



# UCNets News

Issue Number 1, July 2016

We write to thank you again for having participated in Wave 1 of the UCNets Social Networks Study about a year ago. Your contribution to research on social ties and health issues has already given us some interesting and important insights. In this *Newsletter* we want to share with you a sampling of results.

You are part of a unique study. Over 450 Bay Area residents in their 20s and over 650 between 50 and 70 years old completed the survey. Scholars around the country have heard about the project and are eagerly awaiting the results. Professional papers, doctoral dissertations, and articles are being planned.

We were gratified by how many of you found the survey rewarding. At the end of the survey, we asked you whether you would be willing to answer additional short surveys between the waves. Over 95% of respondents said yes. Interviewers who conducted the in-person version of the survey reported that over 90% of the interviewees were very engaged in the discussion.

Most of our findings about the connections among changes in people's lives, health, and personal relationships will emerge after all three waves of the survey have been completed in 2018. But some interesting bits of information emerged in the first wave.

**The Wave 2 version of the survey will go into motion in the Fall 2016 and we will be contacting you then.** Let us know if your contact information has changed by calling (toll-free) at 1-877-932-0614 or emailing [ucnets@berkeley.edu](mailto:ucnets@berkeley.edu). You'll probably be happy to know that we have shortened and streamlined the survey. And we expect to be fascinated to find out what has – and what has not – changed since last time. And you'll receive a check for **\$35** upon completion of the survey.

In the meantime, please enjoy some of the first results of our study. Once again, we thank you and look forward to the next wave starting this fall.

Sincerely,

Professor Claude Fischer  
Principal Investigator

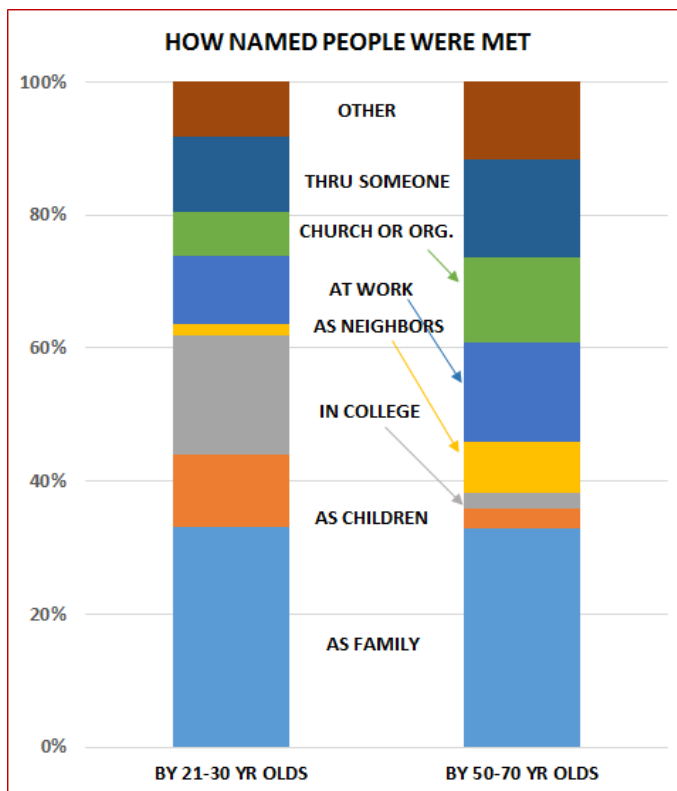
## Results from the First Wave

Most of our findings about the connections among changes in people's lives, health, and personal relationships will emerge after all three waves of the survey have been completed in 2018. But some interesting bits of information emerged in the first wave. Below are several examples.

### **How we know (where we met) people in our networks:**

We asked about the people that you know, whom you do things with, rely upon and receive

help from, if need be. The most commonly connected people in your networks – for both older and younger respondents – was family, and there was no difference between the two age groups. But young people and older people do have differences: not surprisingly, meeting as children, or through college connections are more prominent for young people. But note that church acquaintances are much less prominent for young people compared to older people, as is meeting through other friends. What we want to see with the next two waves of data is whether the pattern shifts. For example, do people acquire more church connections as they get older and start having children, or will

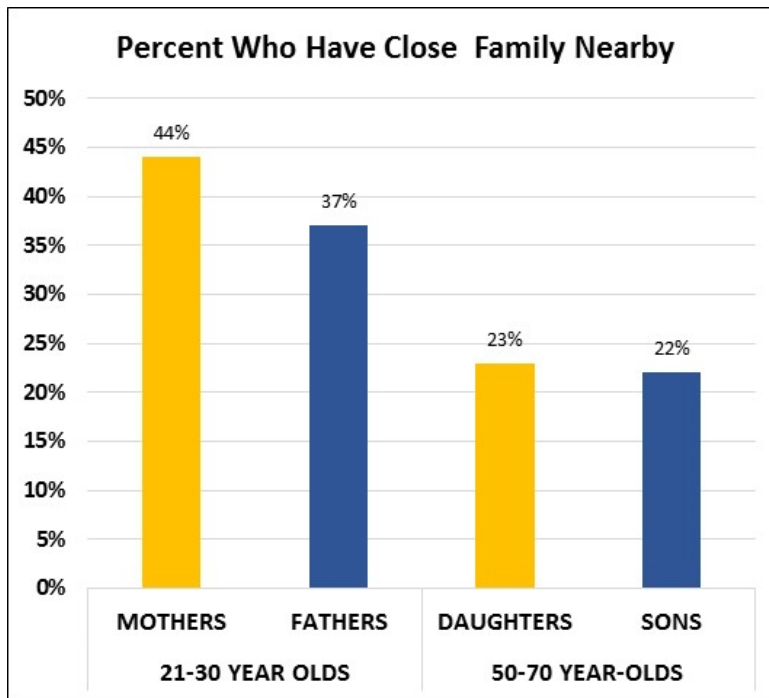


the current 21-30 year olds simply have a smaller church-connected network?

### **Meeting New People After Moving**

We asked participants what they might do to meet people if they were to move to a new community. Many of you suggested that you might join groups of various kinds—gyms, book clubs, art classes, and the like. Some said that they would go to regular meeting places like bars or music clubs. Some expected to make friends through coworkers, fellow students, and the like. Others felt that they would meet new people in the normal course of life and wouldn't need to make special efforts. And then there were participants who felt that they wouldn't be looking for people to meet because they were already pretty busy socially.

## Parents and Adult Children – How Far?



Among the young respondents, 44% lived with or within an hour's drive of mom, compared to 37% who lived with or within an hour's drive of dad. The lack of proximity may not be surprising as nearly two-thirds of them had been living in their current towns less than five years. Meanwhile, older respondents were even farther from adult children—less than one-quarter had a son living within one hour's drive, and less than a quarter had a daughter living within an hour's drive. So, overall,

respondents' families were pretty spread out.

### Feeling Obligated to Help?

You will recall that we asked questions about your sense of "obligation" to people you know when asked about doing a hypothetical favor for them. We found that the older respondents were less likely than the younger ones to express a feeling of obligation towards friends and family, and to generally reject the language of obligation.

*"I would do it but definitely not out of obligation" (female, 50-70 year old)*

### Stay tuned for more!

As we said before, the key findings will emerge when we have collected all three waves of surveys. Then we will be able to say something about how people's social ties affect and are affected by their life experiences. That is why we are so grateful for both your past and future cooperation.



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