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\* LONE PARENTHOOD IN NCDS4 \*  
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Main Customer: Department of Health and Social Security

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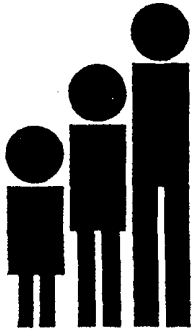
Lone parenthood in NCDS IV.

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## Background to Working Papers from the National Child Development Study.

1. This Working Paper reports on the analysis of data relating to 12,538 23 year olds living in Great Britain who have been the subjects of a longitudinal study since their birth in 1958. The data were obtained by means of interview survey during late 1981 and early 1982. This survey and this Working Paper form part of the fourth follow-up of the National Child Development Study which is being sponsored by five Government departments - DHSS, DES, DE, MSC and DOE. Preparation for the survey began in May 1980 and the project is due for completion by December 1984.
2. The National Child Development Study (NCDS) is a longitudinal study which takes as its subjects all those living in Great Britain who were born between 3 and 9 March, 1958. Since the original birth survey in 1958 the National Children's Bureau has sought to monitor the social, economic, educational and health circumstances of the surviving subjects. To this end, major surveys were carried out in 1965 (NCDS1), 1969 (NCDS2), 1974 (NCDS3) and 1981 (NCDS4). For the purposes of the first 3 surveys, the birth cohort was augmented by including those new immigrants born in the relevant week and information was obtained with the active co-operation of parents, teachers and the schools' health service as well as members of the NCDS cohort. The 1981 survey differs in that no attempt was made to include new immigrants since 1974 and information was obtained from the subject only.
3. The target sample for the 1981 survey was a total of 16450 individuals - all those who had participated in NCDS1, NCDS2 or NCDS3, excluding those known to have emigrated or to have died. Following initial tracing by the Bureau, details of names and addresses were passed to NOP Market Research Limited and Social and Community Planning Research who carried out further tracing and subsequent interviews. The 12538 interviews obtained represent 76 percent of the original target sample and 93 percent of those traced and contacted by interviewers.

4. The interview survey was carried out by NOP and SCPR between August 1981 and March 1982. Each interview took approximately 90 minutes and information was obtained on employment, unemployment and periods out of the labour force; apprenticeship and training; post-school education; marriage, cohabitation and children; housing and household; family income, savings, investment and inheritance; respondent reported health and health related behaviour; and voluntary activity and leisure.
5. Completed questionnaires were visually checked by NOP and SCPR and the data then transferred by them to computer. Following preliminary computer editing by NOP and SCPR more detailed checks have been carried out by NCB. The majority of open-ended questions were coded by SCPR using coding frames developed by NCB. All open-ended questions related to health states were coded by NCB.
6. The form in which the data were collected has made it necessary to generate a number of derived or recoded variables, i.e. summary measures which combine two or more pre-coded variables. The use of these summary measures has enabled exploration of additional and more complex relationships than would have been possible using only information taken directly from the questionnaire. A description and explanation of the derived variables used in the cross-tabulations is presented in Appendix A, which is available on request.

## Introduction

1. The purpose of this Working Paper is to present some preliminary results of comparisons between lone parents and other parents in the NCDS IV Cohort, and to suggest further analyses arising from these findings.
2. Information on family formation is available for 12,528 members of the cohort, 26 per cent of whom had had at least one child by the time they were interviewed. Overall, four per cent of the cohort had experienced at least one period of lone parenthood.
3. The paper will address the following questions:
  - i. What is the prevalence of lone parenthood?
  - ii. What are the characteristics of lone parents?
  - iii. Do lone parents differ from parents who have never had this experience, and if so, in what ways?
4. Just over half of all those who had experienced lone parenthood were currently lone parents when interviewed. This paper will first examine the prevalence and characteristics of these individuals and the extent to which they differ from other parents, and will then discuss the circumstances of former lone parents and the extent to which they differ from current lone parents.

### The prevalence of lone parenthood

5. Lone parenthood was defined as a situation in which a member of the cohort had had to bring up a child in the absence of a partner (a spouse or cohabitee) for a continuous period of one month or more. However, periods during which a partner was absent due to the demands of his or her work, ill-health, or because he or she was away on holiday or on an educational course, were not counted as periods of lone parenthood. This definition reflects discussions within DHSS which influenced the development of the questionnaire.
6. When interviewed, 24 per cent of the cohort were bringing up children of their own. The majority of these parents were married and living with their spouse (85 per cent), but six per cent were cohabiting and nine per cent were lone parents.

7. Mothers were considerably more likely than fathers to be bringing up children on their own, as Table 1 shows. One in eight of the mothers were lone parents and only one in 100 of the fathers.

