



# Study Youth's Education Participation

Findings from Footprints in Time: The Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children (LSIC)

**Footprints in Time:** The Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children (LSIC) began in 2008 with a sample of nearly 1,700 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (aged 0.5-5 years) and their families from 11 sites, including major cities and very remote areas across Australia. Wave 13 interviews were conducted entirely by telephone during the COVID-19 pandemic (June to December 2020). This factsheet presents key findings from the LSIC Wave 13 survey about the education participation of Study Youth (aged 12-17 years in 2020). A total of 755 families were surveyed in Wave 13, accounting for 49% of the in-scope population for the wave. The Wave 13 sample was more clustered around non-remote areas, with 40% of families from major cities, 44% from regional areas and 16% from remote and very remote areas, compared with 30%, 41% and 29%, respectively, in Wave 12.

## School attendance status of Study Youth in 2020:

	Number
Go to TAFE, CIT instead of school	n.p*
Doing home schooling	11
Not at school now but planning to go back	18
Don't go to school at all anymore	22
Doing school online	26
Going to school	605

n.p\*= Not published

## Some of the reasons Study Youth were not going to school:

- **33%:** School factors (e.g., being bullied (teased); didn't like school).
- **22%:** Work (e.g., wanting to get a job, apprenticeship or traineeship).
- **14%:** Health factors (e.g., having a physical/mental health problem).
- **10%:** Moving to a different place.
- **7.5%:** Traveling/taking break from school.
- **5%:** Sorry business.
- **15%:** Other (unspecified).

## Main factors that help Study Youth continue their education:

- Having good friends at school.
- Viewing education as a pathway to achieving desired career goals.
- High family expectation and encouragement.
- School being fun and exciting.

## What factors helping Study Youth to continue their education?

### 40% Friends

"My friends help me to keep going."

### 30% Future Goals

"I want to exceed in education so that I can get a good job."

### 22% Family

"Encouragement from my parents and they help me with my schoolwork."

### 13% School Environment

"Good teacher, Aboriginal Education worker."

### 5% Liking Schooling

"I like school no matter what."

### 4% Learning

"Learning stuff, asking questions. Making friends."



### *Some of the elective school subjects Study Youth chose in 2020:*

- **20%:** Technologies (e.g., computer, metalwork, hospitality).
- **17%:** Arts (e.g., art, dance, drama, music, media).
- **14%:** Health and physical education.
- **8%:** Humanities and social sciences (e.g. history, geography, business, religion).
- **7%:** Foreign languages and Indigenous studies.

Note: It is not known how many schools offer Indigenous studies

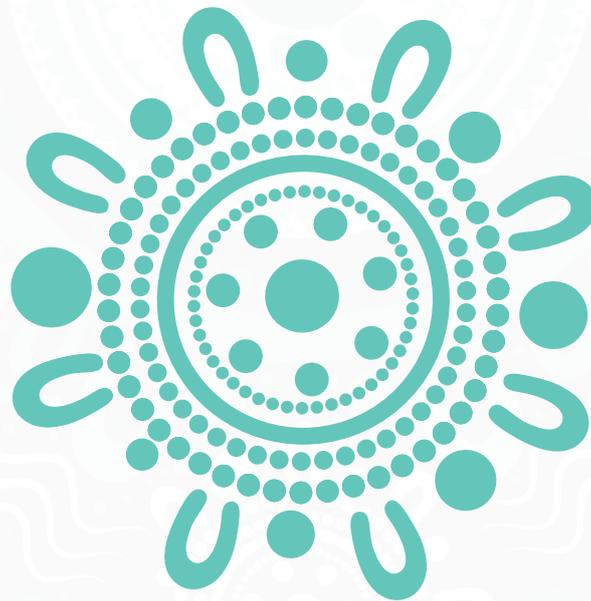


### *Some of the reasons why Study Youth did the chosen subjects (K Cohort only):*

- **50%:** The subjects were interesting.
- **11%:** Study Youth were good at the subjects.
- **10%:** Study Youth needed the subjects for planned study and career.

## **What do the results suggest about improving education participation?**

- Create a positive learning environment both at school and at home.
- Encourage future goal setting.
- Make school curriculums contextually relevant and support diverse learning preferences.
- Increase the presence of First Nations staff at the school



Please see the full report for detail on the study findings: Cooms, V., Dinku, Y., Howard-Wagner, D., Edwards, B., & Biddle, N. (2024). Footprints in Time: Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children (LSIC)-Wave 13 Summary Report, Australian National University, Canberra.

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