	0.53	0.31	0.00	0.00	0.23	0.36	0.30
Going to the movies^a									
Never	15.71	20.42	15.04	16.77	15.96	22.08	18.03	17.41	17.68
Sometimes	74.88	69.97	73.35	70.81	74.11	68.18	73.03	71.50	72.17
Often	9.17	9.02	10.82	12.11	9.93	8.44	8.56	10.55	9.68
No answer	0.24	0.59	0.79	0.31	0.00	1.30	0.38	0.54	0.47
Going to concerts^a									
Never	50.95	61.45	58.31	53.11	56.38	51.30	56.53	55.93	56.20
Sometimes	41.07	31.91	34.30	38.51	36.52	40.91	36.21	36.55	36.40
Often	7.62	5.25	6.86	8.07	7.09	6.49	6.49	6.80	6.66
No answer	0.36	1.39	0.53	0.31	0.00	1.30	0.76	0.72	0.74
Going to pub or club^a									
Never	13.21	21.41	15.83	12.73	14.54	14.94	15.20	17.47	16.48
Sometimes	40.60	45.59	45.65	47.52	40.07	45.45	45.38	42.70	43.87
Often	46.07	32.31	37.99	39.44	45.04	38.31	38.96	39.36	39.18
No answer	0.12	0.69	0.53	0.31	0.35	1.30	0.46	0.48	0.47
Reading a book^a									
Never	26.94	29.04	27.18	25.78	33.69	29.22	37.46	21.17	28.31
Sometimes	45.29	46.98	50.66	49.69	41.84	48.70	45.87	47.64	46.87
Often	27.53	23.19	21.64	23.91	24.47	20.78	16.21	30.59	24.29
No answer	0.24	0.79	0.53	0.62	0.00	1.30	0.46	0.60	0.54
Reading newspapers/magazines^a									
Never	6.19	5.85	5.56	5.28	9.22	6.49	8.86	4.12	6.20
Sometimes	49.29	55.00	56.88	50.62	48.58	55.84	56.15	49.82	52.60
Often	44.40	38.45	37.04	43.79	42.20	36.36	34.61	45.58	40.77
No answer	0.12	0.69	0.53	0.31	0.00	1.30	0.38	0.48	0.44
Visiting friends/having friends visit^a									
Never	1.31	2.68	1.58	2.48	0.35	0.65	1.60	1.97	1.81
Sometimes	29.17	33.60	28.76	27.95	34.04	27.27	29.49	31.90	30.84
Often	69.40	63.03	69.13	69.25	65.60	72.08	68.53	65.77	66.98
No answer	0.12	0.69	0.53	0.31	0.00	0.00	0.38	0.36	0.37

^a Per cent of total respondents.

