

# Aboriginal families STUDY

## Translating evidence from the study to inform policy and practice



**Community consultation**  
2007-2008



**Baseline study**  
2011-2013

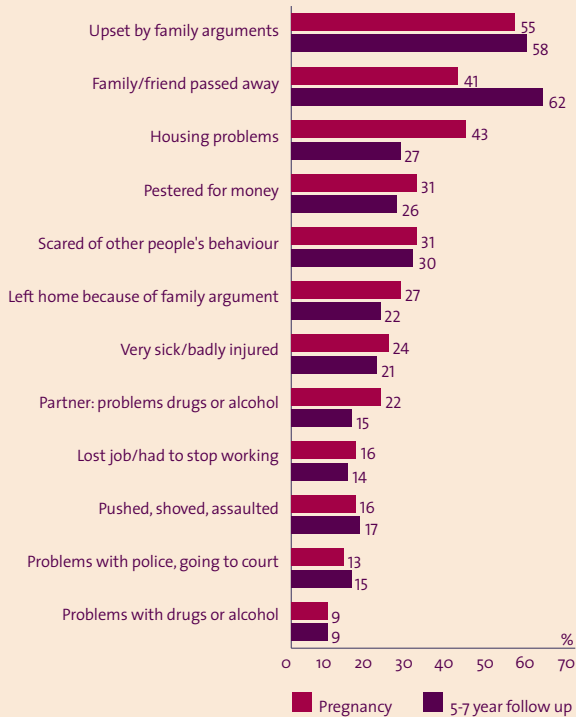


**5-8 year follow up**  
2018-2021



**11-12 year follow up**  
2023+

### Stressful events and social health issues



**1 IN 2 WOMEN EXPERIENCED  
3 OR MORE ISSUES**

**1 IN 4 WOMEN EXPERIENCED  
5-12 ISSUES**



**63% OF WOMEN FELT THAT IT WAS  
STRONG FAMILY CONNECTIONS  
THAT KEPT THEM STRONG**

### In the last 5 years...



**1 IN 2 WOMEN MOVED HOME  
2 OR MORE TIMES**



**1 IN 3 WOMEN MOVED HOME  
3 OR MORE TIMES**

### In the last 12 months...



**MORE THAN 1 IN 3 WOMEN (37%)  
EXPERIENCED INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE**

**What women need when they are  
experiencing intimate partner violence:**



# The Aboriginal families STUDY

The Aboriginal Families Study is a prospective mother and child cohort study investigating the health and wellbeing of 344 Aboriginal children and their mothers living in urban, regional and remote areas of South Australia.

The study is being conducted by the Intergenerational Health group at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute in partnership with the Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia and the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute.

The study was developed in response to gaps in the available evidence to inform health policy and services and was preceded by extensive statewide consultation with Aboriginal communities. We have been guided by an Aboriginal Advisory Group auspiced by the Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia since 2007.

Major areas of focus include:

- Maternal health and wellbeing
- Children's health, wellbeing and development
- Social determinants of health
- Engagement with health services
- Connections to family, community, culture and language.

Mothers in the study completed a baseline questionnaire with an Aboriginal researcher in the first year after the birth of the study children (July 2011-June 2013). Approximately, one quarter of all Aboriginal families that had a baby in South Australia within this period are taking part. The families taking part come from regional and remote communities (including Ceduna, Yalata, Port Lincoln, Whyalla, Port Augusta, Coober Pedy, Riverland, Murray Bridge and Mount Gambier) as well as metropolitan Adelaide.

A second wave of follow-up of mothers and children (aged 5-8 years) was undertaken between 2018 and 2021. Mothers and carers of the study children completed a structured questionnaire with an Aboriginal researcher that asked about the health and wellbeing of mothers and about the health and wellbeing of the study children. The children took part in activities to assess their cognitive, speech and language development. So far, 248 families have taken part in follow-up (72%).

## Citation for this infographic:

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The research team has produced several academic papers and 7 Policy Briefs:

**Policy Brief #1** Antenatal care – women's views and experiences of the Aboriginal Family Birthing Program Services and other public models of antenatal care

**Policy Brief #2** Social health issues in pregnancy and implications for the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal women during pregnancy

**Policy Brief #3** Achieving equitable access to antenatal care – discusses the impact of the Aboriginal Family Birthing Program on women's access to antenatal care

**Policy Brief #4** Improving the health of Aboriginal babies – discusses the links between cannabis use, smoking and social health issues during pregnancy and low birthweight.

**Policy Brief #5** Safeguarding the health of Aboriginal mothers and babies – women's experiences of accessing postnatal primary care.

**Policy Brief #6** Social health issues – focuses on social determinants of women's health and wellbeing around the time the study children were starting primary school

**Policy Brief #7** Health consequences of family and community violence

**Aboriginal Families Study Policy briefs and papers can be downloaded at:**

<https://www.mcri.edu.au/research/projects/aboriginal-families-study/news-and-publications>

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