



Life Study

An overview for the Health & Wellbeing Board

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Life Study
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<http://www.lifestudy.ac.uk/>

Life Study

- aims to become a world-leading research study used to understand and improve the lives of children and their families
- is large in scale and innovative in design
- will follow children through to adult life starting in pregnancy with a strong focus on the first year of life
- will provide insights into pathways leading to life long health and well being and the interplay between biology, behaviour and the broader social, physical and economic environment
- will inform health and social policies in areas of major importance to the lives of UK children now



Context: UK Birth Cohorts



Study	1946 NSHD	1958 NCDS	1970 BCS70	1991 ALSPAC	2000-1 MCS	2007-10 BiB
Births recruited (n)	5,362	17,773	16,135	14,541	18,819	13,818
Pregnancy				■		■
Birth	■	■	■	■		
4 & 8 wks				■		
6 & 8 mos				■		
9 mos					■	
1 year						

Life Study – part of a powerful legacy

LIFE STUDY

Study	1946 NSHD	1958 NCDS	1970 BCS70	1991 ALSPAC	2000-1 MCS	2007-10 BiB	2014-18 Life Study
Period of recruitment	1 week	1 week	1 week	21 months	16 months	43 months	c. 48 months
Births recruited (n)	5,362	17,773	16,135	14,541	18,819	13,818	> 80,000
Pregnancy				■		■	¹ ■
Birth	■	■	■	■			■
4 & 8 wks				■■			
6 & 8 mos				■■			■
9 mos					■		
1 year							■

¹birth sample not included in pregnancy visit



Context: complex pathways & childhood outcomes

Infections, immunity, asthma & allergies:
the 'hygiene hypothesis'



Disorders of social & emotional communication



Pollutants



Obesity, activity,
sedentary behaviours

Cognitive
development

Low iodine may lead to literacy problems

Hannah Devlin Science Editor

Babies whose mothers have low levels of iodine during pregnancy have worse literacy skills in childhood, scientists have found.

"Our research found children may continue to experience the effects of insufficient iodine for years after birth," said Kristen Hynes, a public health specialist at the University of Tasmania in Australia, who led the study. "Al-

though the participants' diet was fortified with iodine during childhood, later supplementation was not enough to reverse the impact of the deficiency during the mother's pregnancy."

Britain has one of the worst rates of female iodine deficiency in the developed world. A study of 193 countries placed the UK among the ten countries with the greatest number of school-age children with insufficient iodine intake in 2011.

Iodine is absorbed from food and plays an important role in brain development, but previously it was not clear what level of deficiency was needed to

have an impact. The study of 228 children in Tasmania suggests that even a mild deficiency has an effect.

Milk is the most common source of dietary iodine; other sources include seaweed and sea fish. Since 1993 the World Health Organisation (WHO) has conducted a global programme of salt iodisation to prevent deficiency. Many European countries, including Switzerland and Denmark, have also signed up to the WHO programme. In Britain, however, it is not compulsory for manufacturers to add iodine to salt and it is estimated that only 5 per cent of salt sold in this country is iodinated.



Who can join Life Study, how many and how?

**LIFE
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- More than 60,000 mothers and their partners will take part in Life Study starting during their pregnancy
- Another 20,000 mothers and their partners living across the United Kingdom are being contacted after their baby is born
- We hope to have more than 200,000 people in our study eventually - this will take 4-5 years just to enrol this number
- BHRUT is the first NHS Trust to join Life Study and a special Life Study clinic is opening at King George's Hospital
- We see babies twice in their first year and will stay in touch as they grow up to learn more about the special early years of life



What kinds of information are we interested in?



Parents

- Identity
- Health
- Lifestyle
- Education
- Employment
- Income
- Relationships

- Pregnancy and birth



Infants

- Health
- Growth
- Development
- Sleeping and crying
- Feeding

- Parenting
- Childcare



The environment

- Housing
- Social networks
- Neighbourhoods
- Environmental pollutants

- BHRUT is committed to excellence in women and children's health, to research and to developing health and social care services for the wider community
- Life Study focuses on many health, social and other issues of concern to the local population
- By working together we can develop Life Study in Barking Havering and Redbridge through childhood and into adolescence
- This will create a valuable resource of information for the local community and for Life Study

Find out more on our website!

Barking, Havering and Redbridge 
University Hospitals
NHS Trust



Thank you

**LIFE
STUDY**

Life Study:

understanding lives now and for the future

Scientific Director: Professor Carol Dezateux

<http://www.lifestudy.ac.uk>

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