Table 19.1
Youths' Leisure and Recreation Activities (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Respondents	840	1,009	379	322	282	154	1,309	1,677	2,986
Visiting family/having family visit^a									
Never	5.36	7.43	7.39	6.83	9.22	7.14	7.87	6.20	6.93
Sometimes	53.21	52.33	54.88	54.66	53.55	53.25	60.05	48.06	53.32
Often	41.43	39.15	37.47	38.20	37.23	38.31	31.40	45.38	39.25
No answer	0.00	1.09	0.26	0.31	0.00	1.30	0.69	0.36	0.50
Car driving/riding for pleasure^a									
Never	19.17	23.98	22.16	21.74	21.28	20.13	18.72	24.03	21.70
Sometimes	39.52	40.63	38.52	36.65	36.17	40.91	40.11	38.52	39.22
Often	41.31	34.19	39.05	41.30	42.55	38.96	40.79	36.91	38.61
No answer	0.00	1.19	0.26	0.31	0.00	0.00	0.38	0.54	0.47
Going for a walk^a									
Never	13.23	11.99	9.23	13.66	12.77	14.94	18.88	7.33	12.40
Sometimes	59.24	57.88	63.59	57.14	62.06	58.44	61.31	57.78	59.33
Often	27.41	29.63	26.39	28.88	25.18	25.32	19.27	34.59	27.87
No answer	0.12	0.50	0.79	0.31	0.00	1.30	0.54	0.30	0.40
Going to the gym^a									
Never	55.71	64.42	59.89	60.56	58.87	59.74	55.61	63.80	60.21
Sometimes	26.31	22.20	23.48	25.16	29.43	26.62	25.82	23.91	24.75
Often	17.98	12.69	16.36	13.98	11.70	12.34	18.18	11.93	14.67
No answer	0.00	0.69	0.26	0.31	0.00	1.30	0.38	0.36	0.37
Jogging/power walking^a									
Never	41.43	51.04	43.39	45.03	48.58	45.45	50.04	43.20	46.20
Sometimes	41.55	36.57	43.39	39.13	37.94	38.31	37.97	40.39	39.33
Often	17.02	11.60	12.43	15.53	13.48	14.94	11.46	15.99	14.00
No answer	0.00	0.79	0.79	0.31	0.00	1.30	0.53	0.42	0.47
Aerobics or swimming^a									
Never	53.33	56.99	55.67	56.21	59.93	55.84	58.82	53.67	55.93
Sometimes	38.93	36.67	36.94	37.27	33.33	34.42	35.06	38.46	36.97
Often	7.74	5.45	7.12	6.21	6.74	8.44	5.50	7.57	6.66
No answer	0.00	0.89	0.26	0.31	0.00	1.30	0.61	0.30	0.44
Skateboarding, rollerskating etc.^a									
Never	84.64	81.37	85.49	84.47	79.79	81.17	76.93	87.72	82.99
Sometimes	12.14	15.06	12.66	13.04	17.73	14.94	18.26	10.61	13.97
Often	3.10	2.78	1.32	2.17	2.13	2.60	4.20	1.25	2.55
No answer	0.12	0.79	0.53	0.31	0.35	1.30	0.61	0.42	0.50

^a Per cent of total respondents.

Table 19.1
Youths' Leisure and Recreation Activities (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Respondents	840	1,009	379	322	282	154	1,309	1,677	2,986
Bicycling^a									
Never	60.24	62.74	64.91	62.42	62.77	66.23	50.95	71.44	62.46
Sometimes	32.02	29.04	29.55	31.37	31.21	25.32	38.27	23.91	30.21
Often	7.62	7.53	5.01	5.59	6.03	7.14	10.24	4.23	6.87
No answer	0.12	0.69	0.53	0.62	0.00	1.30	0.53	0.42	0.47
Surfing, sailing, other water sports^a									
Never	66.03	72.45	72.82	72.05	70.57	63.64	62.46	75.91	70.02
Sometimes	25.74	20.32	20.58	20.81	21.28	24.68	26.53	18.90	22.24
Often	7.99	6.05	6.07	6.83	7.80	10.39	10.40	4.47	7.07
No answer	0.24	1.19	0.53	0.31	0.35	1.30	0.61	0.72	0.67
Snow skiing/ snowboarding^a									
Never	89.17	94.05	89.45	90.06	89.36	87.66	88.53	92.73	90.89
Sometimes	9.05	4.37	8.97	8.70	8.87	10.39	9.10	6.20	7.47
Often	1.55	0.69	1.32	0.93	1.42	0.65	1.83	0.54	1.11
No answer	0.24	0.89	0.26	0.31	0.35	1.30	0.54	0.54	0.54
Playing sport (tennis, golf, football, netball, squash etc.)									
Never	32.62	45.99	36.68	37.58	43.97	38.31	28.57	48.12	39.55
Sometimes	36.43	33.20	39.58	34.78	31.56	37.66	36.75	33.93	35.16
Often	30.83	20.02	23.22	27.33	24.11	23.38	34.22	17.47	24.82
No answer	0.12	0.79	0.53	0.31	0.35	0.65	0.46	0.48	0.47
Participating in music, drama etc.									
Never	62.50	67.49	65.70	70.19	71.63	63.64	69.82	63.63	66.34
Sometimes	22.26	20.32	23.48	16.46	18.79	18.83	16.73	23.67	20.63
Often	15.12	11.10	10.29	12.73	9.57	16.23	12.83	12.10	12.42
No answer	0.12	1.09	0.53	0.62	0.00	1.30	0.61	0.60	0.60
Watching sport on TV									
Never	24.05	35.68	27.97	32.61	29.43	31.82	20.17	38.22	30.31
Sometimes	47.62	43.61	48.28	44.41	48.58	43.51	43.39	47.82	45.88
Often	28.21	19.62	23.48	22.67	21.63	24.03	35.68	13.60	23.28
No answer	0.12	1.09	0.26	0.31	0.35	0.65	0.76	0.36	0.54
Watching sport live									
Never	41.43	56.10	48.81	48.76	50.71	49.35	41.02	55.93	49.40
Sometimes	42.50	33.70	40.37	37.89	40.43	38.31	41.71	35.72	38.35
Often	15.95	9.32	10.29	12.73	8.87	11.04	16.58	7.93	11.72
No answer	0.12	0.89	0.53	0.62	0.00	1.30	0.69	0.42	0.54

^a Per cent of total respondents.

