



Australian Government

Australian Institute of
Family Studies

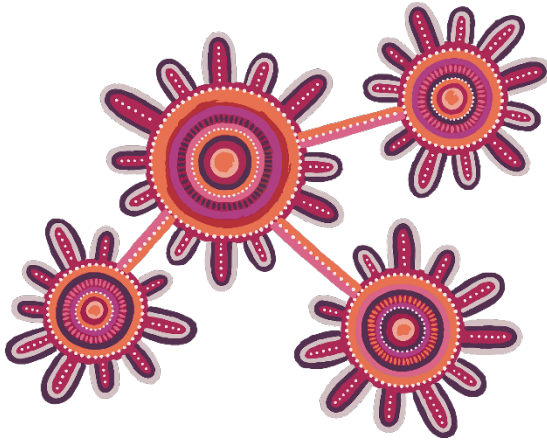


The Longitudinal Study
of Australian Children

Keeping longitudinal studies relevant in a changing social landscape

Agatha Faulkner and Amanda Vittiglia

Acknowledgement of Country



The Australian Institute of Family Studies acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to lands and waters. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to Elders past and present.

For 20 years, LSAC has tracked what it really means to grow up in Australia



- 10,000 babies and children
- Nationally representative
- Strong delivery partnership
- All aspects of life - health, relationships, work, education and lifestyle
- Informing policy and practice
- Enhancing methods here and overseas

Fascinating insights that have shaped policy and practice



Our study has revealed

- Benefits of three-year old kinder
- How teens use social media
- Use of drugs and alcohol
- Experiences of discrimination and violence
- Impacts of COVID
- Drivers of mental health

Our study has shaped

- Paid parental leave
- Family law
- Early Childhood education
- Social media reforms

Balancing continuity and change

Preserve

- Comparability of data over time
- Analytic integrity
- Participant trust
- Established measures

EVIDENCE- INFORMED DESIGN DECISIONS

Adapt to reflect

- Changing families
- Contemporary language
- Policy priorities
- New risks and technologies
- Participant voice

Example 1: How LSAC captures contemporary families



Family structure

- Household composition
- Relationship to participant
- Parent classifications: Parent 1, Parent 2 and Parent Living Elsewhere (PLE)
- Parenting roles for children living elsewhere
- Non-resident children
- Contact arrangements and child support

