Improving questionnaire content for parents and families living apart

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Understanding Society
THE UK HOUSEHOLD LONGITUDINAL STUDY

UKRI

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Non-technical summary

Understanding Society provides a unique insight into families living together or apart. For parents who separate whilst part of the study, it follows them pre-partnership, into parenthood and post-separation. However, parents living apart (PLA) also include non-co-resident parent couples and parents who were never in a relationship, as well as step-families. As a household survey, it is imperative that we identify and collect information about parents living apart in all forms to enable research into pathways, trajectories and outcomes for sample members and their dependent children.

The *Understanding Society* questionnaire currently asks modules across a range of domains. In this Working Paper we have reviewed questionnaire content in eleven modules in *Understanding Society* where we collect information specifically relevant to parents living apart (PLA). We explain the changes made to questionnaire content in waves 14 and 15 of the main survey to improve the identification of and data we provide about families across households. The changes will significantly enhance the data we produce for scientific and policy research and impact and this Working Paper should help users understand the rationale and nature of these changes.

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Keywords: children, parents, questionnaire design, households, questionnaire content

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A note about terminology

As a household survey, we have traditionally used terms which differentiate between parents living in and outside of the household where the child resides, such as 'resident' and 'non-resident' parents. However, we recognise that these terms do not reflect the reality of life for many families and that terminology in different domains has evolved to reflect diverse parenting practices. As a longitudinal survey we are constrained in some respects in keeping terminology consistent across waves and also in using 'lay language' commonly understood by participants. Where appropriate, and possible, we have substituted these terms for 'parents with care' and 'parents living elsewhere' (Birks et. al 2006) while noting that even these terms do not completely capture the range of parenting arrangements and realities (Goldman et. al 2019). The terms used in this Working Paper are loosely defined below to aid interpretation:

- Birdnesting: where children remain in the 'family home' and each parent moves in and out to reside with the child.
- Non co-resident parent couples : parent couples in a continuing relationship who live in different households.
- Families across households: umbrella term for families not all residing in the same household including separated parents, non co-resident parents, parents who were never in a union, children living with non-parents and step-families.
- Guardian/kinship carer: responsible adults caring for a child who is not their biological, adoptive or step-parent.
- Dependent child: a child under 16 (note in the Child Maintenance module some questions are also asked of children aged 16-19 in full-time education using the DWP definition).
- Non-resident parent/parent living elsewhere: the parent (biological, step, adoptive) not residing in the same household as the dependent child.
- Resident parent/parent with care: the parent (biological, step, adoptive) residing in the same household as the dependent child.
- Parents living apart (PLA): umbrella term for parents not residing in the same household including separated parents, non co-resident parents, parents who were never in a union, and parents with children from another relationship living elsewhere.

Background

The Office for National Statistics suggest there are currently 2.5 million separated families in the UK affecting 4 million children (ONS 2023). Using our study data, Bryson et al. (2017) estimated that around 2% of families with children separate each year, and it has been estimated that 15% of babies in Britain are born to parents not living together (Kiernan, 2004).

An initial review of *Understanding Society* reveals that PLA is conceptually much broader than 'separated families' and includes non-coresident couple parents, parents who were never in a relationship and step-families. It is imperative that this full range of parents living apart and their dependent children are visible. Pathways, trajectories and outcomes may well differ for parents and children following separation compared with those for parents who never lived together, or were never in a relationship. Understanding a child's living arrangements and family dynamics also has important implications from a policy perspective, for example, in assessing support arrangements, poverty or benefit eligibility.

Understanding Society currently collects comprehensive longitudinal data from a representative group of UK households, including families with dependent children, both intact and living apart. Its design makes it ideally suited for capturing the dynamics of parents living apart (PLA) arrangements. It collects information on family life before and after the birth of children and separation, tracks individuals who leave the household and provides data from the perspective of both 'parents with care' and 'parents living elsewhere' as well as on children under 10 and directly from young people aged 10 and above. The data collection includes a large number of households and comprises annual demographic, social, economic, health and behavioural data and histories. The study has the potential for linkage to administrative data and incorporates the British Household Panel Survey, creating a longitudinal dataset from 1991-present day. It has been identified as 'the best available longitudinal data for studying family separation' (Bryson et al., 2017).

The dataset has been used to research the impact of parental separation on income, employment, housing, mental health and life satisfaction (Brewer & Nandi 2014), to explore how family forms change throughout childhood (Brewer et al., 2016), how post-separation parenting and contact is practiced (Haux et al., 2017) and to create a profile about 'non-residential fatherhood' (Poole et al., 2016; Goldman & Burgess 2017), shared care arrangements (Haux and Luthra, 2019) and kinship care (Roth and Aziz 2012).

However, there have also been a number of recommended methodological and substantive improvements to the questionnaire content in the literature (see Bryson and McKay, 2018, Haux and Luthra, 2019, Goldman and Burgess 2017). This Working Paper summarises one strand of our work to improve the way we capture PLA in the study (see Benzeval 2019). Specifically, it focuses on the review and enhancements made to questionnaire content in waves 14 (fieldwork 2021-2023, data to be released at the end of 2024) and wave 15 (fieldwork 2022-2024, data to be released at the end of 2025). The review of questionnaire content was carried out with two aims in mind:

1) how we can *identify the full range of PLA;* and,
2) how we can improve *data collected* from existing PLA sample members, including longitudinal data.

Structure of the Working Paper

This Working Paper sets out:

- All current modules and questions in *Understanding Society* which are specifically related to PLA and why they were included in the review.
- The review process, which involved drawing on robust methodological research, incorporating best practice observed in similar surveys, using recommendations in the literature, and consultation with both subject matter experts and end-users.
- The design of wave 14 (fieldwork 2022-2024).
- The substantive changes to questionnaire content in wave 15 (fieldwork 2023-2025) modules.

Current modules relevant to Parents Living Apart (PLA)

We identified eleven modules in the main survey of relevance to PLA. The table below summarises the purpose of each module and the rationale for including it in our review.

Module	Waves	Purpose of module	Rationale for review
Household Grid	Annual	The Household Enumeration Grid identifies household members and collects some basic information about them. Any knowledgeable adult in the household can fill this in. Of relevance to parents, it asks about relationships within the household and identifies any new children and/or parents or partners in the household since the last interview.	To find ways of improving our *identification* of PLA and ensure PLA content is only asked where appropriate.
Fertility History	Annual	The Fertility History module is asked of all new entrants to the survey (excluding rising 16 year olds) and boost sample respondents (if relevant). It collects information about biological, adopted and step children the respondent has or has ever had. In wave 1, this module collected information for each adopted and biological child. From wave 2 the module collected information on the number of adopted and biological children and the DOB of the eldest child only.	To find ways of improving our *identification* of PLA for new entrants.

		In IP10 an experiment was carried out to improve identification of 'non-resident' parents and reasons for separation (Al Baghal *et al*., 2018). As part of this, the Fertility History module was adapted to ask an expanded set of questions about biological, step and adopted children not resident in the household and identify their name and DOB, and identify the 'non-resident' children's other parent.	
Annual Event History	Annual	The Annual Event History module is asked of all continuing respondents and rejoiners. It collects information about events that may have happened since the last interview. As it relates to parents and children living apart, it asks about new pregnancies, new births and household changes (e.g. moving in with a partner/spouse, separation, changes in marital status), and any cohabitation spells since the last interview.	To find ways of improving our *identification* of PLA for both continuing respondents and rejoiners.
Partnership History	Annual	The Partnership History module is asked of all new entrants to the survey (excluding rising 16 year olds) and boost sample respondents (if relevant). It collects information about marriage and cohabitation history. In wave 1, this module collected information for each marriage or cohabitation spell. From wave 2 the module collected information about the first marriage/cohabitation spell only.	To find ways of improving our *identification* of PLA for new entrants.

		Information about current marriage or cohabitation is collected in the household grid (above).	
Family Networks	Rotating: waves 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15 NOTE: Rotation plans may change to a three-year pattern, and so this module is planned to next appear in wave 18.	The Family Networks module is a biennial module asked in every odd wave (first asked in wave 1). It asks about relatives that the respondent may have living elsewhere, how often they have contact and about the exchange of help. As it relates to parents and children living apart, it asks about any sons/daughters alive who are not living with the respondent and identifies those under 16. It does not differentiate between biological, adopted and step children. It asks a set of questions of these children (e.g. frequency of contact, overnight stays, distance, closeness of relationship, payment of child support). These questions are phrased generally, i.e. "How often do you visit, see or contact your child(ren) under 16 living outside the household?" and were not linked to individual children if the respondent has more than one child. The questions are repeated every 2 years, and do not acknowledge answers given by respondents in the last relevant wave.	To find ways of: 1) improving our *identification* of PLA through direct questioning and 2) enhance the *quality* of the data collected about a sample member parent and their child(ren) living elsewhere. The aim is to build on and refine the data collected about 'non-resident' parent sample members.
Child maintenance	Rotating: waves 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15	The Child Maintenance module is a biennial module asked in every odd wave (first asked in wave 3). It is asked	To find ways of:

	NOTE: Rotation plans may change to a three-year pattern, and so this module is planned to next appear in wave 18.	of all respondents who have a dependent biological or adopted child in the household under 16 or aged 16-19 and in full-time education with their other biological or adoptive parent absent from the household. It asks the resident parent about: • receipt of child maintenance payments and in-kind assistance from the non-resident parent. • non-financial questions relating to contact, overnight stays and decision-making the non-resident parent has with their resident child. • basic information about the non-resident parent such as their employment status, marital status and whether they have any other children.	1) improving our *identification* of PLA through direct questioning and 2) enhance the *quality* of the data collected about a sample member child's parent living elsewhere. The aim is to build on and refine the data collected about child sample members (and their sample member resident parent) with a parent living elsewhere.
Parenting Style	Asked when child is aged 10	The Parenting Styles module is currently only asked of cohabiting couples. Each wave, both parents of a 10 year old child are asked a 37-item set of questions based on the Parenting Styles and Dimensions Questionnaire (PSDQ) to identify authoritarian, authoritative and permissive parenting styles (Baumrind 1971).	To assess whether these questions could be asked of PLA to measure 'parenting apart'/co-parenting styles and facilitate comparative analysis with cohabiting couples.
Parents and Children	Rotating: waves 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15.	The Parent and Children module is a biennial module asked in every odd	To assess whether the questions could be asked of PLA to facilitate

	NOTE: Rotation plans may change to a three-year pattern, and so this module is planned to next appear in wave 18.	wave (first asked in wave 1). It asks parents of children under 16 in the household 21 questions . It includes questions about the child's schooling, how often they eat together, talk about important matters and spend leisure time together. It also asks about whether they quarrel with, slap or shout at the child and how often they hug or praise the child and whether the child is involved in rule-setting and whether rules are enforced.	comparative analysis of parenting practices with cohabiting couples.
Child development	Asked when child is aged 3, 5 and 8 from wave 3 onwards.	The childhood development module is asked of and contains 16 questions about the child's health, reading with the child, sharing meals, regular bedtime, hours spent watching TV. It also asks for parental assessment of risk aversion, child patience and delayed gratification. Specific further questions are asked at different time points: • Age 3 –whether the child is happy/content, irritated, difficult to comfort, curious/active, communicative, empathetic and any health concerns. It also includes questions based on the Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scale.	To assess whether these questions could be asked of children living elsewhere.