Table 19.1
Youths' Leisure and Recreation Activities (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Respondents	840	1,009	379	322	282	154	1,309	1,677	2,986
Hobbies (painting, craft, collecting, sewing, etc)									
Never	33.69	30.43	35.88	36.02	41.13	35.71	43.16	26.71	33.92
Sometimes	45.48	43.31	43.27	42.86	38.65	41.56	37.97	47.53	43.34
Often	20.71	24.88	20.58	20.81	20.21	21.43	18.11	25.22	22.10
No answer	0.12	1.39	0.26	0.31	0.00	1.30	0.76	0.54	0.64
Cooking for pleasure									
Never	40.00	35.18	38.26	39.75	43.97	41.56	54.32	26.30	38.58
Sometimes	48.21	45.79	46.97	45.34	44.68	38.31	36.90	53.25	46.08
Often	11.79	17.94	14.51	14.60	11.35	18.83	8.17	20.04	14.84
No answer	0.00	1.09	0.26	0.31	0.00	1.30	0.61	0.42	0.50
Going to the beach, bushwalking									
Never	27.14	26.26	28.04	31.68	30.60	31.17	31.83	24.99	27.98
Sometimes	53.33	54.41	55.56	52.80	52.31	47.40	51.57	55.04	53.52
Often	19.52	18.33	16.14	15.22	17.08	20.13	15.99	19.62	18.03
No answer	0.00	0.99	0.26	0.31	0.00	1.30	0.61	0.36	0.47
Playing board games, computer games or cards									
Never	21.79	19.82	22.96	22.67	29.08	25.32	15.28	27.67	22.24
Sometimes	55.12	52.23	54.09	54.66	44.68	50.65	48.82	55.81	52.75
Often	23.10	26.96	22.69	22.36	25.53	22.73	35.37	15.98	24.48
No answer	0.00	0.99	0.26	0.31	0.71	1.30	0.53	0.54	0.54
Shopping									
Never	10.36	8.03	7.39	10.87	13.12	11.69	18.33	2.74	9.58
Sometimes	52.26	54.61	52.51	51.24	48.58	42.21	66.84	40.61	52.11
Often	37.26	36.37	39.58	37.58	38.30	45.45	14.21	56.23	37.81
No answer	0.12	0.99	0.53	0.31	0.00	0.65	0.61	0.42	0.50
Other leisure activities mentioned by respondents^a:									
None	80.82	82.65	81.12	80.37	85.05	79.74	83.10	80.72	81.77
Dancing	3.48	1.81	4.79	1.56	1.42	1.31	1.08	3.73	2.57
Outings with friends/ family/ groups	0.24	1.10	0.53	0.93	0.71	0.00	0.54	0.78	0.68
Horse riding	1.44	0.90	0.80	1.87	0.36	0.65	0.15	1.81	1.08
Listening to music	1.80	1.20	2.66	1.25	1.07	3.27	1.46	1.81	1.65
Gardening	0.36	0.40	0.27	0.62	0.00	0.65	0.31	0.42	0.37
Eating out/going to restaurants	0.36	0.40	0.53	0.31	0.71	1.31	0.15	0.72	0.47
Fishing/ spear fishing	0.72	1.10	0.53	1.56	0.36	0.65	1.38	0.48	0.88

^a Per cent of total respondents.

