

# The Rest

## Relationship Statistics

Vol. 58 – May 2006

### ADOLESCENTS

- In 2005, there were 1.9 million Australians aged 12-18 accounting for 9.6% of the population – down from 12.7% in 1971.
- Based on 2001 census figures, there were 1.1 million families in Australia with adolescent children aged 12 to 18 years.
- 76% were couple families and 24% were sole parent families.
- In 2001, 52% of adolescents aged 15-18 years were studying and not in paid work; 26% were studying and in paid work; 12% were in work only; and 7% were neither working nor studying.
- 68% of mothers and 85% of fathers of adolescents were in paid work.
- In 66% of couple families with adolescent children, both parents were in paid employment; in 21% of couple families, the father was the sole breadwinner; while in 5% of couple families, the mother was the sole breadwinner; and in 9% of couple families, neither parent was in paid employment.
- One-third of employed fathers of adolescent children worked more than 48 hours a week.
- In 2004, when adolescents aged 15 to 18 years were asked to rate how important 12 life issues were to them, the top of the list for both boys and girls were keeping fit, getting more education, and having lots of friends.
- More boys than girls rated sports and hobbies as important – 69% of boys compared to 49% of girls.
- Boys were also more likely than girls to rate having a successful career, making a lot of money and saving and investing as important.
- When adolescents were asked to rate what life issues they thought would be important to them when they reached the age of 35, the most commonly cited priorities for both boys and girls were having a successful career, saving and investing, and making a lot of money.
- Few cited family formation as important currently, but most cited it as an important life issue by the time they reached 35.
- Boys were more likely than girls to see themselves by age 35 as attaching high importance to living in a long term relationship. (76% of boys compared with 65% of girls)
- In the same 2004 survey, 70% of boys and 62% of girls reported that they were very satisfied with their relationship with their parents. However, when asked about their stepparents, only 45% of boys and 24% of girls expressed such a high level of satisfaction.
- Mother – child relationships were rated highly overall with 74% of mothers of adolescents aged 12 to 18 years expressing high satisfaction with their relationship with their children; whereas 78% of fathers expressed high satisfaction regarding their partner's relationship with the children.
- Meanwhile 73% of fathers expressed high satisfaction regarding relations with their children, whereas 59% of mothers expressed a high level of satisfaction regarding their partner's relationship with the children.

SOURCE:

*"Snapshots of Australian Families with Adolescents" (2006). Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies.*