

Media Release

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Aussies changing views on the importance of the traditional nuclear family

88.5% say society is more open to and benefiting from a variety of family arrangements.

Australia is seeing a drop in 'traditional' family views, with stereotypes such as parents staying together even if they're unhappy in their relationships and males being the breadwinners (65.7%) falling by the wayside.

Partner choice is also changing, with two-thirds (66.0%) of Aussies glad that outdated views towards interracial marriage are declining.

Traditional perceptions of the nuclear family and its core values are shifting, with nearly four in five Aussies (78.1%) saying that society's views on what constitutes a family have changed compared to 10 years ago.

Released today, the [Real Insurance Australian Family Values Survey](#) is the thirteenth instalment in a series of national studies investigating the shifting values and concerns affecting Australian families.

The research shows that one size does not fit all, with more than half (55.4%) of those surveyed saying that having two children is the perfect size for a family, while close to a fifth (19.3%) say three is the perfect number. Regardless of their personal views on the perfect family size, the vast majority (82.8%) think that more couples are going childfree by choice and believe this decision is generally more accepted these days (79.9%).

Only half (51.5%) of respondents say people with young children are happier than those without; however, more than one in five parents (21.0%) claim they were happier before they had children. Almost a third (32.9%) have challenged this, saying they are happier now that they have children.

Nearly a third of Aussies (32.1%) who do not have children say they are definitely not planning on having any, with their reasons including 'impact on finances,' 'impact on lifestyle freedom' and 'overpopulation and future security crisis'.

Real Insurance spokesperson, Tania Bradley, says: "With our ever-changing society, it's no surprise that we're seeing a shift in this idea of the nuclear family unit being the ultimate goal that families aspire to. It's becoming increasingly accepted for couples to choose to be childfree nowadays compared to previous years.

"Whilst amongst older generations starting a family was expected, we're now seeing non-parents taking various factors into account before making the decision to have a child, including time to travel or focusing on career progression"

Single parenthood is on the rise, and more than half (51.4%) of prospective parents say that they

would consider having a child on their own if they don't meet the right person. While the idea of single parenthood has previously had stigma attached to it, a large proportion (73.0%) say there is less judgement now compared to a decade ago.

Interestingly, parents believe that the ideal age to have a child is 27 years old; however, potential parents say they realistically expect to start having children at the age of 32. For prospective parents, financial preparedness (28.6%) and relationship concerns (26.9%) typically influence the delay in having children.

We are also taking a less traditional view towards marriage, with more than two in five (42.4%) saying that it's not important for couples to be married before having children. That said, almost a quarter (21.5%) believe marriage is important and that it's the ideal family model.

At the core of each family stand the values that uphold them, with respondents ranking 'unconditional love,' 'taking care / watching out for each other' and 'spending time together as a family' as the top meaning of 'family values'. More than two in five (41.5%) say that traditional values are just as important now compared to previous generations, though similar proportions (38.4%) say that is not the case. Nearly half (47.8%) say that this comes down to a shift in societal changes.

Supporting data is available on the Real Insurance website

Media Enquiries

Shannon Cuthbert

Senior Account Manager

Haystac

m: 0405 652703

e: shannon.cuthbert@haystac.com.au

About Real Insurance

Real Insurance is an award-winning Australian insurer, with a goal to protect the quality of people's lives. Real Insurance has been named as the top Risk and Life Insurer in Roy Morgan's 2017, 2015, 2013 and 2012 annual Customer Satisfaction Awards. Real Insurance was also awarded the 2017 Reader's Digest Highly Commended Trusted Brand Award in the Funeral Insurance category, and previously the 2014 Highly Commended Trusted Brand Award in the Life and Funeral Insurance categories, as voted for by Australian consumers. The company has been in the Australian market since 2005 with product offerings in life, income, funeral, pet, car, home, travel and bike insurance. Real Insurance is a trading name of Greenstone Financial Services Pty Ltd and The Hollard Insurance Company Pty Ltd.

About the 'Real Insurance Australian Family Values Survey'

In order to explore the concept of family values in Australia, CoreData surveyed 1000 typical Australians across the nation in July 2018.

The sample collection employed soft quotas to monitor representativeness of the Australian adult population. Hard quotas by state were also engaged to ensure all the main states were represented with sufficiently robust samples (NSW = 200, VIC = 200, QLD = 200, WA = 200, Remaining states/territories = 200)