Table 19.1
Youths' Leisure and Recreation Activities (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Respondents	840	1,009	379	322	282	154	1,309	1,677	2,986
Other leisure activities mentioned by respondents (continued)^a:									
Studying/museums/zoo	0.12	0.20	0.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.15	0.12	0.14
Having sex	0.00	0.20	0.27	0.00	0.00	0.65	0.31	0.00	0.14
Writing stories/ poems/ articles/ songs	0.48	0.90	0.27	0.93	1.78	1.31	0.61	0.96	0.81
Playing with pets/ walking dogs	0.24	0.80	0.00	0.62	0.36	1.31	0.23	0.72	0.51
Private parties/barbeques	0.36	0.70	0.27	0.00	0.36	0.65	0.31	0.54	0.44
Motorbike racing/ riding/ motorcross	1.08	0.50	0.53	1.25	0.36	0.65	1.31	0.30	0.74
Flying	0.00	0.10	0.27	0.31	0.00	0.65	0.23	0.06	0.14
Night clubbing	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.36	0.00	0.08	0.00	0.03
Talking on the phone	0.36	0.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.15	0.48	0.34
Camping/rock climbing	0.84	0.20	1.06	0.00	0.00	0.65	0.54	0.42	0.47
Volunteer work (aged care)	0.12	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.65	0.08	0.12	0.10
Online chatting/blogging/ surfing the net	1.20	1.40	0.53	1.25	1.78	0.00	0.38	1.81	1.18
Working on car/motorbike	0.48	0.50	1.33	1.25	0.36	1.31	1.46	0.12	0.71
Drinking with family/friends	0.36	0.20	0.27	0.00	0.71	0.00	0.46	0.12	0.27
Martial arts/wrestling/boxing	1.08	1.30	0.27	1.56	1.42	0.65	1.77	0.60	1.11
Indoor sports (table tennis, ten pin bowling)	0.12	0.40	0.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.15	0.24	0.20
Go-carting	0.12	0.10	0.27	0.62	0.36	0.00	0.46	0.00	0.20
Traveling/road trips	0.72	0.50	0.27	0.31	0.00	2.61	0.15	0.90	0.57
Boy scouts/ girl guides	0.12	0.00	0.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.12	0.07
Going to church, youth/church groups	0.60	0.30	1.33	0.31	0.00	1.31	0.23	0.78	0.54
Darts/pool/snooker	0.24	0.30	0.27	0.31	0.00	0.65	0.38	0.18	0.27
Daydreaming/sleeping	0.24	0.40	0.27	0.00	0.00	0.65	0.08	0.42	0.27
Snorkeling/scuba diving	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.36	0.00	0.08	0.06	0.07
Modeling/fashion	0.12	0.00	0.27	0.00	0.36	0.00	0.00	0.18	0.10
Hunting/shooting	0.60	0.20	0.53	0.31	0.36	1.96	1.08	0.00	0.47
Yoga/Pilates/meditation	0.24	0.40	0.00	0.62	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.48	0.27
Playing musical instrument/singing	0.36	0.60	0.27	0.31	0.36	0.00	0.46	0.36	0.41
Taking drugs	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.36	0.00	0.15	0.00	0.07
Motor shows (participating)	0.12	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.36	0.65	0.23	0.00	0.10
Babysitting	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.36	0.00	0.00	0.12	0.07

^a Per cent of total respondents.

Table 19.1
Youths' Leisure and Recreation Activities (continued)

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Respondents	840	1,009	379	322	282	154	1,309	1,677	2,986
Other leisure activities mentioned by respondents (continued)^a:									
Gambling/casino	0.24	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.31	0.00	0.14
Live theatre/plays/musicals	0.36	0.10	0.00	0.31	0.36	0.00	0.08	0.30	0.20
Showing animals (cattle, dogs etc)	0.12	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.36	0.00	0.08	0.06	0.07
Ice-skating/ice hockey	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.71	0.00	0.15	0.06	0.10
Crosswords/puzzles/Sudoku	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.06	0.03
Other	3.00	2.51	1.86	4.36	1.42	3.27	2.76	2.65	2.70

^a Per cent of total respondents.