		• Age 5 and 8 – child's use of computers at home, happiness and/or problems at school.	
Strengths and Difficulties (SDQ)	Asked of children aged 5 and 8 from wave 3 onwards.	A brief behavioural screening questionnaire for children aged 5 and 8. It comprises 25 items measuring positive and negative behaviours Five items each are aggregated to five subscales, measuring emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyperactivity and peer relationship problems. The SDQ Total Difficulties Score will be missing if more than two items making up any of the subscales are missing. The fifth scale, measuring prosocial behaviour remains separate.	To assess whether these questions could be asked of children living elsewhere.

Review Process

The review was conducted during 2020-2022. Changes to questionnaire content are never made lightly and content is only updated if it demonstrates clear benefit to the data for research. We consulted relevant topic experts and data users on proposed changes to ensure longitudinal compatibility for researchers. Relevant questions from other surveys were incorporated where appropriate and existing data was analysed to inform any changes. We also conducted an extensive literature review of papers using UKHLS for research on PLA and methodological papers reviewing UKHLS content. This comprehensive process aimed to thoroughly evaluate the quality and coverage of existing modules while pinpointing areas requiring new content or amendments.

Where applicable, the changes we proposed to questionnaire content to enhance research opportunities on PLA were based on robust methodological research. We drew upon research with sample members and the wider public:

- **Qualitative research with separated families** (general public and UKHLS sample members) to ask about which topic areas would be appropriate to cover when interviewing both parents in separated families (Kantar Public, 2017). The findings from this report revealed a general concern about the study contacting non sample members as they interpreted the purpose as being to check if they were telling the truth. There was a reluctance among participants to delve into emotional questions, particularly those related to the quality of their relationship with non-resident parents, in case this stirred up negative emotions and created tension. Further, certain fathers held negative perceptions of the legal system, leading to their reluctance to participate in the survey. These concerns were centred around apprehensions about their fathering being assessed and the information being shared with family justice system authorities.
- **Innovation Panel Experiment**: tested a set of questions aspiring to identify more, and a more representative sample of, non-resident parents than achieved previously. Although tentative, it found that fertility history questions asked in combination with children living elsewhere questions increased the non-resident parent sample by a quarter (Al Baghal 2018, Bryson and McKay 2018).
- **Qualitative Interviews with both halves of separated couples** (UKHLS sample members) to understand issues around co-parenting and to help develop new questions to identify shared care circumstances (Haux & Luthra, 2019). This found that questions about involvement in important decisions related to the child was a good proxy for co-parenting (in combination with contact frequency questions) and recommended that it also be asked of parents living elsewhere.

Review outcomes

Under the twofold aim of the review a number of changes were made to improve identification of and data collected from PLAs.

Under aim 1 of the review, improving identification of PLA could be achieved in general by:

- asking about dependent children of adults in the sample living in and outside of the household across a range of modules (fertility history and direct questions about children elsewhere/parents elsewhere) as was tested in Innovation Panel 10.
- More timely identification of children with only one parent in the household (e.g. new pregnancies and newborns) and accurate recording of the relationship status with the other parent;
- Improving longitudinal data collection about children and PLA.

The detail of the identification changes to questionnaire content are contained in the tables 1-5 below. Please note, for reasons of space, the tables do not contain the complete questionnaire modules, only those variables which are illustrative or have been amended or added.

Under aim 2 of the review, improving questionnaire content, we identified several changes particularly relevant to wave 15 (fieldwork 2023-2025) rotating module content: Child Maintenance and Family Networks/Non-Resident Children. The details of the question changes are contained in the tables 9 & 10 below. Please note, for reasons of space, the tables do not contain the complete questionnaire modules, only those variables which are illustrative or have been amended or added.

This next section summarises the rationale and outcome of the review of existing modules, module by module.

1. Household Grid module

In general we found that the Household Grid accurately recorded familial relationships and household changes to identify PLA and direct them to specific PLA modules later in the questionnaire. However, the grid did not always recognise same sex parents, legal parents who have a child conceived through sperm/embryo donation or surrogacy or single parents who adopt alone or have a child alone through surrogacy or sperm/embryo donation. It therefore required updating to ensure that respondents were only asked PLA content throughout the questionnaire where appropriate, i.e. where there was in fact another parent to a dependent child in the sample living elsewhere.

To remedy this, we acknowledged the challenge of presenting a straightforward set of parent options to all household grid respondents while recognizing the minority of cases requiring additional parent categories. Our new approach involved presenting relationship options in two lists: the first list included commonly used options e.g. 'biological,' 'adoptive,' or 'step parent,' with a 'none of the above' response leading to a second list that included the specific option of 'legal parent'. It is hoped that this will accurately record legal parentage and ensure that respondents are not asked questions about an 'absent parent' where this is inappropriate.

The review also identified that other improvements to content could be made to:

1) Identify the father (if applicable) of new pregnancies where there is no spouse or partner in the household;
2) Identify the other biological or legal parent (if applicable) of newborns where there is no spouse or partner in the household.

Evidence suggests that a significant minority of fathers do not live with the mother of their child during the pregnancy and at the time of the child's birth (Kiernan 2016). New variables were added in waves 14 and 15 to record the relationship with the other parent in these scenarios (e.g. out of union or non co-resident couple) in the Annual Event History module and New Current Pregnancies module (see tables 1 and 8 below).

2. Fertility History module (waves 14 and 15)

Under aim 1 of the review, we identified that improvements could be made to the Fertility History module to:

- Record each biological, adopted and step child living elsewhere (as trialled in IP10 see Al Baghal 2018);
- Record the respondent's relationship to the other parent for each child;
- Ask respondents if their resident female partner aged 16-49 is pregnant;
- Ask female entrants aged 16-49 if they are pregnant and identify the father (if applicable) where there is no spouse or partner in the household.

We acknowledge that using retrospective questions is subject to recall biases, however it was decided that this approach would maximise our chances of identifying children and parents elsewhere of new entrants we might otherwise miss. This was especially important for wave 14 where we had the general household boost.

We adapted the questions in wave 14 (see table 1), and further refined some in wave 15 (see table 6). The changes appear as amendments to the 'Fertility History' module and in a new module 'Annual Fertility History' for newborns (see table 7).

3. Partnership History module

Under aim 1 of the review we found that the Partnership History module provides valuable background information relating to partnership trajectories for PLA. However, partnership history information is of limited value in itself in identifying PLA because:

- It only identifies parents who may have cohabited or married in the past and not those who may have had a child while not living together;
- If a respondent has multiple previous partnerships it is not possible to definitively link a particular partnership and their parentage to an individual child in the study without making an assumption.

We concluded that parentage would be best captured in other modules (e.g. Family Networks, Child Maintenance and a new Non-Resident Children module) and so no changes were proposed to this module as part of this review.

4. Annual Event History module (waves 14 and 15)

The review concluded that the existing Annual Event History module adequately captures PLA and would work for rejoiners who may have been absent from the study for a lengthy period of time as it allows for the possibility of fathering or having multiple children and for multiple household changes since the last interview.

Given the evidence that 15% of babies are born to parents not in a co-residential partnership at the time of birth (Kiernan and Smith 2003) we introduced new modules to identify parents living elsewhere for new pregnancies and births in a timely way. We believe this change captures the majority of scenarios but recognise that some unique situations may remain, such as newly adopted non-resident children since the last interview, of particular relevance to same-sex couples.

Using information from the Household Grid and Annual Event History module we identify:

1) the father (if applicable) of new pregnancies where there is no spouse or partner in the household (see table 8 Current Pregnancies module)
2) the other biological or legal parent (if applicable) of newborns where there is no spouse or partner in the household (see table 7 Annual Fertility History).

5. Family Networks module (wave 14)

As part of aim 1 of the review of this module we identified that vast improvements could be made to content in wave 14 to:

- identify *individual* children living elsewhere and ask questions about the respondent's interaction and relationship with each child. This would greatly improve data quality and facilitate a much broader range of research questions.
- *attempt* longitudinal tracking of children living elsewhere e.g. to look at patterns of contact with an individual child under 16 over time. As the child living elsewhere is not a sample member, this will involve asking for the name, date of birth and sex of the non-resident child to enable us to identify and match the child across waves, the success of which will be dependent on data quality. Once we have received the data from the first wave (release end of 2024) we can review to see if there any limitations to this approach. (See Non-Resident Identifier module and table 4 below).
- record information about biological, step and adopted children separately. This will facilitate more accurate reporting and comparative analysis of PLA.
- acknowledge answers given in previous waves. This will hopefully improve participant experience of the survey and may reduce questionnaire burden for continuing respondents.

Further data about these children, e.g. about contact and overnight stays with the sample member parent is then collected in a new bespoke Non-Resident Children module (see subheading 6.9.2. and table 5 below).

As part of aim 2 of the review we looked at questionnaire content. One strength of the study highlighted in the literature is that we ask non-resident parents directly to report on their involvement with and relationships with children living elsewhere rather than relying on the reports of resident parents. However, reviews have also noted some limitations to the data in this module, including gaps in the data:

- questions do not record the number and age of non-resident children, when the parents separated, or information about the resident parent and the parents relationship with each other (Haux et al., 2017).
- 50/50 or shared care arrangements were treated (incorrectly) as mutually exclusive of other contact frequency response options.

