

**EMBARGO 00:01 Monday 28 April 2008**

## **UNIVERSITY ASPIRATIONS HIGHEST FOR FIVE YEARS**

Nearly three out of four young people say they are likely to go into higher education – the highest for five years - and fewer are being deterred from university by worries over debt, according to the latest Ipsos MORI poll of student intentions published today by the Sutton Trust.

Seventy-two percent of students aged 11-16 feel they are either likely or very likely to go on to higher education, the highest figure recorded since the survey began in 2003. Thirty-nine percent said they were ‘very likely’ to go into higher education when they were old enough and 34 percent said they were ‘fairly likely’ (see notes).

Only 8 percent of the 2,387 students questioned said they were either ‘very unlikely’ or ‘fairly unlikely’ to go to university compared to 11 percent last year, a significant drop.

The main reason mentioned by more than half (52 percent) of those who do not think they will progress to higher education is the desire to “do something practical rather than studying from books”. Fifty percent want to start earning as soon as possible and 30 percent think they can get a well-paid job without a degree.

Only 13 percent reported that they are “worried about getting into debt as a student”, compared with 20 percent last year – again, a significant fall.

However, many students do not think they are getting enough information from their teachers about going into higher education. Four out of ten said they are either getting ‘not very much’ information (31 percent) or ‘none at all’ (9 percent).

Sir Peter Lampl, Chairman of the Sutton Trust, said: "While it is encouraging that three quarters of young people aspire to university, less than half that number currently end up in higher education and those from poorer families are the least likely to progress. So we need to offer more support to young people throughout their education so that they are in a position to realise their ambitions at 18 and beyond.

That is why it is worrying that so many students feel they are not being provided with enough information about higher education by their schools. Research from Staffordshire University which we published in February showed that few students knew about the bursaries or maintenance grants on offer at universities. Today's findings are a further reminder that support and guidance about higher education needs to start early on – at primary school upwards – and be a core part of the school day, so that no young person loses out.”

### **Notes for Editors**

The survey was conducted between January and March 2008, and completed by 2,387 11-16 year old pupils in England and Wales. The top line findings of the survey are appended to this press release. The aggregate of the ‘fairly likely’ and ‘very likely’ respondents is 72% of the sample, not 73%, due to rounding.

In 2006/7, the proportion on young people aged 17-20 in higher education was 32%

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000780/sfrdius02-2008.pdf>

**The Sutton Trust** is a charity founded in 1997 by Sir Peter Lampl with the aim of providing educational opportunities for young people from non-privileged backgrounds and improving social mobility. It funds a wide range of research and projects covering parenting and early years, schools, universities and access to the professions.

The Trust is currently undertaking a review for the National Council of Education Excellence of how to increase higher education participation rates among disadvantaged young people. Its interim report has been submitted to the Council and will be published shortly.

**For further information: Tim Devlin, Press Officer, Sutton Trust, on 07939 544 487.**

**Ipsos MORI Young People Omnibus Survey - 2008  
Sutton Trust Topline Results**

- 2,387 interviews were conducted among school children aged 11-16 in England and Wales
- Self-completion questionnaires were completed in 100 classroom sessions between 11<sup>th</sup> January and 28<sup>th</sup> March 2008
- Data have been weighted by gender, age and region
- Results are based on all pupils in England and Wales, unless otherwise stated
- An asterisk (\*) represents a value of less than half a per cent, but not zero
- Where results do not sum to 100%, this is due to multiple responses or computer rounding.
- Where applicable, trend data has been included (*Bases: 2007=2,417, 2006=2,334, 2005=2,709, 2004=2,303, 2003=2,469*)

**First of all we would like to ask some questions about you. Please remember that your answers are confidential.**

**How old are you?**

	%
11	19
12	19
13	19
14	19
15	15
16	9

**Are you male or female?**

	%
I am a boy/male	51
I am a girl/female	49

**Which of the following best describes you?**

	%
White	83
British Black	2
Black Caribbean	1
Black African	1
Black Other	*
British Asian	4
Indian	1
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	*
East African Asian	*
Other	4
Not stated	*

Other	5
Don't know	2
Not stated	1

**What does your father/stepfather do?**

	%
Works full-time	72
Works part-time	9
Is unemployed	4
Looks after house/family	11
Other	5
Don't know	7
Not stated	2

**Which year are you now in at school?**

	%
Year 7	31
Year 8	16
Year 9	20
Year 10	14
Year 11	18

**Who lives in your home?**

	%
My mother	95
My stepmother	2
My father	67
My stepfather	13
My brother(s)	59
My sister(s)	54
Somebody else	10
Not stated	*

**What does your mother/ stepmother do?**

	%
Works full-time	39
Works part-time	32
Is unemployed	5
Looks after house/family	40

This section is about what you think you will do when you leave school.

Young people who stay on at school or college in Years 12 and 13, until they are 18, can usually apply for a place at university to study for a degree. This is known as 'going into higher education'.

Q1. How likely or unlikely are you to go into higher education when you are old enough?

	2008 %	2007 %	2006 %	2005 %	2004 %	2003 %
Very likely	39	37	34	34	33	40
Fairly likely	34	34	37	35	36	31
Fairly unlikely	6	8	5	7	7	8
Very unlikely	3	4	4	5	5	5
Not sure either way yet	19	17	19	18	18	14
Not stated	1	1	1	1	*	2

Q2. Why are you unlikely to go into higher education?

Base: All who are fairly or very unlikely to go into higher education (223)

	2008 %	2007 (281) %	2006 (220) %	2005 (326) %	2004 (286) %	2003 (343) %
I prefer to do something practical rather than studying from books	52	52	48	45	49	39
I want to start earning money as soon as possible	50	49	43	48	40	40
I can get a well-paid job without a degree	30	34	30	35	25	31
I do not enjoy learning	25	30	32	29	31	29
I do not need a degree to do the job(s) I am considering	25	27	21	30	25	32
I'm not clever enough	22	29	32	26	25	28
I don't like the idea of it	22	24	22	21	19	24
I won't get good enough exam results to get into a university	20	24	31	26	29	29
I don't know enough about it	16	16	16	15	15	16
I'm worried about getting into debt as a student	13	20	15	17	18	14
People like me are not expected to go to university	9	8	14	12	13	11
My family can't afford to pay for me to be a student	7	11	7	10	7	9
Most of my friends are not planning to go to university	7	9	15	12	11	9
My parents did not go to university	6	13	19	15	13	11
My family want me to start earning money as soon as possible	6	11	10	12	9	7
Someone from a university talked to me about higher education and it put me off	6	5	7	6	6	7
My teachers are encouraging me to do something else	4	5	4	3	3	3
Other	8	4	3	2	5	7
Don't know	5	3	4	5	4	1
Not stated	5	6	3	4	5	5

Q3. **How much information, if any, do you feel your teachers and school have given you about going into higher education?**

	%
A lot	12
A fair amount	42
Not very much	31
None at all	9
Don't know	6
Not stated	1

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