

Summer 2022



FAMILY ECONOMICS STUDY (FES) NEWS

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Directors' Note

Dear FES Families,

From all of us at the Family Economics Study, THANK YOU for continuing to be part of FES during these uncertain times. Over the past two years, more than 9,000 FES families participated in the main FES, the Child Development Supplement (CDS), and the Transition to Adulthood Study (TAS). More than 90% of all FES families participated! Your ongoing loyalty is truly amazing. We appreciate your continued support and participation.

We also welcomed 500 new FES families over the past year. We hope these new interviews are the first of many for your family, as you share with us how your family grows and changes over time. For those of you who have been with us for decades, we sincerely hope you will encourage the next generation to participate. It is exciting that we now have participation from three, four, and, in some cases, five generations of FES family members!

In Spring 2023, the 43rd wave of FES will be launched. It is vitally important to hear from each of you, so we can understand how recent changes in the world have affected you and your family. We will also launch supplemental studies later in 2023 for eligible individuals and families. Updated information on all of these components, how to contact us, and new FES research can be found at our website: www.fes.isr.umich.edu.

Your contributions to FES have made this study a national treasure for scholarly research in the United States. We cannot emphasize enough how much we appreciate the time and effort you give us in doing your interview.

Sincerely,

Katherine McGonagle and Narayan Sastry
FES Co-Directors

NEW FEATURES

Over the past few FES waves, we have developed new tools to make completing the study easier and more convenient. In 2019, we added an online scheduler for you to book a date and time for your telephone interview, and in 2021 we tested a web version of the full interview and added an electronic payment option that allows for quick deposit of your token of appreciation payment.

New this wave: You can update your contact information online using a secure web portal and receive a token of appreciation.

We have also updated our website. You can scan the QR code on the right using your smartphone's camera, or navigate to the following URL -



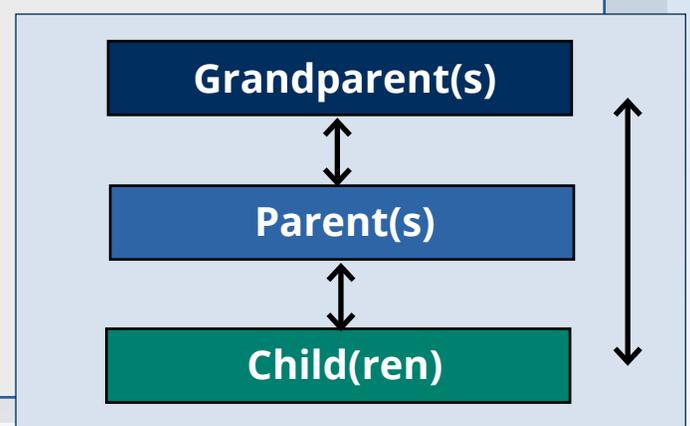
www.fes.isr.umich.edu

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We are excited to announce the recent successful collection of saliva from many children and adults in families that participated in CDS. We will use the saliva to create genetic measures for new research. We are very grateful for the participation of these CDS families.

To make these data even more valuable, some participants in multi-generational families, including parents and grandparents of CDS participants, will be asked to provide saliva after completing the main FES interview. Those who do so will receive an extra token of appreciation.

By adding genetic information to FES, researchers will be able to answer new questions about how social and genetic environments influence people's outcomes over their lives and how families transmit characteristics across generations through both social and genetic processes.



