



# Simmons Longitudinal Study

Parent Newsletter—Spring 2005



Simmons College

School of Social Work

## Springing ahead...

We don't know about you, but here at SLS we are ready for spring to come. A time when we see the return of flowers and warmer weather, and maybe, just maybe, a final melting of all this snow—spring is many people's favorite time of year. It is also traditionally a time for new beginnings, and for appreciating all that we have and all that is yet to come. When we looked through your last interview with us, we were struck by how proud you were of your sons and daughters, how close you felt to them, and how much family means to you in these years.

One thing that has helped you stay close to your children (see just how close in our article below) is the fact that many of them still reside in Quincy! Check out page 4 to see where the study participants have ended up, and then take a trip down memory lane and test your knowledge about your hometown with some facts and trivia ("Quincy over the years," page 3). We thought you'd want to know about your children's aspirations for the years to come, so turn to page 2 ("Looking ahead") to find out what else is in store to be proud of. Finally, spend quality time with your family without spending a fortune—check out page 2 for a list of fun and unique activities for all ages.

And last, but certainly not least, remember to return your postcard so that we can stay in touch with you *and* enter you into the drawing for one of five chances to win \$100!

We hope you enjoy the newsletter and the long-awaited arrival of spring.

Sincerely,

Helen Reinherz, Project Director



## A family affair...

### How often have we said it—Family matters!

One of the most important tasks in young adulthood is that of creating new families, a process which may include your children finding a spouse or partner and perhaps even starting new families of their own. As more of the SLS respondents entered this new stage of adulthood, we were curious to see how you felt these transitions were impacting your relationships with your adult children.

Good news: as your sons and daughters tackled the ever-increasing challenges of young adulthood, such

as building careers, furthering their education, and establishing families, you told us that you felt closer to them than ever!

Nearly all of you reported that you see or speak to your sons or daughters either daily (48%) or weekly (45%). Over half of you believe that since the last time we talked to you your relationship has changed in positive ways. Nearly three-fourths of you were "very satisfied" with your relationship with your son or daughter, and nearly all of you (91%) described your relationships as "close" or "very close".

It seems that as your children navigate the path toward the milestones of adulthood they are fortunate enough to have you right there beside them.

*The SLS has been going strong for over 28 years... We couldn't do it without you!*



## Looking ahead...

**W**hen we spoke with your children last, we asked about their long-range goals for jobs and careers. And, as expected, some of them were well set in their current jobs. Others wanted to earn more money to enjoy more of the good things in life. Still others, however, talked of finding jobs that allowed time for family and also allowed them to express their creative talents. Here's some of what they said:

- \* "I would definitely like to switch jobs and do something that I think is rewarding."
- \* "I'd like to find a job where I can balance work and family life; I'm not interested in making millions."
- \* "I want to stay in the field I am currently in and advance both professionally and financially."
- \* "I'm trying to get into a management position, earn a higher salary, maybe even start my own business."
- \* "My goal is to be a working actor. That's the biggie."
- \* "My goals are unclear. I don't think I really will know until I have a child, which with my career is going to be tough to juggle."
- \* "I want increased flexibility and to do something creative."

And finally, several respondents had this goal in mind:

- \* "My dream is to hit the lottery." (Some of us at SLS share this wish!)

Over half of your children were *very satisfied* or *mostly satisfied* with their progress toward achieving these goals. This is good to hear.

## Spend Your Time, Not A Fortune

(For your kids, grandkids, or the kid in you!)