A lack of harmony across modules:

- Parents with children in the household were asked how often the child *sees* their parent living elsewhere whereas parents living elsewhere were asked the much broader question of how often they 'see, visit or *contact* their child' (Haux, McKay, Cain 2017).

- Response options for contact asked about the parent living elsewhere did not match those asked about the child living elsewhere, notably, the latter had the option of 50/50 or shared care where the former did not (Haux, McKay, Cain 2017).

A general need to update questions to reflect contemporary realities of co-parenting arrangements:

- questions only capture some aspects of 'father involvement', such as frequency of contact (broadly understood as face-to-face or virtual) overnight stays and payment of financial support (Poole et al., 2016). Parents with children living elsewhere were not asked about their involvement in important decisions (Haux & Luthra 2019), an important indicator of co-parenting.
- More generally, questions about contact frequency may not accurately measure the realities of contact patterns, which are often complex and ambiguous especially in situations where the 'parent living elsewhere' may sometimes reside in the main household and spend time with their child in another house independently (Waller & Jones 2014) or contact is more fluid without fitting a scheduled pattern. Further, respondents may encounter difficulties in reporting, unsure whether these types of questions are asking about frequency (i.e. how often) or quantity (i.e. how much time) (Goldman et al. 2019).

We therefore made a number of changes in wave 15 in a new bespoke Non-Resident Children module (see subheading below).

6. Child Maintenance module (wave 15)

No module changes were deemed necessary under aim 1 of the review. However, we identified various potential amendments to enhance questionnaire content under aim 2, ranging from minor to more substantive changes.

a. Minor improvements

- Acknowledge that some parents live apart in a continuing relationship. This was easily achieved by routing out those parents in a continuing non-resident relationship from questions which assume they are separated (modules **rnrpe, rlength**) and references to 'ex-partner' in other questions were removed (**cmvol, recon2, relex, exjob**).
- Improve terminology used to describe PLA. Drawing on research, we replaced labels of 'resident' and 'non-resident parent' with 'parent with care' and 'parent living elsewhere' as far as possible (Callister & Birks 2006, Goldman & Burgess, 2017)
- Mirror information collected from sample members about a resident child's parent living elsewhere to match that collected from sample member parents with a child living elsewhere as far as possible (Haux et al., 2017).

b. New variables

- Ask about shared care arrangements separately from, and in addition to, contact frequency (see **sharcare**).
- Collect information about the sex of the parent living elsewhere and frequency of remote contact with their child(ren) (see **rsex**, **seekid2**)
- Collect information about the geographical distance of parent living elsewhere from the child (**rfar**). This was not previously collected but has consistently been shown to be associated with contact (Cheadle et al., 2010 and Bradshaw et al., 1999).

Another shortcoming of the data identified by Bryson et al. (2017) is that *Understanding Society* '[b]eyond use of the statutory child maintenance system…contains little on the statutory, legal and voluntary support parents used when separating or to resolve issues postseparation'. More recent studies have underlined the importance of collecting data about the support needs of separating families (Symonds et al 2022).

Under aim 2 of the review, we found that the previous options for cmservice and cmsvcoth_code were of limited value because they:

- Did not always tell us *why* the support was needed because organisations could cover a range of topics.
- Omitted some commonly cited sources of support e.g. counselling, GP and religious institutions.
- Included small local services rather than national.
- Included options which were either never or rarely selected by respondents.
- Encouraged the selection of 'Other' which required manual recoding in-house and often repeated options already listed.
- Did not capture service involvement where support was not personally sought by the respondent (e.g. following referral or court application by an ex-partner).

We therefore developed new questions (**cmsvcwhy-cmsvccon**)) with the following benefits:

- Clearer options for survey respondents.
- More detailed information for users: what support was for, as well as who from, and the involvement of formal services, facilitating greater research opportunities.
- It was informed by and reflects raw data in **cmsvcuse** and frequencies obtained in **cmservice.**
- It can be fielded to sample members with children living elsewhere (in Non Resident Children), it was previously only asked of parents with a child in household with a parent living elsewhere.
- It allows for possibility that multiple types of support were provided by one or multiple organisations.
- The changes involved only minor amendments to the questionnaire: and by recategorizing existing data (which can also be done retrospectively) it ensured longitudinal consistency.

The detailed changes can be found in table 9. Below. We do however recognise that separation is not a 'one-off' event but an ongoing process and that support may well be sought prior to the decision to separate (Symonds et al., 2022).

7. Parenting styles

The PSDQ questionnaire scale appears to have been designed for cohabiting parents (Baumrind 1971) and no literature could be found applying this scale to the situation of separated parents. Our review found that several of the items could theoretically apply to PLA, but some may embody difficulties of interpretation for both respondent and user.

For example, 'reasons for requests not given' (**ps4**) is intended to measure authoritative parenting however it may be exacerbated if the relationship between parents is characterised by conflict. Measures such as spanking the child (**ps6**) necessarily presuppose face-to-face contact, and questions about allowing a child to input into rules (**ps22**) implies a common set of rules which might not exist in two-household parenting arrangements.

Given this complexity, we decided not to ask parents living apart the parenting styles module in wave 15. We had initially considered a 14-question scale based on the Coparenting Relationship Scale (CRS) (Feinberg et al., 2012) but given demands on questionnaire time we did not include it in this round of changes.

However, parents living apart is a diverse and varied group, including divorced or separated individuals, those in a continuing non-resident relationship as well as those who may never have been in an union. Co-parenting style measures need to be comprehensive enough to capture this range of situations and take account of relationship history (Waller, 2012). We believe co-parenting style measures need to consider the extent of 'co-operative' or 'conflicted' co-parenting (Macooby and Mnookin 1992) such as:

- discussion/agreement on childrearing,
- support/trust between parents vs conflict,
- the presence/absence of shared 'rules',
- paternal involvement and parental warmth (Pleck 2010).

8. Parents and children

During the consultation it was suggested that the Parents and Children module be extended to PLA arrangements. However, our review found that while certain module items are suitable for asking a sample member parent about their child living elsewhere, other questions take on a different meaning in the context of two-household parenting. For instance, questions about leisure time 'outside the home' (**socialkid**) does not recognise time spent with a parent elsewhere which may well be in the 'second home'. Questions about sharing meals together are designed to measure family cohesion, which is already disrupted in two-household parenting, and so the question would capture cohesion within the 'new' family unit rather than cohesion between the parent living elsewhere and the child. Questions relating to the frequency with which they quarrel (**quarrel**) or involve their children in making rules (**ruleskid**) is relative to the amount of time spent together e.g. quarrelling 'less than once a week' when they see each other every other weekend may well be considered frequent. Furthermore, questions related to physical discipline (**slapkid**) and warmth (**cuddlekid**) assume some level of face-to-face contact with the parent.

Given some of the complexity, we decided to continue to ask about involvement in important decisions (**cplmp**), of both the parent with care and parent living elsewhere, as a proxy for co-parenting with contact frequency questions as recommended by Haux & Luthra (2019).

9. Child development

We considered extending these modules to ask of children living elsewhere, but concluded that further work and consideration of the consequences of doing this is necessary before doing so.

10. Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire

As mentioned above, further consideration is needed before rolling this module out to children living elsewhere.

New modules

In addition to the above changes to existing modules, the review highlighted the need to create a new module that consolidates the identification of all non-resident children in individual modules (Fertility History, Annual Events and Family Networks). This assigns a unique identifier for each non-resident child. Research in the USA found that 'fertility history type questions' may reveal additional non-resident children not reported in response to direct questions about children living elsewhere

(Stykes et al., 2013). This was tested in an experiment in Innovation Panel 10, which, although tentative, did find that fertility history questions asked in combination with children living elsewhere questions increased the non-resident parent sample by a quarter (Al Baghal et al., 2018, Bryson and McKay 2018).

We therefore included two new modules in wave 14, building upon the experiment in Innovation Panel 10: the Non-Resident Identifier module and Non-Resident Children module.

11. Non-Resident Identifier module (new in wave 14 only)

This module records the DOB, sex and name of each non-resident child and allocates an identifier, and records their relationship to the respondent i.e. biological, adopted or step child. Note that from wave 15 this is superseded by the Child Summary Module (below).

12. Non-Resident Children module (new module shortened version in wave 14/ full version in wave 15)

In line with aim 1 of the review, this module adapts and improves upon information collected in the Family Networks module (above) to identify whether all non-resident children have the same other parent and asks who the child lives with and whether they have ever lived with the respondent (**livedwithnrc**) and when (**mthslwc, yrslwc**).

As per aim 2, modifications to the questionnaire content for the Family Networks module encompass alterations to existing variables, and are contained in the new 'Non-Resident Children module' as outlined in Table 9 and summarised below:

- Collect further information about the parent the child lives with and their circumstances e.g. their sex (**nrcpsex**), age (**nrpagenr**), whether they are in a couple (**rnrprenr**), married (**rnrpmanr**) have other natural children (**rpchldnr, rpchldlvnr**), or are living with other children (**rothchldnr**) or are employed (**exjobnr**) (Haux et al., 2017).
- Mirror information collected from parents with care and parents living elsewhere, relating to the sample member parent's relationship with the parent the child lives with (**reltopwc**), how often they see eachother (**recon2nr**), how friendly they are (**relexnr**), the length of their relationship (**rlengthnr, rlgthunr**)
- Loop all questions per individual child rather than asking in general e.g. weekend stays (**wekidnr**), overnight stays (**staykidnr**), distance (**farkidnr**)
- Make contact measures more comparable by separating out questions about face-to-face and virtual contact (**seekidnrc2**).
- Align contact response options more closely by adding 'fortnightly' as an option and removing '50/50' shared care (**seekidfreq**). We draw upon findings that contact frequency may be better understood as 'episodes of time spent together over a fortnightly period' (Goldman et al. 2019). We have added an option of 'fortnightly' and an interviewer instruction to select this when contact is every other weekend to improve the validity and consistency of this measure.
- Ask about shared care arrangements separately from, and in addition to, contact frequency (**sharcarenr**).
- Ask the sample member parent about involvement in important decisions relating to the child living elsewhere (**cplmpnrc**) to measure parental involvement and co-parenting (Haux & Luthra 2019).
- Ask whether the sample member parent accessed support, and what type, upon separation or whether any formal services were involved. (**cmsvcwhynr-cmsvcconnr**)

- Remove question about 'closeness' to the child (**relkid**) (Haux & Luthra 2019).

