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**Coverage**

United Kingdom

**Theme**

Social and Welfare

## Changing lives of today's children

### *Social Trends* – 37<sup>th</sup> edition

Today's children are staying in education longer and are increasingly likely to live in a one-parent family, and young adults are staying with their parents for longer, according to this year's edition of *Social Trends*, published today by the Office for National Statistics.

The underlying theme of *Social Trends 37* is children and young people. It shows that family structures are changing and looks at how children and young people are interacting with modern society, both with the education system and today's digital age of mobile phones and the Internet..

Findings relating to children and young people include:

- There were almost three times as many further education students in the UK in 2004/05 as in 1970/71. The proportion of under-fives at school increased threefold in the same period from 21 per cent in 1970/71 to 64 per cent in 2005/06.
- Nearly a quarter (24 per cent) of children in Great Britain were living in lone-parent families in 2006, more than three times the proportion in 1972.
- Around half (49 per cent) of those aged 8 to 11 owned their own mobile phone in the UK in 2005, compared with four-fifths (82 per cent) of children aged 12 to 15
- Young adults are still not flying the nest - in 2006, 58 per cent of men and 39 per cent of women aged 20 to 24 in England lived with their parents. This is significantly higher for both men and women than in 1991. At the same time, first time buyers in the UK faced average house prices 204 per cent higher than in 1995, compared with a 92 per cent rise in average incomes.

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### ***Social Trends 37***

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<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/socialtrends>

*Social Trends* brings together a wide range of statistics on many aspects of contemporary UK society and how it has changed over the years. The population of the UK is still growing but family sizes are shrinking. Smaller homes are being built in the face of rising demand, but this places increasing pressure on the land and the environment and so homes are increasingly being built at higher density and on previously developed land.

We are also living more years in poor health, and obesity is on the rise, but our attitudes towards our lifestyles are changing. More opportunities for sport are being provided through schools and we are taking more holidays abroad than ever before.

**Other key statistics include:**

- There were 60.2 million people living in the UK in 2005, more than ever before. The proportion aged under 16 has fallen to 19 per cent, from 25 per cent in 1971.
- In spring 2006 there were 24.2 million households in Great Britain, an increase of 30 per cent since 1971. Over the same period, the population of Great Britain increased by only 8 per cent.
- 15,700 same-sex civil partnerships were formed in the UK between December 2005 and September 2006. Of these, 93 per cent were in England and Wales, 6 per cent were in Scotland and 1 per cent were in Northern Ireland.
- Fifteen per cent of children were living in working-age households in the UK where no one was working in spring 2006, a fall from 19 per cent in spring 1992.
- Eighty-six per cent of children in Pakistani/Bangladeshi households in the UK were in the bottom 40 per cent of households ranked by disposable income compared with 49 per cent of all children (2004/05).
- Housing, fuel and power accounted for 19 per cent of spending by UK households in the bottom fifth of the income distribution compared with 7 per cent of those in the top fifth (2004/05).

- The expected number of years spent in poor health in Great Britain rose from 6.4 to 8.8 for men between 1981 and 2002, and from 10.1 to 10.6 for women.
- Eighteen per cent of boys and 13 per cent of girls aged 5 to 16 in Great Britain in 2004, living in households with a gross weekly income of under £100, had a mental disorder.
- The proportion of newly built homes with two bedrooms rose from 25 per cent to 42 per cent in England between 2001/02 and 2005/06, replacing homes with 4 or more bedrooms as the most common type of new build.
- There was a threefold increase in the volume of household waste collected for recycling or composting in England between 1996/97 and 2004/05.
- Sixty-two per cent of new housing in England in 2005 was built on previously developed land compared with 39 per cent in 1990.
- In 2004, the UK road accident death rate for children aged 14 or under, at 1.3 per 100,000 population, was one of the lowest in Europe. Luxembourg had the lowest recorded rate, at less than 0.1 per 100,000 population, while Poland had the highest at 3.6 per 100,000 population.
- Bus and coach fares rose by 168 per cent between 1997 and 2006 in the UK, compared with a rise in the 'All items' retail prices index of 93 per cent.
- Thirty million overseas residents visited the UK in 2005, a new high. The last peak was in 1998 with 25.7 million visitors.
- Between January and April 2006, 42 per cent of adults aged 16 and over in Great Britain purchased something online in the 12 months before interview.

## BACKGROUND NOTES

1. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available from the press office.
2. **National Statistics** are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference. © Crown copyright 2007.