Table 19.2
Youths' Exercise Behaviour and Access to Transportation

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Total Respondents	840	1,009	379	322	282	154	1,309	1,677	2,986
In general, how often does youth participate in moderate or intensive physical activity for at least 30 minutes?^a									
not at all	3.70	5.49	4.76	3.42	4.26	5.19	3.75	5.15	4.54
less than once a week	13.01	14.77	12.70	14.60	14.18	15.58	10.34	16.83	13.98
1 - 2 times a week	25.89	25.15	25.93	22.05	30.14	25.32	22.51	28.02	25.60
3 times a week	17.78	17.47	18.25	20.81	19.50	12.34	17.38	18.38	17.94
more than 3 times a week	23.75	24.15	25.93	25.16	20.92	23.38	26.19	22.34	24.03
every day	15.87	12.97	12.43	13.98	10.99	18.18	19.83	9.28	13.91
Is youth currently an active member of a sporting, hobby or community-based club or organisation?^a									
yes	49.88	31.05	40.74	45.17	43.97	41.83	47.85	35.42	40.87
no	50.12	68.95	59.26	54.83	56.03	58.17	52.15	64.58	59.13
Does youth have access to car or motorcycle?^a									
Yes, own car	55.64	42.63	53.30	57.94	55.71	54.55	54.92	48.20	51.14
Yes, own motorcycle	2.64	1.49	1.58	2.80	3.21	3.25	4.22	0.66	2.22
Yes, car/motorcycle provided by employer	0.72	0.40	0.00	0.62	0.71	0.00	0.84	0.18	0.47
Yes, car/motorcycle belonging to family member	28.06	21.31	24.27	23.68	20.00	24.03	23.81	23.89	23.86
Yes, car/motorcycle belonging to someone else:									
Partner/girlfriend/boyfriend	0.36	1.29	0.53	1.25	1.79	1.30	0.77	1.14	0.98
Friend	0.48	1.00	0.53	0.62	1.07	0.65	0.84	0.66	0.74
Family friend	0.12	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.08	0.00	0.03
Colleague	0.00	0.00	0.26	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.08	0.00	0.03
Unspecified	1.08	2.29	1.85	1.56	1.43	1.30	1.31	1.98	1.68
No, but has driver's license	4.80	8.47	6.60	3.43	6.79	7.79	5.76	7.01	6.46
No, doesn't have driver's license	12.11	26.49	16.62	16.82	18.93	13.64	16.21	20.78	18.78

^a Per cent of total respondents.

Section 20:

Important Life Events in Youths' Childhood

Overview of Findings

In order to develop a fuller picture of the experiences that may have shaped their childhoods, young people in the *Youth in Focus* (YIF) survey were asked about a wide range of significant life events that may have happened to them or their families while they were growing up. For example, youths were asked whether someone close to them had died, whether a household member had had a drug or alcohol problem, and whether the family had had a major financial crisis. Young people were also asked if their parents' read to them at night and helped with them with their homework. Finally, young people were asked how happy their childhood and teenage years were in general. Taken together, responses to these questions provide a fuller picture of the ways in which economic disadvantage in childhood might affect young people's life chances.¹²

Our results indicate that while some life events do appear to be related to the income-support history of a youth's family, others do not (see Table 20.1). For example, young people growing up in families with no history of income-support receipt (Category A) are only slightly more likely than youth in income-support families (Category B) to report ever attending a boarding school (8 versus 6 per cent respectively). Moreover, irrespective of their families' economic circumstances approximately two-thirds of young people report that someone close to them died while they were growing up.¹³

At the same time, other – mainly negative – life events are much more prevalent amongst young people growing up in disadvantage. Youth in income-support families are approximately three times as likely as youth in non-income-support families (38 versus 13 per cent) to say that their family had a major financial crisis at some point while they were young. Moreover, 18-year-olds in income-support families are approximately twice as likely as young people in non-income-support families to report: running away from home, getting into trouble with the police, having alcohol problems, using illicit drugs, hanging out with a bad crowd, and being injured or assaulted. Just over 4 per cent report attending court as a result of juvenile offences and almost one in ten (9 per cent) report becoming pregnant themselves or getting someone else pregnant. These rates are many times higher than the corresponding rates amongst youth in non-income-support families (1 and 2 per cent respectively). In light of this it is not surprising that young people growing up in families with a history of intensive income-support receipt are also twice as likely to have come in contact with guidance officers, police or juvenile aid and four times as likely to have come in contact with children's services.

While these negative life events appear to be related to the economic circumstances of the youth's family, they are also related to gender. Girls in particular are much more likely to report that their family had a financial crisis, they ran away from home, began to hang out with a bad crowd and were treated for a mental or emotional issue. Boys on the other hand are much more likely to report that they got into trouble with the police.

