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## Childlessness and changes in personal relationships

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### **Abstract**

Childlessness is rising among cohorts born after the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War in many western countries, including Australia. The issue of childlessness has received much attention in the light of the fall in fertility rates to below replacement level in Australia and in most developed countries. While numerous studies have established the characteristics associated with childlessness and have sought to answer why people do not want to have any children, little attention in these studies has been paid to how changes in personal relationships affect people's intentions to have children or to be childless. Drawing on available secondary datasets from the Australian Family Formation survey (1981-1990), this paper will examine links between changes in relationships and changes in intentions to become a parent or to remain childless.