TABLE 1

Percentage of parents in each family situation when interviewed by sex (base = 3017 individuals bringing up at least one child)

|                        | <u>Women</u> | <u>Men</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|------------------------|--------------|------------|--------------|
|                        | <u>%</u>     | <u>%</u>   | <u>%</u>     |
| Family situation:      |              |            |              |
| Without a partner      | 13           | 1          | 9            |
| Married                | 81           | 94         | 85           |
| Cohabiting             | 6            | 5          | 6            |
| <hr/>                  |              |            |              |
| N = 100% (all parents) | 2038         | 979        | 3017         |

8. Because of the very small number of lone fathers (8 individuals), this paper will be concerned only with lone mothers, and the extent to which their characteristics and circumstances differ from those of married and cohabiting mothers.
9. For the majority of lone mothers (79 per cent), the current period of lone parenthood was the only one they had experienced.
10. However, as Table 2 shows, the frequency of periods of lone parenthood varied with the marital status of lone mothers. Just over half of the lone mothers had never been married; and these mothers were less likely to have experienced two or more periods of lone parenthood than those whose marriages had ended in separation, divorce or widowhood.

TABLE 2

Number of periods of lone parenthood experienced by current lone mothers in each marital status group (base = 262 mothers bringing up children on their own when interviewed)

| <u>Marital status:</u>            | <u>No. periods of lone parenthood</u> |                         | N=100%*   |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|
|                                   | <u>One</u><br>%                       | <u>Two or more</u><br>% |           |
| Never married                     | 84                                    | 16                      | 135       |
| Separated, divorced or<br>widowed | 75                                    | 25                      | 127       |
| <hr/> TOTAL                       | <hr/> 79                              | <hr/> 21                | <hr/> 262 |

\* Information is missing for three mothers who had never married.

Children

11. Whereas most of the children of cohort members were living in two-parent families, 12 per cent (513 children) were being brought up by lone parents.
12. In general, lone mothers were bringing up fewer children than mothers living with a partner. Only 27 per cent of the lone mothers had two or more children compared with 41 per cent of the partnered mothers.
13. Among both lone and partnered mothers, the number of children in the family varied with the marital status of the mother, as can be seen in Table 3. Mothers who had never been married were much less likely to have more than one child, particularly if they were lone mothers.

TABLE 3

Number of children in families of lone and partnered mothers by marital status (base = 2038 mothers)

|  | <u>Number of children in family</u> |            |                   | N=100% |
|--|-------------------------------------|------------|-------------------|--------|
|  | <u>One</u>                          | <u>Two</u> | <u>Three plus</u> |        |
| <u>Lone mothers x marital status:</u>      | %                                   | %          | %                 |        |
| Never married                              | 88                                  | 11         | 1                 | 133    |
| Separated, divorced or widowed             | 57                                  | 32         | 11                | 127    |
| <hr/>                                      |                                     |            |                   |        |
| TOTAL LONE MOTHERS                         | 73                                  | 21         | 6                 | 265    |
| <hr/>                                      |                                     |            |                   |        |
| <u>Partnered mothers x marital status:</u> |                                     |            |                   |        |
| Never married                              | 73                                  | 20         | 7                 | 73     |
| Separated, divorced or widowed             | 52                                  | 36         | 11                | 44     |
| Married and living with spouse             | 58                                  | 35         | 7                 | 1656   |
| <hr/>                                      |                                     |            |                   |        |
| TOTAL PARTNERED MOTHERS                    | 58                                  | 34         | 7                 | 1773   |

Social position

14. The social position of cohort members when interviewed is based upon the 1980 Classification of Occupations, and is derived from the classification of the current job, or the last job if currently unemployed or out of the labour force. Consequently, the current social position is available only for those who had had at least one job. The use of the Classification presents certain problems when applied to work done by women, particularly mothers. Unlike men, a relatively high proportion are employed in skilled and semi-skilled non-manual jobs, and a high proportion of mothers work part-time. The preponderance of non-manual and part-time work makes it more difficult to distinguish between the types of job done by mothers, and it is important that this should be borne in mind when comparing the social position of lone mothers with partnered mothers.



15. Overall, lone mothers differ little from mothers living with a partner, as Table 4 shows. For example, forty-six percent of lone mothers and 52 per cent of partnered mothers were or had been employed in non-manual jobs.

TABLE 4

Current social position of lone and partnered mothers by marital status  
(base = 1975 mothers who had had at least one job)

|  | <u>Current social position</u>   |   |   |  | N=100%*     |
|--|----------------------------------|---|---|--|-------------|
|  | <u>Prof +<br/>intermed.</u><br>% | <u>Semi +<br/>skilled<br/>non-manual</u><br>% | <u>Semi +<br/>skilled<br/>manual</u><br>% | <u>Un-<br/>skilled<br/>manual</u><br>% |             |
| <u>Lone mothers x marital status:</u>      |                                  |   |   |  |             |
| Never married                              | 12                               | 41  | 44  | 2                                      | 135         |
| Separated, divorced, or<br>widowed         | 4                                | 36  | 54  | 6                                      | 117         |
| <b>TOTAL LONE MOTHERS</b>                  | <b>8</b>                         | <b>38</b>                                     | <b>48</b>                                 | <b>5</b>                               | <b>252</b>  |
| <u>Partnered mothers x marital status:</u> |                                  |   |   |  |             |
| Never married                              | 8                                | 30  | 59  | 3                                      | 74          |
| Separated, divorced or<br>widowed          | 9                                | 30  | 49  | 12                                     | 46          |
| Married and living<br>with spouse          | 8                                | 45  | 43  | 4                                      | 1603        |
| <b>TOTAL PARTNERED MOTHERS</b>             | <b>8</b>                         | <b>44</b>                                     | <b>44</b>                                 | <b>4</b>                               | <b>1723</b> |

\* Information on employment is not available for 13 lone mothers and 50 partnered mothers.