We have mirrored content collected about parents living elsewhere (Child Maintenance module) and child living elsewhere (Non-Resident Children module) as far as possible but acknowledge that this is incomplete e.g. the former collects information about children under 16 and aged 16-19 in full time-education whereas the latter only asks about children under 16. Historically, child maintenance was more financially focused whereas family networks was more family-focused and so the decision was made to keep this longitudinally consistent acknowledging that the child maintenance module has evolved over time to capture much more family-oriented content.

13. Child Summary module (new in wave 15)

This module replaces the Non-Resident Identifier module in wave 14 and pulls together all children identified in the various modules to present to the participant to confirm or amend.

14. Guardian module (new in wave 15)

Historically, *Understanding Society* has identified children not living with a biological, adoptive or step- parent but with a 'responsible adult' and some research has been carried out using this data (Aziz and Roth 2012). Our aim is to build upon this to provide a more detailed picture of the characteristics and circumstances of children living with 'guardians'. It is hoped this can improve the evidence base on the needs and experiences of 'non-parent carers' (Cusworth et al., 2023) as well as facilitate comparative research of kinship care with one-household or two-household parenting. The module will ask:

- Whether either parent resides in the same household (**chparliv, chmoth, chfath)**;
- Contact (face to face and virtual) with both parents (**chmcont, seemoth, seemothvir, chfcont, seefath, seefathvir)** ;
- Overnight stays with both parents (**staymoth, stayfath**);
- Distance from both parents (**mothfar**, **fathfar**);
- Parents' employment (**mothjob, fathjob**);
- Involvement of formal service e.g. Family Courts, Children's Services, Cafcass, police (**chservuse, servuseoth**);
- Whether the guardian has parental responsibility or a court order (**legalpar**);
- Financial support from either parent (**parpay, csamount, csfreq, othsupp**);
- How much long the child will live with the respondent (**staylong, staylongnum**) and whether they will return to the parents (**chreturn**);
- Reason why child does not reside with parents (**chlivnot, chlivnotmain**).

The detailed questions can be found below in table 11.

Remaining gaps

This review has led to a number of changes to significantly improve our identification of and data collected from the range of parents living apart in the UK. Underlying the review is the ongoing need to balance maintaining longitudinal consistency to measure change over time while capturing emerging phenomena such as shared care and non-residential parenthood from birth. Further, as a multi-domain survey, space is at a premium. Modifications to the questionnaire content are undertaken with careful consideration, ensuring that any updates are implemented only when they contribute to the overall improvement of the study and enhance the richness of the research data. While our questionnaire changes have addressed many of the concerns identified as part of the review and in the literature, we acknowledge that some areas may require further methodological testing and/or research before making amendments, as noted below:

- **Co-parenting and parenting apart**: we had initially recommended an 14-question scale based on the Coparenting Relationship Scale (CRS) (Feinberg et al., 2012). However, given competing demands on questionnaire time we dropped this in favour of retaining the proxy measure **cplmp**, based on Haux & Luthra (2019). It is hoped that our changes to capture better information about the frequency and content of communication between parents, in combination with shared decision-making will capture key dimensions of shared care. However, we recognise that questions about 'important decisions' may be a less accurate measure of co-parenting for younger children.
- **Two-household parenting**: we recognise there is a definitional issue using terms such as 'parent with care' and 'parent living elsewhere' when children may split their time between two households. We also acknowledge that 'parents living elsewhere' may reside part-time with children and the 'resident with care' or the family may adopt a 'birdnesting' approach, where the children remain in one house and the two parents move in and out.
- **Reasons for separation** – this was asked in IP10 but given the sensitive nature of the questions it concluded 'While it appears feasible to ask separated parents about the reasons for their separation, more nuanced work is required on the profile of respondents within each experimental arm before final conclusions can be drawn regarding the optimal approach' (Bryson and McKay 2018).
- **Services used by separating couples**: as previously mentioned, we recognise that separation is a process rather than a singular event and services may well be used prior to leaving the relationship (Symonds et al., 2023), and that support may have been sought but not found, inaccessible (e.g. for financial reasons) or not sought (e.g. too distressing).

We welcome the opportunity to hear from and collaborate with users to address some of these challenges moving forward.

Detail of the Wave 14 (2022-2024) changes, module by module

Table 1: Fertility History module (W14)

Variable label	Rationale	Variable name	Question text	Comment
Fertility intro	Explain the reason for asking about each individual child ever fathered/had to include and identify non-resident children.	**Fertintroadp2**	The next questions are about any children you have or have ever had - including biological, adopted and step-children. Because family life is changing and many more parents nowadays don't live with their children, it's really important to us that Understanding Society builds an accurate picture of what family life in the UK looks like. So, we're asking people about all of their children. So, as well as telling me about any children you currently live with, please make sure you tell me about any children you don't live with - including children you were never or are no longer in touch with, or any who may have died.	This question was first asked in IP10. See (Al Baghal et al., 2018)
Biological child(ren) preamble	New entrants asked about each biological child.	**Childint**	I'd like to ask you about each child, starting with your eldest child.	This question was first asked in IP10.
Child resident - biological	Establish whether the child is resident or non-resident.	**Lchlv**	Is your [eldest/next oldest] child still living with you?	This question was first asked in IP10.
Relationship to child's mother/father	Record the respondent's	**Reltopwcbfh**	Which of these best describes your relationship to your child's father/mother?	A version of this question was first asked in IP10.

	current and past relationship to child's other parent if other parent is absent from household.		1. Currently in relationship/married but not living together 2. Previously married, now separated/divorced 3. Previously lived together, now separated 4. Previously in a relationship but didn't live together 5. Never in a relationship/just friends 6. Sperm donation	NOTE 1: Acknowledging its imperfection, this version aimed to capture both past and current relationships in one question. NOTE 2: 'sperm donation' was added in w14 as an option to account for situations where there isn't necessarily 'another parent'. We recognise potential confusion in instances where mothers separated from a second female parent and had a child through sperm donation. For these reasons from wave 15 we adapted this further (see **reltopwcbbirth reltopwcbcurr** below)
PNO of resident biological child	Resident children linked to household grid.	**lchnofh**	Please confirm which child this is.	A version of this question was first asked in IP10.
Name of biological resident child who is not on the HH grid	Resident child's name collected if not in household grid.	**lchname**	Could you please tell me their name?	This question was first asked in IP10.

Child age last lived with resp (New)	Age of child when last resident.	lchalfh	How old was [he/she] when [he/she] last lived with you? If the child never lived with you, please enter 0.	This question was first asked in IP10.
Ever had adopted child(ren)	New entrants asked about each adopted child.	Ladopted2	Have you ever adopted a child? Please include any adopted children, even if you are not living with them or are not in touch with them, or any who may have died.	This question was first asked in IP10.
Year adopted child joined resp HH	Record when they joined household.	Lacyb4	Thinking about your [eldest/next eldest] {if LNADOPTED2 > 1} adopted child, in what year did they begin living with you?	This question was first asked in IP10.
Adopted child still lives in resp HH	Establish whether the child is resident or non-resident.	Laclv	Does he/she still live with you?	This question was first asked in IP10.
Relationship to child's mother/father	Record the respondent's current and past relationship to child's other parent if other parent is absent from household.	reltopwcafh	Which of these best describes your relationship to your child's father/mother? 1. Currently in relationship/married but not living together 2. Previously married, now separated/divorced 3. Previously lived together, now separated 4. Previously in a relationship but didn't live together 5. Never in a relationship/just friends 6. Sperm donation	First asked in IP10, this question underwent additional modifications in Wave 15 to account for respondents adopting alone and to distinguish between past and current relationship status. See **reltopwcaelse**, **reltopwcadop** and **reltopwcacurr**
PNO of adopted child in HH	Resident adopted children linked to household grid	lacno	Please confirm which child this is.	This question was first asked in IP10.

Name of adopted resident child who is not on the HH grid	Child's name collected if not in grid.	**lacname**	Could you please tell me their name?	This question was first asked in IP10.
Age of adopted child when last lived with resp	If adopted child not resident asked age when last lived with respondent.	**lacal**	What age was [he/she] when [he/she] last lived with you?	This question was first asked in IP10.
Ever had step-child(ren)	New entrants asked about each step child.	**lstep2**	Have you ever lived with any step-children? Please include any adopted children, even if you are not living with them or are not in touch with them, or any who may have died.	This question was first asked in IP10.
Year step-child joined resp HH	Record when they joined household.	**Lscyb4**	Thinking about your [eldest/next eldest] {if LNSTEP2 > 1} step-child, in what year did they begin living with you?	This question was first asked in IP10.
Step-child still lives in resp HH	Establish whether they are still resident.	**Lsclv**	Does he/she still live with you?	This question was first asked in IP10.
Relationship to child's mother/father	Recording the respondent's relationship to child's other parent if other parent is absent from household.	**reltopwcsfh**	Which of these best describes your relationship to your child's father/mother? 1. Currently in relationship/married but not living together 2. Previously married, now separated/divorced 3. Previously lived together, now separated 4. Previously in a relationship but didn't live together 5. Never in a relationship/just friends 6. Sperm donation	A version of this question was first asked in IP10. NOTE: a further amendment was made in wave 15 to remove options 5 and 6 as step child is defined as a child from a spouse/partner's previous marriage/relationship. Additionally, changes were implemented to distinguish between past and current relationship status. See

				chsreltopwcstep . chsreltopwcscurr
PNO of step-child in HH	Resident step children linked to household grid.	**lscno**	Please confirm which step-child this is.	This question was first asked in IP10.
Name of resident step-child who is not on the HH grid	Child's name collected if not in grid.	**lsname**	Could you please tell me their name?	This question was first asked in IP10.
Age of step-child when last lived with resp (New)	If step child not resident asked age when last lived with respondent	**lscal**	What age was [he/she] when [he/she] last lived with you?	This question was first asked in IP10.
Partner pregnant	New male entrants asked if resident female partner aged 16-49 is pregnant	**partpregfh**	Is your partner currently pregnant?	NOTE: in wave 15 this variable was also asked of females with a resident female partner and asked about any person the respondent has had a sexual relationship with see **partpregfh** in a new module 'Current pregnancies'.
Pregnancy due day father	Record expected due date.	**pregduedffh**	What is the expected due date for this baby?	This question was asked in IP14 and IP15.
Currently pregnant	New female entrants aged 16-49 asked if pregnant.	**preg0fh**	Are you currently pregnant?	This question was asked in IP14 and IP15.