Parental involvement in their children's education also differs with economic circumstances. For example, youth are much less likely to report that their parents read to them at night or were involved in helping them with their school work, choosing options, and preparing for exams if they grow up in families heavily reliant on income support.

¹² Information in this section of the report is also drawn exclusively from the self-completion questionnaire. Sample size will vary slightly depending on the item response rate for each question.

¹³ The exception is that just over half (56 per cent) of young people in Category E report that they experienced the death of someone close to them.

Specifically youth in income-support families are approximately twice as likely to report that their parents never read to them at night and approximately four times as likely to report that their parents did not help them with school work.

Finally, the vast majority of the 18-year-olds responding to the self-completion questionnaire reported that their childhood and teenage years was either very happy or pretty happy. Despite this, the propensity to report having had a happy childhood does vary somewhat across economic categories. Fully, 95 per cent of youth in non-income-support families report having had a happy childhood, whereas this is true of only 86 per cent of young people growing up in families with a history of intensive income-support receipt.

Taken together, these results suggest that economic circumstances and negative life events in childhood are linked. Future research should carefully consider the extent to which these negative life events are the mechanism through which economic and social disadvantage are transferred from one generation to the next. Moreover, it will be important to consider the experiences of boys and girls separately in order to take account of the often substantial gender differences in the propensity to experience specific events.

Table 20.1
Important Life Events in Youth's Childhood

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Did youth ever live away from home at a boarding school?									
Yes	7.77	5.99	5.28	7.17	6.03	10.46	6.37	7.07	6.76
No	92.23	93.91	94.72	92.83	93.97	89.54	93.56	92.93	93.21
Total respondents	837	1,002	379	321	282	153	1,304	1,670	2,974
Did any of the following ever happen to youth:									
Someone close to youth died?									
Yes	65.07	64.87	62.53	64.06	56.23	67.11	61.62	65.57	63.84
No	34.93	35.13	37.47	35.94	43.77	32.89	38.38	34.43	36.16
Total respondents	836	1,002	379	320	281	152	1,300	1,670	2,970
Youth's family had a major financial crisis?									
Yes	13.09	38.29	33.60	23.27	30.50	35.76	23.50	31.71	28.10
No	86.91	61.71	66.40	76.73	69.50	64.24	76.50	68.29	71.90
Total respondents	833	995	378	318	282	151	1,298	1,659	2,957
Someone in youth's household had an alcohol problem?									
Yes	7.68	20.88	16.40	10.97	23.05	18.42	14.66	16.35	15.61
No	92.32	79.12	83.60	89.03	76.95	81.58	85.34	83.65	84.39
Total respondents	833	996	378	319	282	152	1,296	1,664	2,960
Someone in youth's household had a drug problem?									
Yes	5.53	18.02	11.11	8.15	11.35	14.57	10.18	12.98	11.75
No	94.47	81.98	88.89	91.85	88.65	85.43	89.82	87.02	88.25
Total respondents	832	999	378	319	282	151	1,297	1,664	2,961
Other significant events happened to youth:									
Youth ran away from home	11.53	23.62	15.79	12.04	21.55	16.23	14.71	19.50	17.40
Youth got into trouble with the police	11.18	24.31	15.79	14.51	19.08	20.13	23.17	13.56	17.77
Youth had problems with alcohol	4.52	8.99	5.53	4.94	7.77	9.09	7.55	6.12	6.75
Youth started using illicit drugs	8.32	16.70	12.63	9.26	14.13	11.04	12.80	12.25	12.49
Youth attended child/ juvenile court due to juvenile offending	0.95	4.45	2.11	3.09	3.89	1.95	3.96	1.96	2.84
Youth started to hang out with a bad crowd	14.27	26.38	19.74	18.83	20.85	24.03	19.21	21.82	20.67
Youth became pregnant/got someone pregnant	1.78	9.29	5.79	4.01	7.42	6.49	3.43	7.73	5.85

