

THANK YOU!

We hope you have enjoyed this newsletter. Thanks again for all the help you have given us so far. If you have any ideas about things you would like to see in future versions of **Next Steps News** please let us know.

There's far too much information in the study to even begin to cover it in something like this but there's more on the website (www.nextstepsstudy.org.uk).

If you have any questions about the study – or about anything to do with education, training or services for young people – then get in touch with us through the website or email: nextsteps@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk. We'll do our best to answer.

You can also find out a lot more about help, advice and services for young people at www.need2know.co.uk.

The Next Steps team



We will be writing to you again shortly inviting you to take part in the study. You will have the option to take part online, over the telephone, or with an interviewer in your own home. We hope to make taking part in the study as easy as possible for you. We will be including the £8 voucher as a thank you for taking part in the study, so look out for it!

Whether you're at university, are still at school or college, on an Apprenticeship, in a job, looking for work, or just taking some time to decide what you want to do – we hope you can take part again because your voice matters. Only by following young people's experiences can we increase our understanding of how our policies impact on their lives. Only by listening to what you think and want can we help all young people get the best from their lives.

NEXT STEPS



Welcome to the third edition of Next Steps News.

You're a member of the **Next Steps Study**. This is a unique study which is very important to us. That means that **you** are important to us, so thank you for helping to make this study such a success.

Many surveys give a one-off snapshot of how someone is at the time they are interviewed. However, as you know, **Next Steps follows young people's lives over a number of years and sees how and why changes happen – giving us a fascinating and dynamic picture.**

A study like this can really help us plan for the future. Now that the study has been running for over five years, we have been able to build up a really interesting picture of how and why young people make the choices they do. This stage in your lives is particularly important in terms of making decisions about what you want to do with your life, so we hope you'll be able to take part again this year.

Our website dedicated to the Next Steps study is still up and running, and we update it regularly to let you know what is happening with the study and what findings have come out of it. If you do have access to the internet please go to www.nextstepsstudy.org.uk and have a look.

In the second edition of Next Steps News, we included some results from the interviews back in 2005 and 2006. This time we thought we'd let you know about what we've been doing with the findings from the surveys that you take part in, as well as giving you a taster of some of the things you were doing last time we spoke to you.



department for
children, schools and families



GfK NOP

MOVING INTO HIGHER EDUCATION

When we spoke to you last year, we asked those of you who had applied to university and accepted a place on a course which university was your first choice. The five most popular universities are (not in order):

Most popular universities for males:

The University of Leeds
The University of Manchester
The University of Nottingham
The University of Sheffield
The University of Southampton

Most popular universities for females:

Birmingham City University
The University of Leeds
The University of Manchester
The University of Nottingham
Sheffield Hallam University

When we asked you why you chose to apply to particular universities, for a lot of you the place and the location was important.

PROUD ACHIEVEMENTS AND PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

As you may remember, over the last few years we have asked you what things you have been happy or proud about doing or achieving in the last 12 months, and what things you are looking forward to doing or achieving in the next 12 months. We have been really impressed by the wide variety of activities you have been involved with, and hearing your responses to these questions is fascinating. Here are just some of the things that you said you were proud of achieving in the last 12 months:

"I got a job with the leading hairdresser in the UK"

"I went on tour with my band in Germany"

"I went to Tanzania on a two week charity trip building schools"

"I qualified as a bricklayer"

"I passed my driving test first time!"

"I have passed my NVQ level 2 in childcare and have been given a permanent job in a nursery"

"I applied for 'Britain's Got Talent' next year!"

As well as these things, lots of you mentioned that you were proud of getting into university, your exam results, getting a job or being promoted at work, your achievements in music, drama, dance or sport, volunteering or charity work you have done. And many of you expressed pride in your own personal development such as successful relationships, having children or moving out of home and becoming more independent.

When we asked you what you were looking forward to doing or achieving lots of you mentioned similar sorts of things. But some of you also said you were looking forward to going on holiday or travelling, taking a gap year before university, as well as enjoying your freedom and relaxing for a while. Here are some other things you were looking forward to doing:

"Climbing Mount Kilimanjaro, and volunteering in Kenya this summer"

"Planning a world trip, in order to write a geography book with a friend"

"Having an interview to work as a member of cabin crew"

"Seeing my son's first birthday"

"Starting my plumbing qualification"

"Going to the USA on a football scholarship"



What has been done so far with the information you have given us?

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF, the people who manage Next Steps) is busy using the data you have supplied us with so far:

- DCSF is working hard to publish its second National Statistics Bulletin using the latest Next Steps data, which will be published on the DCSF website in June 2009, so keep an eye out for that.
- The first National Statistical Bulletin, using some of the data from the Next Steps study between 2004 and 2007, was published in June 2008. It focused on the five strands of the DCSF's Every Child Matters Agenda: 'Be Healthy; Stay Safe; Enjoy and Achieve; Make a Positive Contribution; and Achieve Economic Well-being'. It is available for you to read on the DCSF website: www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SBU/b000795/index.shtml.
- There is a project underway to look at bullying and which sorts of people are more likely to report being bullied. Another project is looking at the sorts of things young people are involved with, looking at everything from voluntary work, playing musical instruments and doing sports to smoking, drinking and taking drugs, to see if we can better understand the roles these have in the lives of young people.
- The data is being used to look at those respondents who became disengaged whilst in compulsory education, so that DCSF can better understand the reasons for this and can be better equipped to support other similar young people in the future.
- There is also a project underway to look at those of you who took on part-time work whilst at school, to see what impact working may have had on what you have ended up doing so far.

When these projects are ready, their reports will be published via the DCSF website (www.dcsf.gov.uk) and DCSF will use them to help their policies in these areas.

A few of you have commented on the questions that were asked in the last interview regarding ethnicity and religion, with many of you feeling that these questions were quite different to questions we've asked in the past. This set of questions was asked specifically so that we could better understand your views about the community in which you live and how you feel some people may be treated. DCSF will be analysing this data as soon as it is available. We've also listened to how you felt about answering these types of questions and will improve them if we ask them again in future interviews.

It's not just DCSF who are using the data within Government; other Departments are using it too:

- The Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) has recently used it to look at those who wanted to go into Higher Education.
- The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) is using the data to look at the effects of living in rural areas on educational choices, experiences and outcomes.
- The Cabinet Office has also used some of the findings from Next Steps. In December 2008, it published a joint report from the Social Exclusion Task Force and the Department for Communities and Local Government which used some data from the Next Steps study. It focused on aspirations and attainments of young people in deprived communities.

More information about these projects and a sample of some of the findings from them can be found on the Next Steps website.

The findings from Government research such as Next Steps are often reported in the media. On the website you can find links to some examples, including articles that use data from Next Steps in The Daily Telegraph and The Times.