Pregnancy due day mother	Record expected due date.	**pregduedmfh**	What is the expected due date for your baby?	This question was asked in IP14 and IP15.
Relationship to child's mother/father	If no spouse/partner in household female respondent asked about her relationship to unborn baby's father.	**reltopwcffh**	Which of these best describes your relationship to your unborn baby's father? 1. Currently in relationship/married but not living together 2. Previously married, now separated/divorced 3. Previously lived together, now separated 4. Previously in a relationship but didn't live together 5. Never in a relationship/just friends 6. Sperm donation 7. Deceased	A version of this question was first asked in IP10. NOTE: this variable was amended in wave 15 see **reltopwcfcp** in a new module 'Current pregnancies'.

Table 2: Annual Event History module (W14)

Variable label	Rationale	Variable name	Question text	Comment
Fathered children since last interview	Continuing male respondents asked whether they fathered biological children since last interview.	**father**	Since we last interviewed you on [ff_IntDate] have you fathered any children, including any children who are not living with you here?	No changes were made to these questions, but they are shown here to illustrate how we identify new dependent children in the sample for continuing respondents which is then fed into the 'Current Pregnancies' and 'Annual Fertility History' modules.
Number of new children	Multiple new children recorded if applicable.	**nchild**	How many children have you had since [ff_IntDate]?	
Currently pregnant	Continuing female respondents aged 16-49 asked whether currently pregnant.	**preg0**	Are you currently pregnant?	
Pregnancy due month/year mother	Record expected due date.	**Pregduemm/ pregdueym**	What is the expected due date for your baby?	
Child still lives with parent	Continuing respondents who have fathered or had a biological child since last interviewed asked if child is still resident.	**lchlv**	Is your [first/second/third/fourth] child still living with you?	
Child's sex	Sex of child recorded.	**lchsx**	[Are/were] they a boy or a girl?	
Child's birth month/year	DOB recorded.	**Lchbm/lchby4**	Can you tell me his/her month and year of birth?	
Child age when last lived with parent	If not resident, record age they last	**lchal**	How old was he/she when he/she last lived with you?	

	lived with respondent.			
PNO of child	Resident children linked to household grid.	**lchno**	Please confirm which newborn child this is.	
Relationship to child's father	If no spouse/partner in household female respondent asked about her relationship to unborn baby's father.	**reltopwcf**	Which of these best describes your relationship to your unborn baby's father? 1. Currently in relationship/married but not living together 2. Previously married, now separated/divorced 3. Previously lived together, now separated 4. Previously in a relationship but didn't live together 5. Never in a relationship/just friends 6. Sperm donation 7. Deceased	A version of this question was first asked in IP10. NOTE: this variable was amended in wave 15 see **reltopwcfcp** in a new module 'Current pregnancies'.

Table 3: Family Networks module (W14)

Variable label	Rationale	Variable name	Question text	Comment
Biological children under 16 not living in HH	All respondents asked about biological children u16 not living in household. Separating out non-resident biological, adopted and step-children facilitates a greater range of research questions and allows for comparative analysis with questions in the child maintenance module.	**biou161**	Are any of your **biological** children living outside this household aged under 16? 　1. Yes, all under 16 　2. Yes, at least one under 16 　3. None under 16	This was asked in IP15.
Number Biological children under 16 not living in HH	Number of non-resident biological children u16 recorded.	**Biou16num1**	How many?	This was asked in IP15.
Adopted children under 16 not living in HH	All respondents asked about adopted children u16 not living in household.	**adopu161**	Are any of your **adopted** children living outside this household aged under 16? 　1. Yes, all under 16 　2. Yes, at least one under 16 　3. None under 16	This was asked in IP15.
Number Adopted children under 16 not living in HH	Number of non-resident adopted children u16 recorded.	**Adopu16num1**	How many?	This was asked in IP15.
Step children under 16 not living in HH	All respondents asked about step children u16 not living in household.	**stepu161**	Are any of your **step** children living outside this household aged under 16? 　1. Yes, all under 16 　2. Yes, at least one under 16 　3. None under 16	This was asked in IP15.

Number Step children under 16 not living in HH	Number of non-resident step children u16 recorded.	Stepu16num1	How many?	This was asked in IP15.

Variable label	Rationale	Variable name	Question text	Comment
Non-resident child's name	Respondents with non-resident biological, adopted and/or step children u16 identified from Family Networks, Fertility History or Annual Event History modules are fed into this module and asked for name, sex, DOB, relationship and each child is allocated an identification number.	nrcname	(First loop) We would like to know a bit more about your child(ren) under 16 who do not live with you. Now thinking about all of your biological [and / ,] {if FAMILYNETWORKS.BIOU16NUM1 > 0 | FERTILITYHISTORY.NNRCBIOU16 > 0} / step [and / ,] {if FAMILYNETWORKS.STEPU16NUM1 > 0 | FERTILITYHISTORY.NNRCSTEPU16 > 0} / adopted {if FAMILYNETWORKS.ADOPU16NUM1 > 0 | FERTILITYHISTORY.NNRCADPU16 > 0} children not living here with you, starting with the eldest, could you please tell me their name? (Subsequent loops) Now thinking about your next eldest biological, step or adopted child under 16 not living here with you, could you please tell me their name?	A version of this first appeared in IP10. This has been modified to only ask about children under 16.
Non-resident child's DOB: day/month/year		**Nrcdobd/ Nrcdobm/ Nrcdoby**	What is [NRCNAME]'s date of birth?	A version of this first appeared in IP10.
Non-resident child's sex		**Nrcsex**	Is [NRCNAME] male or female?	A version of this first appeared in IP10.
Child's relationship to Respondent		**Reltonrc**	Is [NRCNAME] your biological, adopted or step child? 1. Biological child 2. Adopted child	A version of this first appeared in IP10.

			3. Step child	
Identification number for each Step, Biological or Adopted		**Nrcidnumber**		A version of this first appeared in IP10.
Total number of biological, adopted and step children under 16 outside of household		**Totalnrca**		A version of this first appeared in IP10.

Table 5: Non-Resident Children module (new module W14 based on IP10)

Variable label	Rationale	Variable name	Question text	Comment
All children in hh have same other biological/adoptive/step parent	If respondent has more than one non-resident child u16 they are asked if all children have same other biological/adoptive/step parent.	**exsamepwc**	Thinking about your children under 16 who do not live in this household, is the mother/father of all your children the same person? 1. Yes 2. No	Introduced in IP10, this question may pose confusion in cases involving surrogacy, sperm donation, and adoption, where more than two parents may be involved. Suggestions on how to address this complexity are welcome.
Other parent code	Multiple parents are given codes.	**pwcparnam**	I'd like to ask some questions about each person with whom you've had children. So that I don't ask the same set of questions twice, I need to record which children you had with each of your partners. We don't need your partner's name, but we'll use a code to identify which children have the same parent.	This question was first asked in IP10.
Non-res child mostly lives with	For each non-resident child u16 identified asked: Who child mostly lives with;	**Nrclives**	Who does [NONRESID.NRCNAME] currently live with (for most of the time)?	This question was first asked in IP10.
Child ever lived with Respondent	Whether they ever lived with respondent;	**livedwithnrc**	Has [NONRESID.NRCNAME] ever lived with you (for most of the time)?	This question was first asked in IP10.

Months/years since Respondent lived with child	How long since they last lived together.	Mthslwc/ Yrslwc	How long is it since you lived at the same address as [NONRESID.NRCNAME]?	This question was first asked in IP10.
How often contact child outside HH	Respondent asked about frequency of contact with each non-resident child.	Seekidnrc	How often do you visit, see or contact [NONRESID.NRCNAME]? 1. Never 2. A few times a year 3. Once a month or less 4. Several times a month 5. About once a week 6. Several times a week 7. Almost everyday 8. Shared care 50/50	This question was first asked in IP10. It amends **seekid** (family networks) to loop questions per child. NOTE: this was amended further in wave 15 to limit it to face-to-face contact and to add the option of 'fortnightly' to make it more comparable to that asked of parents with care. See **seekidfreq** and **seekidnrc2**.
How often remote contact child outside HH	Respondent asked about frequency of remote contact with each non-resident child.	Seekidnrc1	How often do you have contact by telephone, email, letter, skype or webcam with [NONRESID.NRCNAME]? 1. Several times a day 2. Daily 3. Several times per week 4. At least once per week 5. Several times per month 6. At least once per month 7. Less often	This question was first asked in IP10. NOTE: this was amended further in wave 15 to update the response options and make it more comparable to that asked of parents with care. See **seekidnrc2**.

Relationship to child's mother/father	Respondent asked about relationship with each non-resident child's other parent.	**Reltopwc**	Which of these best describes your relationship to [NONRESID.NRCNAME]'s mother/father? 1. Currently in relationship/married but not living together 2. Previously married, now separated/divorced 3. Previously lived together, now separated 4. Previously in a relationship but didn't live together 5. Never in a relationship/just friends	This question was first asked in IP10. Note this was amended in w15 to add the option of 'deceased' see **reltopwc**.
Months/years since separated from child's parent	If separated from each non-resident child's other parent, record when this was.	**Pwcseparatem/ Pwcseparatey**	How long ago did you and [NONRESID.NRCNAME]'s mother/father separate?	This question was first asked in IP10.

