

# Technical note

## Overview of methodology

This note outlines the methods used for each research element of the study.

### Face-to-face survey (December 2019-January 2020):

A nationally representative face-to-face survey was conducted of those aged 16 and over across the UK to provide robust, reliable and representative statistics. The fieldwork was carried out using Ipsos MORI's face-to-face omnibus survey 'Capibus'. In total, 3,733 respondents were interviewed face-to-face. To allow analysis within Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, and by parents of a 0 to 5-year-old, more interviews were carried out among people in these groups.

Capibus uses random location sampling, using a control method applied to field region and sub-region over a robust number of sample points (typically 170-190) to ensure a good geographical spread of interviews is achieved. Interviewer quotas are then set for sex, age, working status and tenure to ensure the sample is nationally representative - we use the CACI ACORN geo-demographic system in the selection process. The use of ACORN ensures all types of area are fully represented and that selection of respondents is largely taken out of the hands of the interviewers, helping to eliminate any possible bias in the sample caused by interviewing people all with the same background.

Each interview was carried out in respondents' homes which meant interviewers could spend longer with respondents, building rapport and deeper engagement in the survey than would be possible in a telephone or online survey, improving the quality of responses. For sensitive questions such as those about judgement and sources of support, a self-completion method was used (the interviewer gave the respondent the tablet computer to answer questions privately) as is best practice.

The data was weighted to correct for any minor deficiencies or bias in the sample using a 'rim weighting' system which weights to the latest set of mid-year census estimates and NRS defined profiles for age, social grade, region and working status - within gender and additional profiles on tenure and ethnicity. The sample profile before and after weighting is presented in Table 1.1.

To inform the questionnaire design, cognitive testing was carried out with 10 respondents from a mix of demographic backgrounds in their homes between 10 - 12 October 2019 to explore comprehension of the newly designed questions. Following this, a pilot survey was conducted with 88 respondents across England, Wales and Scotland over the weekend of 25-27 October 2019.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the pilot was to test questions were clear to parents and non-parents, whether additional answer codes would be helpful and to get feedback from interviewers on how the survey was perceived by respondents.

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<sup>1</sup> It was not possible to include Northern Ireland in the pilot.

**Table 1.1: Sample profile before and after weighting**

Dimension	Before weighting	After weighting
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	46.71%	48.98%
Female	53.28%	51.02%
<b>Region</b>		
North West	11.06%	10.93%
North East	4.37%	4.00%
Yorks & Humberside	6.91%	6.13%
West Midlands	8.30%	8.74%
East Midlands	7.90%	7.26%
South East	12.29%	13.69%
East of England	10.31%	9.34%
South West	7.34%	8.54%
Wales	4.53%	4.77%
Greater London	14.89%	13.22%
Scotland	9.40%	8.38%
Northern Ireland	2.68%	2.91%
<b>Social grade of chief income earner</b>		
AB	25.53%	26.14%
C1	36.16%	28.95%
C2	20.12%	21.16%
D	9.35%	14.59%
E	8.87%	14.59%
<b>Age of respondent</b>		
16-24	13.90%	14.24%
25-34	19.98%	16.51%
35-44	19.31%	15.33%
45-54	12.67%	16.66%
55-64	12.13%	14.74%
65+	20.8%	22.52%
<b>Working status of respondent</b>		
Working		57.36%
Not working		42.64%
<b>Tenure</b>		
Owned mortgage	29.9%	34.21%
Owned outright	29.2%	34.29%
Rent Local Authority	7.8%	11.76%
Rent private	22.1%	19.74%
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
White	85.10%	87.15%
Black or Minority Ethnic	14.90%	12.85%

**5 Big Questions (January 21<sup>st</sup>-February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020):** The 5 Big Questions was an extensive public survey with over half a million people responding; 435,141 of whom were from the UK.<sup>2</sup> An online questionnaire was shared as an open-link, so everyone was welcome to provide an answer. The intent of the '5 Big Questions' was to give everybody a chance to be heard and to spark a national conversation about the early years. Although the survey received a large response, it is not representative of the UK population and simply reflects the views of those who took part.

**Explanatory qualitative research (February 2020):** In-depth qualitative interviews were conducted with 40 parents of a 0 to 5-year-old who had taken part in the face-to-face survey and agreed to be re-contacted. Each interview was carried out by telephone and lasted approximately 40 minutes.

Quotas were set at the recruitment stage to ensure a mix of parents according to their working status, social grade, gender, whether they live in a rural or urban area, age and ethnicity.

The phase also included an 'online community' to explore in issues related to 'judgement' and 'shame' in more depth. The community included 20 parents of a 0 to 5-year-old and who had experienced feelings of judgement and those who had not. It also included 6 non-parents (including one expectant parent). The online community was a virtual community whose members interacted with each other within a secure platform.

**Observational research (September-October 2019):** The "ethnographic research" comprised in-home visits with 12 families with a child aged 0-5. The visits were conducted by specialist ethnographers and lasted one day. They were filmed. It also included 4 community leader interviews carried out by phone.

**Online survey (October 2020):** The strands of research described above were conducted between September 2019 and February 2020 before the coronavirus pandemic in the UK and worldwide. An online survey of 1,000 parents of a 0 to 5-year-old was carried out in October 2020 to identify any changes in parents' experiences of the preceding 6 months, when the COVID-19 pandemic has been affecting every aspect of life in the UK.

The online survey was conducted using Ipsos MORI's 'You Say' panel. Data were weighted by parent age, gender and social grade to generate data representative on these factors.

Caution should be taken when comparing findings between the online survey and Capibus survey findings given the different modes of interviewing (online/face-to-face) and sampling approaches. Capibus uses a random location sampling design whereas the online panel uses a non-random sampling approach and includes respondents who have signed up to be part of the online panel.

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<sup>2</sup> UK responses were identified using IP address. A total of 527,898 completed the survey globally.