1. Get some exercise and enjoy the great outdoors. Go cross-country skiing, hiking, or rock-climbing at the **Blue Hills Reservation** in Milton (617-698-1802, <http://www.mass.gov/mdc/BLUE.HTM>).
2. Immerse yourself in science at the **MIT Museum** in Cambridge (617-253-4444, <http://web.mit.edu/museum>). Be amazed by robots, holography, or bridge and ship design.
3. Get a massage. The **Massage Institute of New England** in Somerville (617-666-3700, <http://www.mine-massageinstitute.com>) offers low rates at its student clinic.
4. Gaze at the stars. See the night sky at the **Charles Hayden Planetarium** or the **Gilliland Observatory** at the Museum of Science in Cambridge (617-723-2500, <http://www.mos.org>).
5. Lose yourself in a giant cornfield maze instead of your troubles. Seek your way out at **Davis Megamaze** in Sterling (978-422-6666, <http://www.davisfarmland.com>).
6. Get a new perspective from the **Skywalk Observatory** at the Prudential Building in Boston (617-859-0648, <http://www.prudentialcenter.com/play/skywalk.html>). Even your worries look smaller from 50 stories high.
7. Sip some soothing tea. Find out where at <http://cupandsaucer.com/tea.html>. Scones, anyone?
8. Be a kid again. Ride the **Paragon Carousel** at Nantasket Beach in Hull (781-925-0472, [www.paragoncarousel.com](http://www.paragoncarousel.com)). This 1928 merry-go-round features Roman chariots, hand-carved horses, and a Wurlitzer organ.
9. Escape into a fantasy adventure. Be a hero in a real-life video game at **5W!TS** in Boston (617-375-9487, <http://www.5-wits.com>).
10. See the buds of spring in the **Tower Hill Botanic Garden** in Boylston, MA (508.869.6111, <http://www.towerhillbg.org>).

## Quincy over the Years

**W**e have been following your children's-busy lives from the time they were five years old—for almost thirty years! They have certainly undergone quite a few changes. We decided to take a look at the city that many of you still call home—Quincy, MA—to see how it has evolved. Check out how things in Quincy have changed in the past thirty years, and then take a look at some facts that you may have not known before.



38, and since then, the community as a whole has kept its younger character—almost 1 in 4 of the population of Quincy are between the ages of 25 and 34. Some things, though, have changed quite a bit. In 1970 the average household income was \$10,527, but it climbed to over \$58,000 in 2000. What a jump! That is over four-and-a-half-times what it was in 1970. While we would expect a large increase when the effects of inflation are taken into account, the average household income is still over \$10,000 more than expected!

### Way back when...

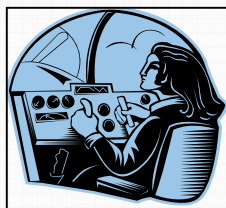
Quincy was founded by traders in 1625, became a town in 1792, and was established as an official city in 1888. Fast forward almost a hundred years later, to 1970, the beginning of your children's first decade. What was going on then? Well, Quincy was at the tail-end of a prosperous era that extended from World War II, when the city emerged as a leader in the shipbuilding industry. As the city grew, the population swelled to 86,177, increasing from only 32,642 in 1910. The population has stayed relatively stable since that time; in 2000 it had only increased to 88,025. The average age in 1970 was

### Today...

Many of the SLS respondents have chosen to remain in Quincy (see pg. 4), and their choice makes sense: its proximity to Boston, varied economic opportunities, low cost of living, and numerous amenities make it a great choice for young professionals and families today. Quincy offers 18 public schools, 4 community centers, and 6 public libraries to its residents. Once known as "Shopperstown, USA," Quincy is home to several shopping districts, including Quincy Center and Marina Bay, and is considered the "Dining Capital" of Boston's South Shore.