Detail of the Wave 15 (2023-2025) changes, module by module

Table 6: Fertility history module (W15)

Variable label	Rationale	Variable name	Question text	Comment
Relationship when child born	**NEW VARIABLE** This asks about past relationship to biological child's other parent.	**reltopwcbbirth**	Which of these best describes your relationship to [Chbname]'s mother/father/other parent when [Chbname] was born?	
Child adopted with someone	**NEW VARIABLE** This checks the type of adoption.	**reltopwcaelse**	Did you adopt [Chaname] with anyone else? Yes No, I adopted alone No, my partner was [CHILD NAME]'s biological parent	This will record instances of single person adoption, or adoption of a partner's child to accurately record the presence of two parents and avoid directing respondents to questions about the 'other parent' where not applicable.
Relationship with other parent	**NEW VARIABLE** This asks about past relationship to adopted child's other parent.	**reltopwcadop**	Which of these best describes your relationship to this person when you adopted/became [Chaname]'s legal parent? Married and Living together Cohabiting/Living together Something else	
Relationship with child's other parent	**NEW VARIABLE** This asks about current relationship to adopted child's other parent.	**reltopwcacurr**	Which of these best describes your current relationship to [Chaname]'s other parent? Currently in relationship/married but not living together Currently married but not in a relationship and not living together	

			Separated Divorced Never married and no longer in a relationship Deceased	

Table 7: Annual fertility history module (W15)

Variable label	Rationale	Variable name	Question text	Comment
Relationship when child born	**NEW VARIABLE** Identifies relationship to other parent at biological child's birth	**reltopwcnbbirth**	Which of these best describes your relationship to [CHILD NAME]'s mother/father/other parent when [CHILD NAME] was born? 1. Married and living together 2. Cohabiting/living together 3. Separated 4. Divorced 5. A couple/married.in a relationship but not living together 6. Married but not in a relationship and not living together 7. Not in a relationship/just friends 8. Sperm donation/surrogacy 9. Deceased	This amended **reltopwc (w14)**. It will allow us to route certain respondents out of questions about an absent parent where not appropriate.
Partner sperm donor/ surrogacy	**NEW VARIABLE** Checks the circumstance of sperm donation/surrogacy.	**Reltopwcnbdonor**	Can we just check, was the sperm donation/surrogacy using your partner's eggs/sperm? 1. Yes 2. No 3. I didn't have a partner at the time	This will ensure we do not route respondents to questions about the 'other parent' where there is none and that we accurately record the presence of two parents.
Partner's child adoptive/legal parent	**NEW VARIABLE** Check if any partner at the time was the adoptive/legal parent	**reltopwcnblpar**	Is/was your partner [CHILD NAME]'s adoptive or legal parent? 1. Yes 2. No	

| Relationship with child's other parent | **NEW VARIABLE** This identifies current relationship to the other parent. | **reltopwcnbcurr** | Which of these best describes your current relationship to TF<[CHILD NAME]'s mother/father/other parent {if RELTOPWCBBirth<7}, this other parent {if RELTOPWCBlpar = 1}?

1. Currently in relationship/married but not living together
2. Currently married but not in a relationship and not living together
3. Separated
4. Divorced
5. Never married and no longer in a relationship
6. Deceased | This replaced **reltopwcbfh** (w14) by asking separately about relationship at time of birth and relationship now. |

Table 8: Current pregnancies module (W15)

Variable label	Rationale	Variable name	Question text	Comment
Partner pregnant	NEW VARIABLE To capture situations where sample members are expecting a child, within or out of union.	**partpregcp**	Is your partner currently pregnant, or is anyone you have had a sexual relationship with currently pregnant by you {if DEMOGRAPHICS.PSEX = 1}?	
Relationship to child's father	**NEW VARIABLE**	**Reltopwcfcp**	Which of these best describes your relationship to your unborn baby's father/mother? 1. Currently in relationship/married but not living together 2. Previously married, now separated/divorced Previously lived together, now separated 3. Previously in a relationship but didn't live together 4. Never in a relationship/just friends 5. Sperm donation 6. Deceased	This amends and replaces **reltopwcf** in the annual events module (w14).

Table 9: Child Maintenance module (W15)

Variable label	Rationale	Variable name	Question text	Comment
Sex of parent living elsewhere	**NEW VARIABLE** Record the sex of the parent living elsewhere.	**rsex**	Is [CHILD NAME]'s mother/father… 1 Male 2 Female	This was not previously asked.
Private maintenance agreement		**cmvol**		**AMENDMENTS** Variable label text amended from 'ex-partner' to 'non-resident parent' to acknowledge that some parents live apart together.
Frequency sees child's non-resident parent updated		**recon2**		
Relationship with child's non-resident parent		**relex**		
Marital Status at time relationship ended		**exjob**		
Distance to **child's non-resident parent**	**NEW VARIABLE** Record distance of parent living elsewhere from resident child.	**rfar**	About how long would it take you to get to where [CHILD NAME]'s mother/father lives? Think of the time it usually takes door to door. 1. Less than 15 minutes 2. Between 15 and 30 minutes 3. Between 30 minutes and 1 hour 4. Between 1 and 2 hours 5. More than 2 hours 6. SPONTANEOUS: Lives/works abroad	This was not previously asked. It mirrors information collected about the parent of a child living elsewhere (**farkid**).
Relationship to child's mother/father	**NEW VARIABLE** Capture current and	**cmreltopwc**	Which of these best describes your relationship to [CHILD NAME]'s mother/father?	This replaces **rtoget.** It mirrors information collected about the parent of

	historical relationship status with child's parent living elsewhere.		1. Currently in relationship/married but not living together 8. currently married but not in a relationship and not living together 2. previously married now separated/divorced 3. Previously lived together, now separated 4. Previously in a relationship but didn't live together 5. Never in a relationship/just friends	a child living elsewhere (**reltopwc**)
Length of relationship with non-resident parent		**Rlength rlgthu**	At the time of your relationship with [CHILD NAME]'s mother/father ended, how long had you been in a relationship with them? [Number and Unit]	**AMENDMENTS** Routing was updated to not ask these of those in a continuing relationship.
If NRP is now a couple		**rnrpre**	Is [CHILD NAME]'s mother/father currently living with someone as a couple? 1. Yes 2. No	
How often sees non-resident parent during term-time updated	This asks about face to face contact the resident child has with their parent living elsewhere.	**cseeterm2**	How often does [CHILD NAME] usually see [his/her] mother/father during term time? 1. At least once a day 2. Several times a week 3. Once or twice a week 4. At least once per fortnight 5. At least once per month	We considered how we could make this more directly comparable with **seekidnrc** in the Non-Resident Children module which asks 'how often do you visit, see, or contact.. your child living elsewhere'.

| | | | | 6. Less often
7. Never | We acknowledged that the response options between these questions are not completely harmonizable with those asked of the parent living elsewhere (non-resident children module). Following consultation we amended response options in the Non-Resident Children module to add 'fortnightly' (see **seekidfreq)** and introduced a separate question about shared care (**sharcare**) and asked separately about face to face contact and virtual contact (**seekid2**).

Our aim was to balance longitudinal consistency with achieving broad comparability. No changes were therefore made to **cseeterm2**.

We were also guided by Haux and Luthra (2019) perspective, emphasising the importance of shared decision making and communication over contact frequency per se when considering shared care. |

Shared care arrangement	**NEW VARIABLE** New question added to capture where there is a shared care or 50/50 arrangement between the sample member resident parent and parent living elsewhere.	**sharcare**	Do you have a shared care or 50/50 care arrangement? 1. Yes 2. No	This was not previously asked. This is to make it broadly comparable with questions asked of parents with their child living elsewhere (previously family networks module, now non-resident children module). (see **sharcarenr**)
Remote contact with NRP	**AMENDED VARIABLE** Recording virtual/remote contact with parent living elsewhere separately.	**seekid2**	How often does [CHILD NAME] have contact with [his/her] mother/father through letters or cards, telephone or video calls, emails and messaging, via social media or through gaming? 1. Several times a day 2. Daily 3. Several times per week 4. At least once per week 5. Several times per month 6. At least once per month 7. Less often 8. Never	This amended **seekid** (w13). It is intended to now capture only *remote* contact the resident child has with their parent living elsewhere (in addition to face to face contact asked above in (**cseeterm2**). Terminology was adapted following consultation to align with language which had been cognitively tested (Goldman et al., 2019).
Child sees non-resident parent at least once a year	**NEW VARIABLE**	**csyearly**	0. No, child doesn't see non-resident parent at least once a year	Added to allow us to route respondents with a resident child who has at least yearly

	Record whether child has at least yearly contact with their parent living elsewhere.		1. Yes, child does see non-resident parent at least once a year	contact with their parent living elsewhere into questions on co-parenting.
Accessed support services	**NEW VARIABLE** Ascertain whether support was sought. **Cmservice** (up to w13) was removed.	**Cmsvcuse**	Have you sought help from any support services for issues you may have as a result of ending this relationship? 1. Yes 2. No	The new questions provide: • Clearer options for survey respondents • More detailed information for users: what support was for, as well as who from, facilitating greater research opportunities • Allows for possibility that multiple types of support provided by one or multiple organisations • Maintains historical answers for harmonizability. Note: to maintain longitudinal consistency as far as possible we retained the phrasing 'as a result of ending the relationship' from **cmservice**
What support services are accessed for	**NEW VARIABLE** Reason for seeking support.	**Cmsvcwhy**	What did you seek support for? Please select all that apply 1. Financial support for myself 2. Financial support for my child(ren) 3. Mediation or relationship support 4. Child contact and/or living arrangements 5. Domestic violence and abuse 6. Child protection concerns 7. Counselling or mental health 8. Other medical support 9. Divorce/separation 10. Housing	

			11. Support for children/young people 12. Drug or alcohol addiction 13. Other	recognising that support may well have been sought/services may have become involved prior to the relationship 'ending'. We will continue to review how best to capture this moving forward. Furthermore, we recognise the value in also recording why support was not sought or sought and not found in a particular instance and will continue to review how to incorporate this moving forward (Symonds et al., 2022).
	NEW VARIABLE Organisation support sought from.	**cmsvcoth**	What other support did you seek?	
Other support service				

		cmservtype	Which type of support service provider did you use? • Child maintenance service/child support agency • National Family Mediation/Local mediation provider • Family Courts • Solicitor/Lawyer • Children's services/social services • Cafcass • Police • Women's Aid • National Domestic Violence Helpline • Other Domestic violence abuse and support (e.g. women's refuge, local charity) • Religious institutions • Other relationship support (e.g. Resolution, One Plus One, Marriage Care) • Separation and single family support (e.g. Centre for Separated Families, Family Lives, Families Need Fathers, Gingerbread, Tavistock Centre for Couple Relationships)	
Type of support service				

			• Counselling or mental health support (NHS/public/private/through work/Mind) • Other medical support (GP/NHS service/Health Visitor/private) • Housing (Shelter, Citizens advice, other) • Financial (Citizens advice, Money Advice Service) • Support for children/young people (e.g. Family Centre, CAMHS) • Support for drug, alcohol, anger management • Other children's charities (e.g. Barnardo's, Action for Children, 4Children) Other	
Consider using support service		cmsvccon	Is seeking help from a support service something that you would consider doing now or in the future? 1. Yes 2. No	
Involvement of formal services	**NEW VARIABLE** Capture non-voluntary involvement of formal services.	cmsvcform	Although you didn't seek help {if CMSVCUSE = 2}, did Did {if CMSVCUSE = 1} you have the involvement of any of the following formal services as a result of ending this relationship?	There is a significant research and policy need to capture when and what support families access during and post-separation (Symonds et al., 2022). We considered the finding in Kantar Public (2017)

| | | | Child Maintenance Service {if CMSERVTYPE <> 21}
`Family Courts {if CMSERVTYPE <> 22}<br><br>`Children's services/ social services {if CMSERVTYPE <> 37}
Cafcass {if CMSERVTYPE <> 4}
Police {if CMSERVTYPE <> 35}
Criminal courts
None of these
Other | which highlighted fathers' negative perceptions of the legal system and potential reluctance to participate in the survey due to concerns about it 'assessing' their fathering and/or sharing responses with the courts.

