# About the research

## *An investigation of wellbeing questions in the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth*

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This report forms part of the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY) suite of research. The particular focus of this report was an examination of the LSAY survey instruments vis-a-vis their coverage of wellbeing questions. Wellbeing is an area of significant interest to policy-makers, because, at the end of the day, it is what policy-makers are trying to achieve. Having a valid set of wellbeing questions in LSAY will enhance the capacity to research the links between wellbeing and other domains of interest for young people in Australia.

## Key messages

- LSAY contains a set of happiness/satisfaction questions which can be used to construct three clear factors relating to young people's wellbeing: social wellbeing, material wellbeing and career. The three factors are shown to be robust over two different cohorts of LSAY and have sufficient variation in factor scores to be useful analytically.
- The factors obtained do not capture all of the dimensions of wellbeing described in the literature and in other wellbeing questionnaires; for instance, the psychological aspects of wellbeing are not represented in the LSAY surveys.
- To enhance the capacity of LSAY as a tool for researching wellbeing, the current happiness/satisfaction questions could be replaced by existing validated questionnaires that capture the main dimensions of wellbeing.

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