

# growing up in Scotland

UPDATE 2023

Thanks for continuing to make this important study a success! The information you provide helps policy makers make decisions about things that affect your life and the lives of others in Scotland.



## GUS at 18. Providing important information on early adulthood

Like many of the young people in the study, Growing Up in Scotland (GUS) celebrated its 18th birthday recently. After almost 20 years, the information the study produces is as valuable now as it ever has been.

The young people in GUS have reached the end of school and have made decisions about the next stage of their lives whether that is to continue studying at

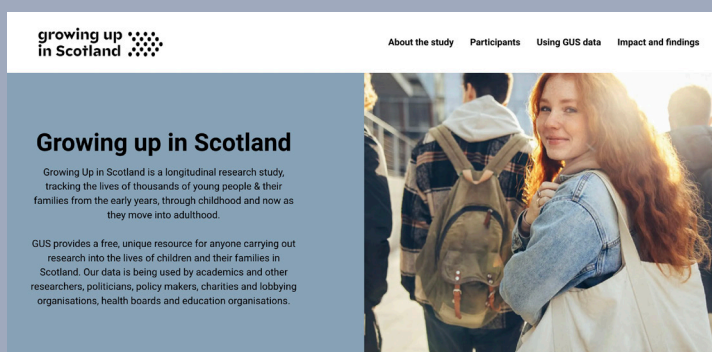
university or college, to take up some work or training or to do something else.

This is a really important stage in young people's lives and the information you provide through GUS helps the Scottish Government and lots of other relevant organisations understand more about the decisions young people take and how best to support them.

GUS is not just a study of childhood. GUS data continues to help policy and decision makers understand what matters to young people in Scotland as they navigate the changes in life that early adulthood can bring.

Thank you once again for helping us to ensure the success of the study – we couldn't do it without you.

## Our new website



Our study website has had a refresh! The new look site contains all the same important news and information about the study as before but now has updated functionality and layout making it easier to use across different types of devices. Make sure you take a look at [growingupinScotland.org.uk](https://growingupinScotland.org.uk).

## Recent findings

### Alcohol sales and where children live

As part of our age 10 data collection, some of the young people in GUS were asked to wear a GPS device for one week to collect information on their activity. This was done as part of a University of Glasgow study called SPACES – Studying Physical Activity in Children’s Environments across Scotland. One of their projects looked at differences in the number of alcohol outlets that 10 year olds across Scotland were exposed to.



Children in the most deprived areas are almost five times more likely than those in the least deprived areas to be exposed to alcohol outlets.

These findings are relevant to local decisions about how many alcohol outlets should be allowed in particular areas.

Children in the most deprived areas were also much more likely to experience this exposure within 500m of their home.

### Helping to tackle childhood obesity around the world

A recent study used GUS data on height and weight collected at age 12 along with some data collected at age 5-6. The aim was to understand whether there were certain experiences or circumstances children have around age 5 which makes them more likely to be obese when they are age 12. If there were, these things (that we call ‘risk factors’) could be monitored in 5-6 year olds across the world and used to target support to help stop children from becoming overweight or obese.

They found that

# 18%

of children in Scotland were obese at age 12

**6** risk factors from age 5-6 were linked to obesity at age 12 which included:

- being a boy
- having a mother who was overweight
- living with someone who smokes at home
- having less money
- being overweight
- experiencing negative life events



## The journey from primary to secondary school

A study undertaken by researchers at the Scottish Centre for Social Research (ScotCen) and University of Dundee used GUS data from when children were in P6 and S1 to look at young people's experiences of moving from primary to secondary school. They found quite a lot of differences between what children thought of primary school and what they thought of secondary school:

A positive move was linked to greater improvements in children's learning

The findings are being used to ensure children have the right support when moving between primary and secondary school.

**44%**

of S1 pupils felt that their teachers always treated them fairly, compared with

**76%**

P6 pupils

**36%**

of children had a positive experience when moving to secondary school and

**22%**

had a negative experience

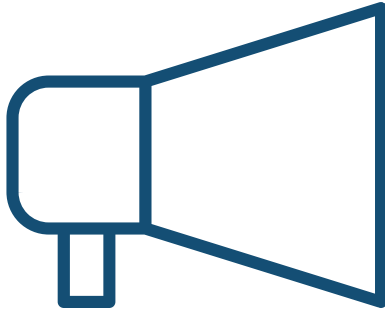


## The GUS conference 2022

In June 2022, a half day conference online was held to provide an update on the study and share some of the most recent findings. The conference was chaired by the Commissioner for Children and Young People in Scotland and attended by over 210 delegates including the Minister for Children and Young People.



Presentations were given on the report on Life at Age 14, and from research projects which have used the study data, sharing important perspectives on the issues that young people and their families in Scotland face today. You can view a recording of the conference on the GUS website at the following link: [growingupinscotland.org.uk/growing-scotland-conference-2022](https://growingupinscotland.org.uk/growing-scotland-conference-2022)

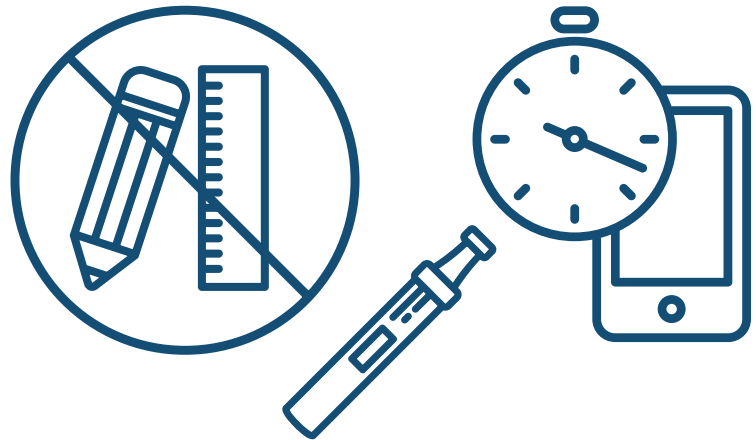


## GUS in the media

Lots of the study findings are picked up by newspapers and you may have noticed the study being mentioned. Since the last newsletter, there have been articles on topics such as truancy, screen time and vaping.

## Sharing findings and making an impact

The GUS team has been busy supporting the many researchers using the data. Findings from the study are shared with a wide range of stakeholders through seminars, conferences and other meetings and events. You can access these reports via the publications page of the study website: <https://growingupinScotland.org.uk/publications>



## What's next for GUS?

We have just finished our age 17-18 interviews and expect to share the first findings in early 2024. Interviews took place when our young people were preparing to finish or had recently left school, so we gathered lots of information about their aspirations and their experiences of further education, apprenticeships and the world of work.

As always, we will be in touch to let you know what is happening and if you are likely to have a further interview – watch out for your letter and email.

## Please keep in touch

Your contribution to the study is really important. If this newsletter has been forwarded to you at an address that is different from the one we have on record or if you are moving home, please let us know your new details.

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