**Table 20.1
Important Life Events (continued)**

	Economic Category						Male	Fem.	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F			
Other significant events happened to youth (continued):									
Youth was seriously injured or assaulted	6.42	12.55	7.37	8.64	14.13	9.09	10.52	9.10	9.72
Youth was treated for a mental or emotional issue	10.70	17.69	13.68	13.27	14.13	14.94	8.69	18.61	14.26
None of these	67.42	47.73	56.32	58.95	52.65	51.95	57.09	55.59	56.25
Total respondents	841	1,012	380	324	283	154	1,312	1,682	2,994
Did youth have any contact with the following:									
Guidance officer	11.05	20.45	13.16	10.53	17.31	18.18	11.21	18.66	15.40
Children's services	2.26	9.29	4.47	2.17	3.89	8.44	3.97	6.48	5.38
Police or juvenile aid	5.82	12.55	8.42	4.95	8.13	11.04	11.14	7.01	8.82
None of these	83.14	68.28	79.21	85.45	75.62	72.08	80.02	73.92	76.59
Total respondents	842	1,012	380	323	283	154	1,311	1,683	2,994
When youth was younger, did parents/guardians read to them at night?									
Every night	19.38	13.17	17.11	11.73	15.25	12.99	11.60	18.44	15.45
Often	36.98	27.03	27.89	35.19	30.14	38.31	29.92	33.08	31.70
Sometimes	25.09	28.42	26.58	32.41	31.91	28.57	30.76	25.88	28.02
Not very often	10.46	14.46	16.05	12.96	12.06	13.64	15.27	11.42	13.11
Not at all	8.09	16.93	12.37	7.72	10.64	6.49	12.44	11.18	11.74
Total respondents	841	1,010	380	324	282	154	1,310	1,681	2,991
Did youth's parents/guardians help them with school work, choosing options, preparing for exams?									
All the time	24.82	18.60	22.63	21.05	21.91	18.83	17.25	24.72	21.45
Often	38.12	31.75	32.63	34.98	28.27	33.12	34.96	32.80	33.75
Sometimes	26.48	27.40	25.00	29.72	29.68	27.92	30.23	25.07	27.33
Not very often	8.31	12.66	14.74	10.53	14.84	14.29	11.45	12.00	11.76
Not at all	2.26	9.59	5.00	3.72	5.30	5.84	6.11	5.41	5.71
Total respondents	842	1,011	380	323	283	154	1,310	1,683	2,993
Overall description of youth's childhood and teenage years:									
Number of observations	842	1,011	378	324	282	154	1,311	1,680	2,991
Childhood was very happy	51.19	32.74	38.10	41.67	36.17	38.96	39.97	40.42	40.22
Childhood was pretty happy	43.94	52.62	53.44	50.62	53.90	52.60	52.10	48.69	50.18
Childhood was unhappy	4.28	10.98	6.88	6.48	7.09	6.49	6.48	8.27	7.49
Childhood was very unhappy	0.59	3.66	1.59	1.23	2.84	1.95	1.45	2.62	2.11

CONCLUSION

Understanding the ways in which economic disadvantage might be passed from one generation to the next is important in the design and implementation of social policies targeted towards supporting vulnerable families. Early results from the *Youth in Focus* (YIF) Project point to a number of channels through which the intergenerational transmission of disadvantage may be occurring in Australia. We discuss a number of selected results here.

In particular, the nature of a young person's educational experiences is central to understanding his or her future life chances. Educational qualifications are closely tied to adult labour market outcomes including income levels, the nature of one's job, the propensity to be unemployed, etc. Education has also been linked to health outcomes as well as to economic and social wellbeing more generally. This makes it particularly important to understand the reasons behind the well-documented correlation in the educational attainment of parents and their children. Parental education, for example, may be linked to that of their children through the availability of financial resources, the ability of parents to invest in their children's education, and the transfer of attitudes towards education, among other things.

Not surprisingly, our results indicate that the level of school education tends to be lower for parents who have a history of intensive income-support use with fully one in five parents in this category reporting that they have completed 9 years or less of secondary school. This proportion is much higher than it is for all other economic categories, the differential being greatest relative to those parents who do not have any history of income-support use.

We also find large differences in the educational experiences of young people across economic categories. Young people in families with no history of income-support receipt are more likely to complete Year 12 before leaving school and more likely to have a university entry score. Moreover, amongst those who receive them, university entry scores are highest among young people in families with no history of income-support receipt.

These patterns are particularly troubling because of their consistency across a vast range of measures and because the magnitude of the gaps are substantial. Future research on the ways in which income-support receipt might be correlated with or cause educational disadvantage should be a matter of high priority so that we can assess the extent to which there is scope for public policy to assist income-support clients in ensuring good educational outcomes for their children.