Given that a version of these questions was already being asked we decided to include it, with a reassurance as to confidentiality, but will continue to review and test how best to achieve this delicate balance. |
| *Other formal services involvement* | | **cmsvcformoth** | What formal service was that? | |

Table 10: Non-Resident Children module (W15)

Variable label	Rationale	Variable name	Question text	Comment
Non-resident child's other parent	NEW VARIABLE Check added to ensure that this module is only asked where the parents live apart and child lives elsewhere.	othphhgmmis	Can I just check, does the mother/father of [CHILDSUMMARY.CHNAMEFIN] live here with you? If so, who is it? 0 Not resident here 1 – hhgrid name	In a minority of situations a child may live elsewhere but both parents remain living together.
Non-res child mostly lives with	Looped per child	nrclives	Who does [CHILDSUMMARY.CHNAMEFIN] currently live with (for most of the time)? A parent Grandparent Other relative In care Other	This first appeared in IP10.
NRP Sex	NEW VARIABLE Sex of parent living elsewhere recorded.	nrcpsex	Is [CHILDSUMMARY.CHNAMEFIN]'s other parent male or female? Male Female	Not previously asked.
Child ever lived with Respondent		Livedwithnrc	Has [CHILDSUMMARY.CHNAMEFIN] ever lived with you (for most of the time)? Yes No	This first appeared in IP10.
Months since Respondent lived with child		mthslwc	How long is it since you lived at the same address as [CHILDSUMMARY.CHNAMEFIN]?	This first appeared in IP10.
Years since Respondent lived with child		yrslwc	Years	This first appeared in IP10.

	NEW VARIABLE This amends seekidnrc (w14) to add 'fortnightly' as an option and remove 50/50 shared care to a new separate variable (sharcarenr). This more closely mirrors those asked of the parent living elsewhere in the child maintenance module.	seekidfreq	How often do you usually see [CHILDSUMMARY.CHNAMEFIN]? Never A few times a year Once a month or less Several times a month Fortnightly About once a week Several times a week Almost everyday	Instruction to interviewer added to select 'fortnightly' for 'every other weekend'.
Frequency sees child				
Shared care arrangement	NEW VARIABLE As above.	sharcarenr	Do you have a shared care or 50/50 care arrangement? Yes No	
How often remote contact child outside HH	NEW VARIABLE This amends seekidnrc1 (w14) to mirror seekid2 (child maintenance).	Seekidnrc2	Even though you never see them, how {if SEEKIDFREQ = 1} How {if SEEKIDFREQ <> 1} often do you have contact through letters or cards, phone or video calls, emails and messaging, via social media or through gaming, with [CHILDSUMMARY.CHNAMEFIN]? Several times a day Daily Several times per week At least once per week Several times per month At least once per month Less often Never	Terminology was adapted following consultation to align with language which had been cognitively tested (Goldman et al., 2019).

Child outside HH stays with R regularly	Loop these questions per each individual child identified in Non-Resident Identifier module.	wekidnr	Does [CHILDSUMMARY.CHNAMEFIN] stay with you for weekends or school holidays on a regular basis, an irregular basis, or not at all? Regular basis Irregular basis Not at all	NEW VARIABLE This amends wekid (family networks) to loop per individual child u16 living elsewhere.
Frequency of overnight stays with respondent		staykidnr	About how many nights each week, fortnight or month does [CHILDSUMMARY.CHNAMEFIN] usually stay overnight with you?	NEW VARIABLE This amends staykid (family networks) to loop per individual child u16 living elsewhere.
Period of overnight stays		staykidwnr	What period does that cover? Week Fortnight 4 weeks/calendar month 3 months 6 months Year	NEW VARIABLE This amends staykidw (family networks) to loop per individual child u16 living elsewhere.
Time taken to get to child outside HH		farkidnr	Even though you are not in contact with [CHILDSUMMARY.CHNAMEFIN], about {if SEEKIDFREQ = 1 & SEEKIDNRC2 = 8} About {if SEEKIDFREQ <> 1 | SEEKIDNRC2 <> 8} how long would it take you to get to where [CHILDSUMMARY.CHNAMEFIN] lives? Think of the time it usually takes door to door. Less than 15 minutes Between 15 and 30 minutes Between 30 minutes and 1 hour Between 1 and 2 hours More than 2 hours SPONTANEOUS: Lives/works abroad	NEW VARIABLE This amends farkid (family networks) to loop per individual child u16 living elsewhere.

How important decisions are made in non-resident child's life	NEW VARIABLE This mirrors information collected in child maintenance module about the parent living elsewhere to loop per individual child u16 living elsewhere.	cplmpnrc	When important decisions, such as relating to education or health, have to be made in [CHILDSUMMARY.CHNAMEFIN]'s life, would you say that decisions are made... Mainly by you Mainly by other parent do you and other parent have a roughly equal say Or does it depend on the decision	As recommended in Haux & Luthra (2019).
Non-resident child's other parent in hh	NEW VARIABLE Check added to ensure that this module is only asked where the parents live apart and child lives elsewhere.	othphhgmis	Can I just check, does the mother/father of [CHILDSUMMARY.CHNAMEFIN] live here with you? If so, who is it? 0 not resident here Identified from hh grid	In a minority of situations a child may live elsewhere but both parents remain living together.
Relationship to child's mother/father	AMENDED VARIABLE A version of this question was first asked in IP10 and w14.	reltopwc	Which of these best describes your relationship to [CHILDSUMMARY.CHNAMEFIN]'s mother/father? Currently in relationship/married but not living together 8. currently married but not in a relationship and not living together 2. previously married now separated/divorced 3. Previously lived together, now separated 4. Previously in a relationship but didn't live together 5. Never in a relationship/just friends 6. deceased	NOTE: this amended reltopwc to add in option of 'deceased'.
Frequency sees ex-partner updated	NEW VARIABLE This mirrors recon2 (child maintenance) to loop per individual resident parent.	recon2nr	How often do you usually see [CHILDSUMMARY.CHNAMEFIN]'s mother/father? At least once a day Several times a week Once or twice a week At least once per fortnight At least once per month	

			At least once per year Less often Never	
Relationship with ex-partner	NEW VARIABLE This mirrors relex (child maintenance) to loop per individual resident parent.	relexnr	How would you describe your relationship with him/her these days? Is it... Very friendly Quite friendly Not very friendly Very unfriendly Mixed – sometimes friendly, sometimes unfriendly SPONTANEOUS: never see them	Acknowledging Kantar Public (2017) finding that parents were generally resistant to asking non-resident parents emotional questions (e.g. about the quality of the relationship) especially if it concerned the other partner, in case this stirred up negative emotions and created tension. We are continuing to explore and test these type of questions.
Length of relationship with resident parent	NEW VARIABLE This mirrors rlength (child maintenance) to loop per individual resident parent.	rlengthnr	At the time your relationship with [CHILDSUMMARY.CHNAMEFIN]'s mother/father ended, how long had you been in a relationship with them?	
Length of relationship with	NEW VARIABLE	rlgthunr	Years Months	

resident parent: Units	This mirrors rlgthu (child maintenance) to loop per individual resident parent.		Weeks	
Accessed support services	NEW VARIABLE This mirrors cmsvcuse (child maintenance) to loop per individual resident parent.	cmsvcusenr	Have you sought help from any support services for issues you may have as a result of ending this relationship? Yes No	
NR what support services accessed for]	NEW VARIABLE This mirrors cmsvcwhy (child maintenance) to loop per individual resident parent.	cmsvcwhynr	What did you seek support for? Financial support for myself Financial support for my children Mediation or relationship support Child contact and/or living arrangements Domestic violence and abuse Child protection concerns Counselling or mental health Other medical support Divorce/separation Housing Support for children/young people Drug or alcohol addiction Other	
NR other support service	NEW VARIABLE This mirrors cmsvcwhyoth (child maintenance) to loop per individual resident parent.	cmsvcwhyothnr	What other support did you seek?	
NR involvement of formal services	NEW VARIABLE This mirrors cmsvcform (child maintenance) to	cmsvcformnr	Although you didn't seek help {if CMSVCUSENR = 2}, did Did {if CMSVCUSENR = 1} you have the involvement of any of the following formal services as a result of ending this relationship?	

	loop per individual resident parent.		Child Maintenance Service {if CMSERVTYPENR <> 21} `Family Courts {if CMSERVTYPENR <> 22} `Children's services/ social services {if CMSERVTYPENR <> 37} Cafcass {if CMSERVTYPENR <> 4} Police {if CMSERVTYPENR <> 35} Criminal courts None of these Other	
Other formal services involvement	NEW VARIABLE This mirrors cmsvcformoth (child maintenance) to loop per individual resident parent.	cmsvcformothnr	What formal service was that?	
NR type of support service	NEW VARIABLE This mirrors cmservtype (child maintenance) to loop per individual resident parent.	cmservtypenr	Which type of support service provider did you use? Child maintenance service/child support agency National Family Mediation/Local mediation provider Family Courts Solicitor/Lawyer Children's services/social services Cafcass Police Women's Aid National Domestic Violence Helpline Other Domestic violence abuse and support (e.g. women's refuge, local charity) Religious institutions Other relationship support (e.g. Resolution, One Plus One, Marriage Care) Separation and single family support (e.g. Centre for Separated Families, Family Lives, Families Need Fathers, Gingerbread, Tavistock Centre for Couple Relationships)	