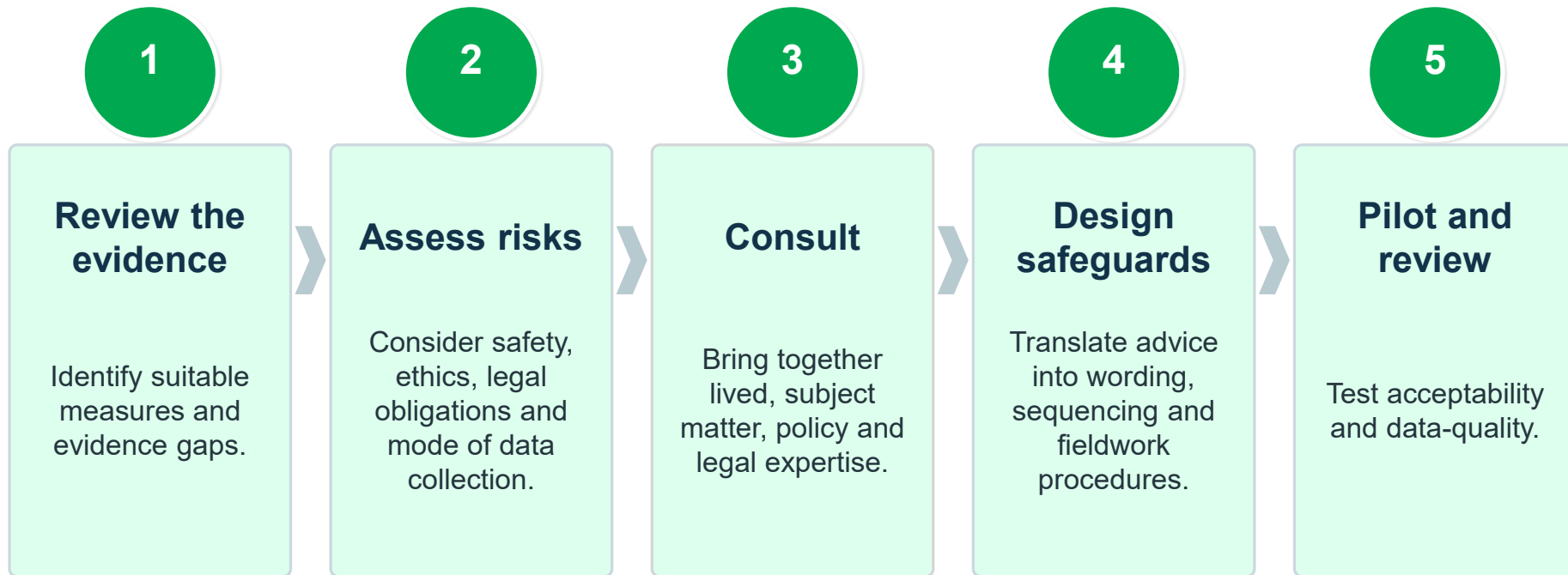
Living arrangements over time

Residential calendar and household form capture movement between households and shared-care arrangements.

Diverse relationships

- Sexual orientation and gender identity
- Multi-partner relationships
- Relationship quality
- Length of relationship

Example 2: How LSAC introduces sensitive content safely



Example 2: Lived expertise consultation shaped how the questions were administered



AREA	EARLIER APPROACH		REFINED APPROACH
Updated definitions and concepts	"The next set of questions cover areas such as feeling fearful, violence and abuse within relationships."	➤	"The next set of questions cover aspects of relationships that are difficult such as feeling afraid, unsafe or being controlled by a partner."
Stronger choice language	"The information you provide..."	➤	"The information you choose to provide..."
More ways to opt out	Skip individual questions	➤	Skip individual questions, skip modules, or end the section
Support beyond referrals	A traditional support-service list	➤	Optional educational and support resource, available even after opting out

Example 2: Safety procedures were tailored to collection mode

FACE-TO-FACE

- Choice of location
- Independent completion check
- Interviewer available for support

VIDEO

- Private-space and device checks
- Headphones encouraged
- Advice about possible device monitoring
- Participant-only screens and controlled access

TELEPHONE

- Sensitive content (including IPV modules) not administered

Example 2: Key takeaways

1

Engage lived expertise

Use lived insight to shape language, framing, choice and support, with appropriate ethics approval.

2

Protect choice and control

Provide clear information and meaningful ways to skip, pause or exit.

3

Design for each mode

Do not assume safeguards transfer unchanged across different data collection modes

Balancing continuity and change



- Longitudinal studies must evolve to reflect changing lives and emerging issues.
- Changes require careful consideration of not just what is added, but how it is implemented
- Thoughtful change helps ensure longitudinal studies continue to inform research, policy and practice.

LSAC Content Consultation



Help shape the future of LSAC

As participants move through their 20s, we're inviting input from researchers, policymakers, service providers and community organisations to help identify the most important topics and questions for Wave 12.

Through a short survey, you'll be able to suggest new topics and questions for inclusion in future waves and provide feedback on existing content that may no longer be needed.

Submit your ideas by **Friday 18th September**



Thank you



Australian Government
Department of Social Services



Australian Government
Australian Institute of
Family Studies



The Longitudinal Study
of Australian Children



ROY
MORGAN
Longitudinal Research

Contact: amanda.vittiglia@aifs.gov.au

The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children: Growing up in Australia is conducted in partnership between the Department of Social Services, the Australian Institute of Family Studies and Roy Morgan with advice provided by a consortium of leading researchers.