

Growing Up in Ireland: Adapting data collection methods in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Introduction

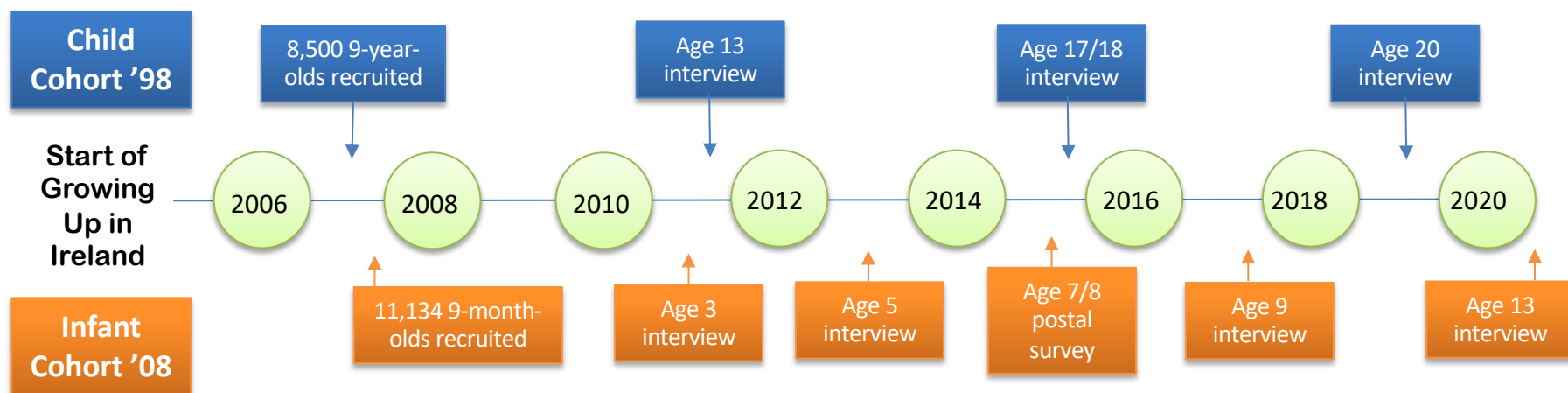
AIM OF GUI?

To improve our understanding of the experiences & development of young people in Ireland, with a view to informing policy & services

HOW?

Face-to-face (in-home) interviews with two cohorts of young people

Fig: Timeline of Fieldwork in GUI



Outline of a 'normal' GUI visit

- Family receives **advance letter/info pack** from GUI study team
- Interviewer makes **personal visit to family home** to arrange an interview (first contact always face-to-face)
 - **Interviewer administers a questionnaire** to (both) parents and young person at home (CAPI)
 - Parents and young person **self-complete sensitive questionnaire** (CASI)
 - Interviewer takes **physical measurements**
 - Young person completes **cognitive tests**
 - Interviewer leaves **time-use diary** with young person

Key challenges



Remote working environment



Interviewer training



Advance contact with families



Mode of interviews



Content of questionnaires and types of data collected

Interviewer training



- Typically in-person at GUI offices
- Conducted remotely via Microsoft Teams during COVID

Positives

- Cost, time & environmental benefits
- Recorded

Negatives

- Miss social interaction
- May be less appropriate for inexperienced interviewers

Advance contact with families

- **Pilot phase:** trialled different options
- Receiving advance contact improved response rates but....
- **Consent process** too burdensome
 - long script for interviewers, dedicated area on GUI website not very effective as most did not look it up online
- **Main phase:** outsourced the print/posting of advance contact packs



Mode of interviews



Main interviews - Computer assisted
telephone interviews

Interviewers' main role



Sensitive interviews - Computer
assisted web interviews

Hosted by Central Statistics Office

Content-related changes

- Longitudinal consistency
- Pilot focused on testing COVID-related questions and new items
- Main phase – separate COVID section at beginning of main
- Altered wording of a few items (i.e. asked to refer back to when schools were open)
- Physical measurements: self-report
- Cognitive assessment: semantic fluency test
- Time-use diaries: dropped



Conclusions

- Significant adaptations made to ensure that fieldwork could continue close to planned timeline
- Main 13-year fieldwork currently underway – response rate?
- Some negatives:
 - Difficult to maintain strong rapport in remote setting
 - Loss of accurate physical measurements, time-use diaries dropped and limitations to type of cognitive assessments that can be conducted
- Some adaptations are arguably **preferable**
 - Notable environmental/cost-related benefits e.g. interviewer training
 - Interviewers don't need to be located close to the families

Thanks

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