			Counselling or mental health support (NHS/public/private/through work/Mind) Other medical support (GP/NHS service/Health Visitor/private) Housing (Shelter, Citizens advice, other) Financial (Citizens advice, Money Advice Service) Support for children/young people (e.g. Family Centre, CAMHS) Support for drug, alcohol, anger management Other children's charities (e.g. Barnardo's, Action for Children, 4Children)	
NR Consider using support service	NEW VARIABLE This mirrors cmsvccon (child maintenance) to loop per individual resident parent.	cmsvcconnr	Is seeking help from a support service something that you would consider doing now or in the future? Yes No	
Age of resident parent at last birthday	NEW VARIABLE This mirrors nrpage (child maintenance) to loop per individual resident parent.	nrpagenr	What was [CHILD NAME]'s mother/father's age last birthday? Please enter their approximate age if you are not certain.	
If Resident parent is now a couple	NEW VARIABLE This mirrors rnrpre (child maintenance) to loop per individual resident parent.	rnrprenr	Is [CHILDSUMMARY.CHNAMEFIN]'s mother/father currently living with someone as a couple? Yes No	
Resident parent is currently married	NEW VARIABLE This mirrors rnrpma (child maintenance) to loop per individual resident parent.	rnrpmanr	Is [CHILDSUMMARY.CHNAMEFIN]'s mother/father currently married? Yes No	

Resident parent has other natural children	NEW VARIABLE This mirrors rpchld (child maintenance) to loop per individual resident parent.	rpchldnr	Does [CHILDSUMMARY.CHNAMEFIN]'s mother/father have any other natural children of his/her own? Yes No	
Resident parent lives with other natural children	NEW VARIABLE This mirrors rpchldlv (child maintenance) to loop per individual resident parent.	rpchldlvnr	Are these natural children currently living with him/her? Yes, all of them Yes, some of them No	
Resident parent has other children living with them	NEW VARIABLE This mirrors rothchld (child maintenance) to loop per individual resident parent.	rothchldnr	Are any other children living with him/her? Yes No	
Employment of resident parent	NEW VARIABLE This mirrors exjob (child maintenance) to loop per individual resident parent.	exjobnr	And if you know, can you tell me which of these best describes his/her current employment situation? Self employed Working 30 or more hours per week Working 16 hours or more per week but fewer than 30 hours Working fewer than 16 hours per week Unemployed Retired On maternity leave/paternity leave Looking after family or home Full-time student Long-term sick or disabled On a government training scheme Unpaid worker in a family business Doing something else	

Table 11: Guardians module (new module W15)

Variable label	Rationale	Variable name	Question text	Comment
	Where in the household grid an adult is identified as a 'responsible adult' for a child under 16 but is not a biological nor adoptive parent they are flagged as a possible guardian.	**[R = GRIDVARIABLES.GUARDIAN**		
Parents live with guardian	**NEW VARIABLE** Check whether parents are also resident.	chparliv	Thinking about [CHILD NAME], can I just check, do either of [his/her] parents live here with you? Yes – mother Yes – father Yes – both No	
Child's mother	**NEW VARIABLE** If mother resides in same household, identified in the grid.	Chmoth	Who is [CHILD NAME]'s mother? Identified in household grid.	
Child's father	**NEW VARIABLE** If father resides in same household, identified in the grid.	Chfath	Who is [CHILD NAME]'s father? Identified in household grid.	
Child contact with mother	**NEW VARIABLE**	Chmcont	Does [CHILD NAME] have any contact at all with [his/her] mother? Yes No Mother died	
Frequency of contact mother	**NEW VARIABLE**	Seemoth	How often does [CHILD NAME] see [his/her] mother?	

			At least once a day	
			Several times a week	
			Once or twice a week	
			At least once per fortnight	
			At least once per month	
			At least once per year	
			Less often	
			Never	
Time taken to get to child's mother	**NEW VARIABLE**	**Mothfar**	About how long would it take you to get to where [CHILD NAME]'s mother lives? Think of the time it usually takes door to door. Less than 15 minutes Between 30 minutes-1 hour Between 1 and 2 hours More than 2 hours Lives/works abroad	
Frequency virtual contact mother	**NEW VARIABLE**	**Seemothvir**	How often does [CHILD NAME] have contact with [his/her] mother through letters or cards, phone or video calls, emails and messaging, via social media or through gaming? Several times a day Daily Several times per week At least once per week Several times per month At least once per month Less often Never	
Frequency overnight stay mother	**NEW VARIABLE**	**Staymoth**	Does [CHILD NAME] ever stay overnight with [his/her] mother? Yes often Yes sometimes Yes rarely	

			No never	
Employment of child's mother	**NEW VARIABLE**	**Mothjob**	And if you know, can you tell me which of these best describes [CHILD NAME]'s mother's current employment situation? Self employed Working 30 or more hours per week Working 16 hours or more per week but fewer than 30 hours Working fewer than 16 hours per week Unemployed Retired On maternity leave/paternity leave Looking after family or home Full-time student Long-term sick or disabled On a government training scheme Unpaid worker in a family business Doing something else	
Child contact with father	**NEW VARIABLE**	**Chfcont**	Does [CHILD NAME] have any contact at all with [his/her] father? Yes No Father died	
Frequency of contact father	**NEW VARIABLE**	**Seefath**	How often does [CHILD NAME] see [his/her] father? At least once a day Several times a week Once or twice a week At least once per fortnight At least once per month At least once per year Less often Never	

Time taken to get to child's father	NEW VARIABLE	Fathfar	About how long would it take you to get to where [CHILD NAME]'s father lives? Think of the time it usually takes door to door. Less than 15 minutes Between 30 minutes-1 hour Between 1 and 2 hours More than 2 hours Lives/works abroad	
Frequency virtual contact father	NEW VARIABLE	Seefathvir	How often does [CHILD NAME] have contact with [his/her] father through letters or cards, phone or video calls, emails and messaging, via social media or through gaming? Several times a day Daily Several times per week At least once per week Several times per month At least once per month Less often Never	
Frequency overnight stay father	NEW VARIABLE	Stayfath	Does [CHILD NAME] ever stay overnight with [his/her] father? Yes often Yes sometimes Yes rarely No never	
Employment of child's father	NEW VARIABLE	Fathjob	And if you know, can you tell me which of these best describes [CHILD NAME]'s father's current employment situation? Self employed Working 30 or more hours per week Working 16 hours or more per week but fewer than 30 hours	

			Working fewer than 16 hours per week Unemployed Retired On maternity leave/paternity leave Looking after family or home Full-time student Long-term sick or disabled On a government training scheme Unpaid worker in a family business Doing something else	
Types of support service	NEW VARIABLE	**Chservuse**	Did you have the involvement of any of the following formal services when [CHILD NAME] came to live with you? Family courts Children's Services/Social services CAFCASS Police Other None of these	
	NEW VARIABLE	**Servuseoth**	What other formal service was that?	
Has legal parental responsibility	NEW VARIABLE	**legalpar**	Do you currently have legal parental responsibility for [CHILD NAME]? Yes – via adoption Yes – via Special Guardianship Order Yes – via Child Arrangements Order/Residence Order Yes – other No	
Receives payments from parent	NEW VARIABLE	**Parpay**	Do you receive any money or payments from [CHILD NAME]'s parents for child support? yes – from their mother Yes – from their father	

				Yes – from both parents jointly No	
Amount of child support received	**NEW VARIABLE**	**Csamount**		About how much did you receive for child support last time [CHILD NAME]'s mother {if PARPAY = 1} father {if PARPAY = 2} parents {if PARPAY = 3} gave you money for child support?	
Frequency receives child support	**NEW VARIABLE**	**csfreq**		How often do you receive this money from [CHILD NAME]'s mother {if PARPAY = 1} father {if PARPAY = 2} parents {if PARPAY = 3}? Weekly Fortnightly Monthly' Yearly Other	
	NEW VARIABLE	**Othsupp**		Apart from the payments already discussed, [does/do] {if CHSERVUSE = 1|2|3} [Does/Do] {if CHSERVUSE <> 1|2|3} [CHILD NAME]'s mother {if PARPAY = 1} father {if PARPAY = 2} parents {if PARPAY = 3} do any of the following to support you/[CHILD NAME]? Pay bills Pay for urgent repairs Pay for furniture, bedding etc Pay for clothes/shoes Pay for toys Pay for school trips (or extra lessons, such as music, dance or sport) Pay for holidays Provide childcare vouchers	

			Pay school fees Make mortgage payments Pay off your debt (e.g. bank overdraft credit card) Pay for something else not listed above None of these	
Length of stay with guardian	**NEW VARIABLE**	**Staylong**	Do you know how much longer [CHILD NAME] will stay with you? Yes, weeks Yes months Yes, years Yes, until they are at least 16 years old No, don't know how much longer	
Number of weeks/months/years	**NEW VARIABLE**	**staylongnum**	How many weeks {if STAYLONG = 1} months {if STAYLONG = 2} years {if STAYLONG = 3}?	
Child expected return to parent	**NEW VARIABLE**	**Chreturn**	Is it expected or hoped that [he/she] will return to [his/her] mother {if (CHMCONT = 1|2) & CHFCONT = 3} father {if (CHMCONT = 3) & CHFCONT = 1|2} parents {if (CHMCONT = 1|2) & (CHFCONT = 1|2)}? Yes No	
Reasons not living with parents	**NEW VARIABLE**	**Chlivnot**	Why does [CHILD NAME] not live with [his/her] parent(s)? Parent disability or illness Difficulties between parent and child Death of a parent Parental drug/alcohol/substance abuse Parental work commitments/schedules Parent in prison	

			Parent did not want them/abandonment very young parent domestic violence parent unable to cope abuse neglect	
Main reason not living with parents	**NEW VARIABLE**	**Chlivnotmain**	What is the main reason [CHILD NAME] does not live with [his/her] parent(s)? Parent disability or illness Difficulties between parent and child Death of a parent Parental drug/alcohol/substance abuse Parental work commitments/schedules Parent in prison Parent did not want them/abandonment very young parent domestic violence parent unable to cope abuse neglect	

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