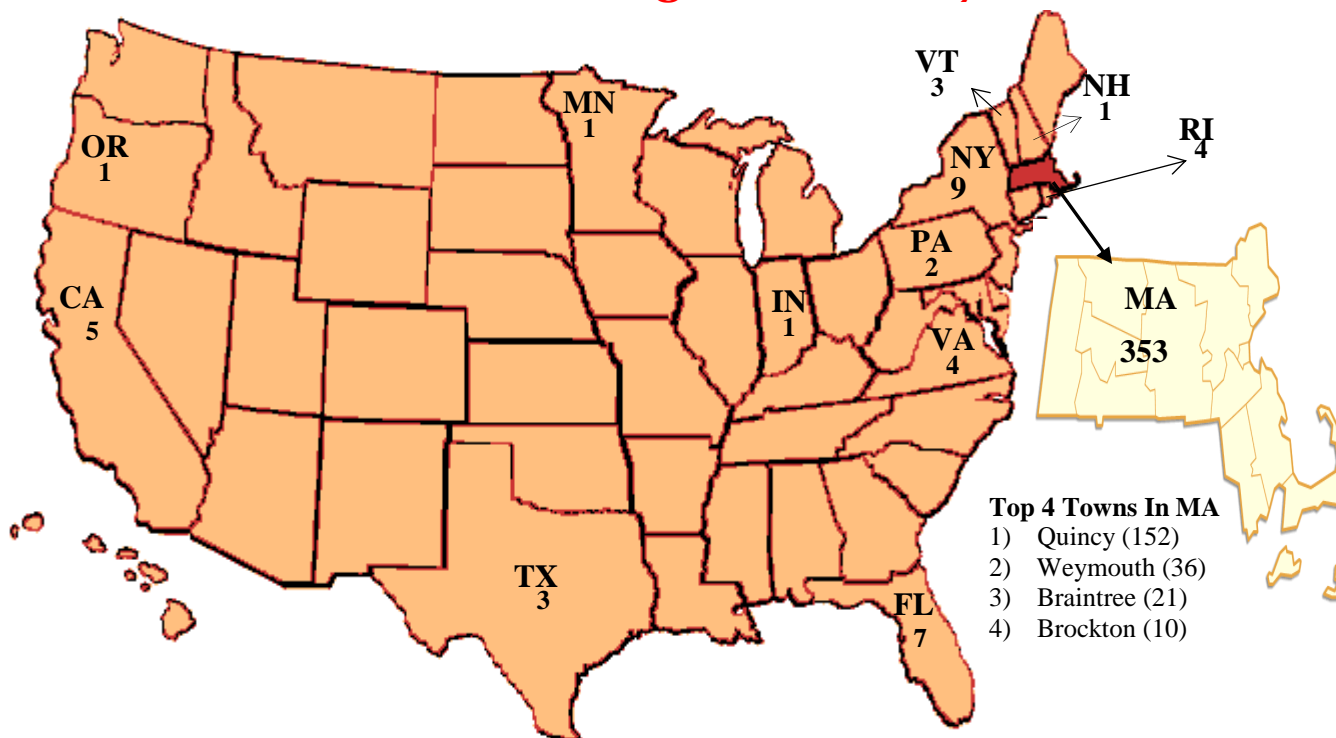
## Did you know...

- **John Hancock, the first person to sign the Declaration of Independence, hailed from Quincy.**
- **On September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1971, the "Red Line" of the MBTA extended its service to include three new stations: North Quincy, Wollaston, and Quincy Center. It takes exactly 20 minutes to get from the Quincy Center stop to the Park Street stop in Boston.**
- **Boston's King's Chapel and Bunker Hill Monument were constructed using Quincy granite.**



- **Amelia Earhart learned to fly at Quincy's Dennison Airport.**
- **Quincy is home to the first Dunkin' Donuts and the first Howard Johnson's in the USA.**
- **Quincy is officially pronounced "Quin-zee," because this is the way that the original Quincy family was said to have pronounced it. Do you agree?**

## Where are the Simmons Longitudinal Study Members Now?



In order to be eligible to be a member of the SLS, your child had to be enrolled in kindergarten in Quincy, Massachusetts, in 1977. We thought you might like to see where the SLS participants ended up after all these years. Three of them are living abroad (in England, Spain, and Ireland), and a few are abroad serving bravely in our armed forces, but many, as you can see, stayed close to home. Take a look at where the members of the SLS are living now, along with the four MA towns that the most participants call home.

## What will you do with \$100??

Have a night out on the town

Buy an official Boston Red Sox World Champion jacket

Put it in the bank

Buy someone special a bouquet of flowers

**The possibilities are endless!**

Don't miss your chance to be one of **five** participants to win **\$100** in our postcard drawing!

Just fill out and return your postcard to us or email us at [SLS@simmons.edu](mailto:SLS@simmons.edu) by **April 1st, 2005**, and you will be automatically entered to win.

**GOOD LUCK!**