Well-Being at Older Ages

<https://bit.ly/3o0kSsq>

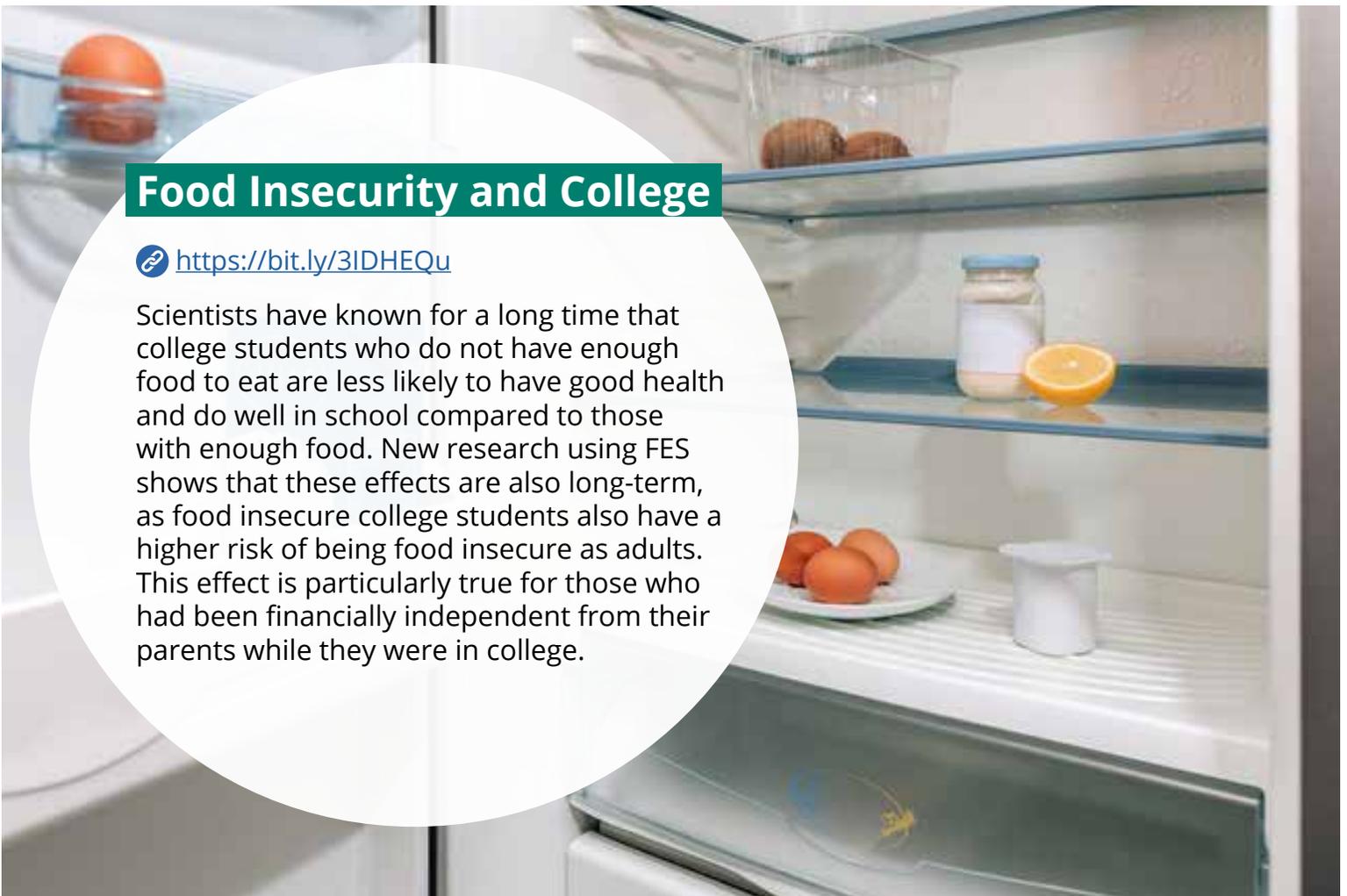
Well-being is one important way that scientists can measure quality of life as people age. Well-being is often defined as being free from a health problem or disability. In a new study based on the FES Disability and Use of Time Supplement, researchers created a new measurement for well-being that includes other aspects of quality of life beyond disability, such as income and wealth, personal relationships, and activities—like hobbies. Scientists can only discover this type of new information because you and your family have participated in FES.



