

# Children of same sex attracted parents score high on health and wellbeing

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Jason, Ruben and Adrian Tuazon-McCheyne. Credit: Jonathan Canlas

Australian children of same-sex couples fared better on average than families from the general population on measures of general health and family cohesion, but continue to be subject to discrimination, interim findings of a University of Melbourne led study has found.

Lead researcher Dr Simon Crouch, from the McCaughey Vichealth Centre for Community Wellbeing at the University of Melbourne said the early findings suggested Australian children with same-sex attracted parents were developing well.

"These children are growing up in a range of contexts and score well on measures of health and wellbeing in the face of discrimination," he said.

Early findings taken from the global index the Child Health Questionnaire, measured the health of the children across a number of domains including physical activity, mental health and behavior. Children with same-sex attracted parents were seen to score particularly well in the domains of general health and family cohesion.

The Australian Study of [Child Health](#) in Same-Sex Families (ACHES) involved 500 children aged two months to 17 years from 315 parents. The parents described a range of sexual orientations including homosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual and queer, and were from all states around Australia except the Northern Territory.

Interim results revealed:

- Children aged five to 17 years with same-sex attracted parents showed a significantly better score on [general health](#) and family cohesion when compared to Australian children from all backgrounds and family contexts.
- For all other [health measures](#) there were no statistically significant differences
- 80 per cent of respondents were female parents and 18 per cent were male parent, with two per cent of parents being of other gender.
- Ninety-three per cent of parents are currently in a relationship.
- Australian children with same-sex attracted parents and their families continue to face discrimination in a variety of contexts.

The University of Melbourne led study, is the biggest of its kind to investigate the complete physical, mental and social wellbeing of children with same-sex attracted parents, and in particular the role that

stigma and discrimination play in their health and wellbeing.

"There are an increasing number of children with same-sex attracted parents in Australia. International research to date has suggested that these [children](#) are doing well in many aspects of their lives, however they are often affected by the discrimination that their families may experience due to parental sexual orientation," Dr Crouch said.

"These results are promising and we look forward to further findings which we expect later this year," he said.

Dr Crouch is from the Jack Brockhoff Child [Health](#) and Wellbeing Program at the McCaughey Vichealth Centre for Community Wellbeing. The program works towards a vision of every child having the opportunity for a fulfilling and healthy life.

**More information:** [goo.gl/1CSR3](https://goo.gl/1CSR3)

Provided by University of Melbourne

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