The empirical evidence is also clear that individuals with higher socio-economic status live longer, healthier lives and there is a growing consensus that the roots of adult health lie in childhood. Children who experience poor health have significantly poorer health as adults even after the effects of family background are taken into account. Childhood health factors appear to operate mainly by limiting educational attainment and reducing initial adult health. This link between health in childhood and subsequent adult health makes it particularly challenging to sort out the extent to which the intergenerational transmission of disadvantage occurs through health.

Consistent with previous evidence, our results provide evidence that economic and social disadvantage is associated with poorer health outcomes amongst Australians. Parents who have a history of intensive income-support receipt have worse self-reported health

and more health conditions. These parents also report that their focal youth had relatively worse health as a child. Specifically, the incidence of asthma, depression, ADHD, and extended hospitalisation is higher amongst young people growing up in disadvantaged circumstances. Parents in income-support-reliant families are also more likely to express concerns about their children's weight.

Parental reports of their own and their children's health status closely mirror those of focal youth themselves. Specifically, young people growing up in families with a history of intensive income-support receipt are less likely than youth in non-income support families to report that there are in excellent or very good health. There is also some evidence that mental health may be worse amongst young people in income-support families. Health-related behaviours including tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana use also seem to be related to economic and social disadvantage.

However, there are also reasons to be concerned about the extent to which families' ability to support their adult children is affected by the family's economic status. In particular, previous research indicates that co-residence with and financial transfers from parents are important mechanisms through which many families provide the resources that young people rely on as they complete their educations, enter the labour market and establish themselves as independent adults.

Our results suggest that the extent to which parents are providing assistance in the form of co-residence and financial support to their 18-year-old children depends a great deal on the family's history of interaction with the income-support system. Parents with a history of intensive income-support receipt are much less likely to be providing support and provide less support when they do. Young people in families with intensive histories of income-support receipt are more likely to have moved out of the parental home by age 18 than are youth in families with no history of interaction with the income-support system for example. Moreover, parents who never received income support are much more likely to help their children with the purchase of a car, to pay for their accommodation while they study, to help pay tuition fees, bills and fines, to provide living allowance and to pay off their debt.

These results may indicate that parents who are reliant on income support may simply be less able to provide support to their children. Still, disparity in young people's motivation for leaving home suggests that there is more discord in family relationships in income-support families. These patterns are particularly concerning because this is a period in life when many young people are making educational and labour market investments. If parents' willingness or ability to continue to support their adult children as they make these investments is negatively related to parents' own economic status, there is potential for parents' economic disadvantage to limit youths' opportunities to invest in their future.

Though preliminary, when taken together, our results suggest that economic disadvantage may be being passed from parents to their children through poorer educational outcomes, worse health, and lower levels of financial support. These results are important in pointing to a number of potential areas for future research. At the same time, there are a number of reasons to be optimistic about the potential for the vast majority of young people to make a successful transition to becoming independent adults.

In particular, the Youth in Focus survey asks both parents and young people about the nature of and their satisfaction with several dimensions of their relationship with each other. On the whole there are many reasons to be positive about the strength of the relationship between Australian parents and their 18-year old children. Parental

satisfaction with their relationships with their teenage children is high and parents report a great deal of mutual respect and understanding. Young people also report having friendly relationships that are based on mutual respect with their mothers. Approximately three in four 18 years olds report that they can respect their mothers' ideas/opinions about life and that their mothers, in turn, respect their ideas. Moreover, the vast majority of young people report that they find it easy to understand their mothers and more than half say that their mothers hardly ever or never make too many demands on them. Interestingly, the nature of young peoples' relationships with their mothers does not seem to vary much by economic status, although parents (who are mainly mothers) with a history of intensive income-support use are substantially less satisfied with the relationship with their children than are parents with no income-support history.

Finally, young people are generally very positive about their futures. There is widespread agreement amongst young people that a good education, one's own ambition, and a job are important in getting ahead in life. With the exception of opinions regarding the appropriate social policy for the unemployed, youths' attitudes towards work-welfare do not appear to depend substantially on their families' interaction with the income-support system. In fact, the vast majority of young people believe that they can do whatever they set their minds to and that what happens to them in the future depends mostly on themselves.

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