Food Insecurity and College

<https://bit.ly/3IDHEQu>

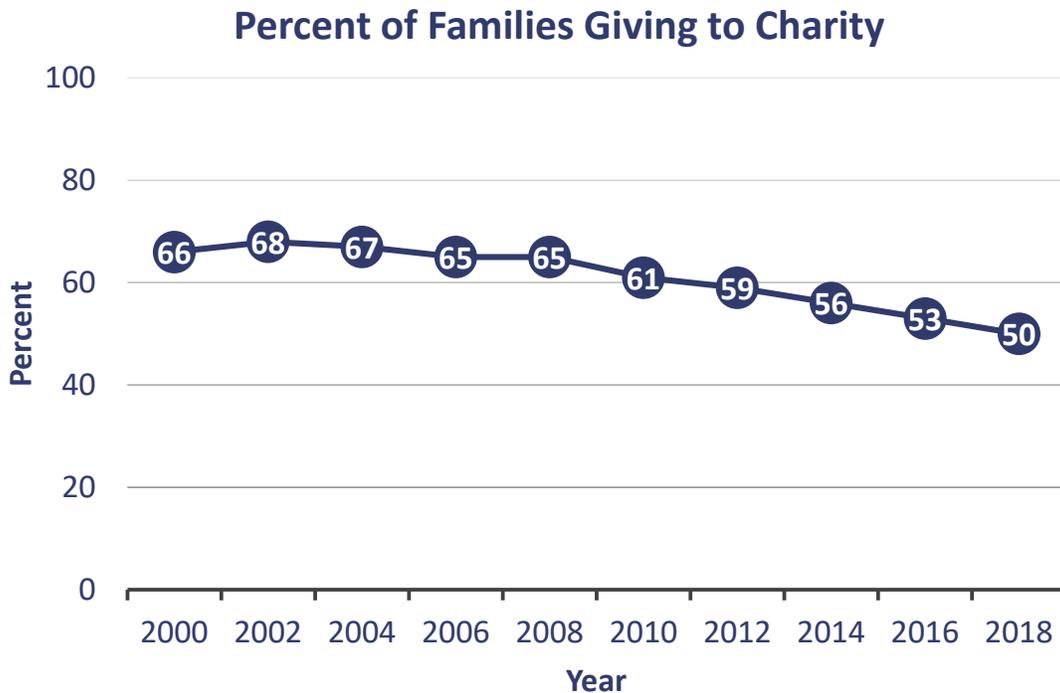
Scientists have known for a long time that college students who do not have enough food to eat are less likely to have good health and do well in school compared to those with enough food. New research using FES shows that these effects are also long-term, as food insecure college students also have a higher risk of being food insecure as adults. This effect is particularly true for those who had been financially independent from their parents while they were in college.



In 2018, Fewer than 50% of Families Donated to Charity

<https://bit.ly/3cb85kh>

COVID-19 has had many effects on the economy in the United States, including the amount of money families can afford to donate to charity. Even before the pandemic, though, the number of families that donated money to charity was falling each year. FES first began collecting information about charitable donations for the year 2000, when 66 percent of families donated to a charity. Since then, the number of families donating has gone down, and in 2018 for the first time less than half of families made a charitable donation.



Youth's Mental Health Benefits from Participation in the Arts

<https://bit.ly/3O2BQ3V>

Participation in the arts is something that many young people enjoy. New research using the FES Transition to Adulthood Study shows that the arts are also good for mental health. Researchers found that young adults who frequently participated in music, dance, theater, visual arts and writing reported better mental health than young adults who did not participate. Scientists think this due to the idea of “flow,” where individuals are completely involved in enjoyable activities.

Health Effects of High-Quality Childhood Education

<https://bit.ly/3O54iCr>



Most research on early childhood education focuses on short-term improvements in reading and math skills. Because families like yours have participated in FES since 1968, scientists can also look at how education in childhood affects people over their entire life. In a new study, researchers found that cancer, heart disease, stroke, and dying young are less likely for those with high quality early childhood education. Men are particularly helped by childhood education, with nearly all the additional costs of early education balanced by health care cost savings as adults, while about half of the costs are balanced by savings for women.

Link Between Disability and Mortgage Distress

<https://bit.ly/3nVZIRI>



A new study using FES shows that not only does having a major health problem make it much more likely that a family will fall behind on their mortgage payments, those with major health problems are also far more likely to report that they expect to fall behind on their payments. The researchers argue that these expectations can lead to greater mental stress, which makes it even harder for people in poor health to stay current on their mortgage.

Work-Related Asthma

<https://bit.ly/3AMTAXh>



New research using nearly 48 years of FES data shows that people in certain high-risk occupations are more than four times as likely to have a doctor tell them they have asthma compared to those with low-risk jobs. These results show the importance of health care providers asking patients about their jobs in order to help with an asthma diagnosis and for employers in high-risk occupations to take more steps to reduce the risk of asthma for their workers.

DID YOU KNOW...?

- Over 82,000 people have participated in the FES since it began in 1968.
- There are some FES individuals whose great-great-grandchildren are now part of the study.
- FES families live in all 50 states and abroad as well.
- The FES will be collecting its 43rd wave in 2023, covering 55 years of change in the United States.
- None of this would be possible without you! Thank you for being part of our FES family tree.