16. Within both groups, however, social position is associated with marital status. Among lone mothers, the social position of those who had never been married tended to be higher than the social position of those who had been married. Among partnered mothers, on the other hand, the social position of both the never-married and the previously married cohabitees tended to be lower than the social position of the married mothers.

17. Among mothers who had never been married, 53 per cent of the lone mothers were in the non-manual group compared with only 38 per cent of those who were living with a partner. The presence or absence of a partner was not associated with social position among separated, divorced and widowed mothers.

Economic activity

18. When interviewed, some of the mothers were in paid full-time or part-time employment, some were unemployed and seeking work or waiting to take up a job, some were engaged in full-time housework and some were economically inactive for one reason or another such as long-term illness, full-time education or extended holiday. The definition of economic activity distinguishes between these various circumstances; the economically active are those in paid employment or unemployed and seeking work; the economically inactive are those engaged in full-time housework or some other activity outside the labour force.
19. Lone mothers differed from partnered mothers in the proportion who were economically active. Over a third of the lone mothers were employed or seeking work compared with just over a quarter of the mothers living with a partner. Twenty-five per cent of lone mothers were working compared to 18 per cent of partnered mothers.
20. However, the majority of mothers in both groups were engaged in full-time housework, as Table 5 shows.- 56 per cent of lone mothers and 69 per cent of partnered mothers.

TABLE 5

Current economic activity of lone and partnered mothers by marital status (base = 2013 mothers)

|   | <u>Current economic activity</u> |                       |                         |                   |                                 | N=100%*     |
|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|-------------|
|   | <u>Full-time work</u>            | <u>Part-time work</u> | <u>Unem-<br/>ployed</u> | <u>House work</u> | <u>Other econ.<br/>inactive</u> |             |
| <u>Lone mothers x marital status:</u>     | %                                | %                     | %                       | %                 | %                               |             |
| Never married                             | 22                               | 6                     | 18                      | 42                | 12                              | 135         |
| Separated, divorced or widowed            | 10                               | 12                    | 6                       | 71                | 1                               | 125         |
| <b>TOTAL LONE MOTHERS</b>                 | <b>16</b>                        | <b>9</b>              | <b>12</b>               | <b>56</b>         | <b>7</b>                        | <b>260</b>  |
| <hr/>                                     |                                  |                       |                         |                   |                                 |             |
| <u>Partnered mothers x marital status</u> |                                  |                       |                         |                   |                                 |             |
| Never married                             | 14                               | 10                    | 10                      | 62                | 4                               | 73          |
| Separated, divorced or widowed            | 11                               | 13                    | 4                       | 70                | 2                               | 46          |
| Married and living with spouse            | 6                                | 12                    | 8                       | 72                | 2                               | 1634        |
| <b>TOTAL PARTNERED MOTHERS</b>            | <b>6</b>                         | <b>12</b>             | <b>8</b>                | <b>69</b>         | <b>3</b>                        | <b>1753</b> |

\* Information on current economic activity is unavailable for 5 lone mothers and 20 partnered mothers.

21. The proportion of economically active mothers varied with marital status, in both groups. Among lone mothers in particular those who had never married were considerably more likely to be economically active than those who had been married; this was entirely due to the proportion of never-married lone mothers unemployed and seeking work (18 per cent) or in full-time employment (22 per cent).
  
22. Economic activity among mothers who had never been married, like social position (see para. 15 above), varied with the presence or absence of a partner; 46 per cent of those without partners were economically active compared with 34 per cent of those with partners.

Becoming a mother

23. Over a third of all mothers gave birth to their first child whilst they were still in their teens; however, over half the lone mothers became parents before the age of 20 compared with just under a third of mothers who were married or cohabiting.
24. Among both lone mothers and partnered mothers the age at which women became parents varied with marital status at the time of the interview. As Table 6 shows, over two-thirds of mothers in both groups who were separated, divorced or widowed had their first child before they were 20 - a considerably higher proportion than among married mothers or those who had never been married.

TABLE 6

Age at which lone and partnered mothers gave birth to their first child by marital status (base = 2038 mothers)

|  | <u>Age at birth of first child</u> |                 |                    | N=100% |
|--|------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------|
|  | <u>Under 18</u>                    | <u>18 or 19</u> | <u>20 or older</u> |        |
| <u>Lone mothers x marital status:</u>      | %                                  | %               | %                  |        |
| Never married                              | 4                                  | 32              | 64                 | 138    |
| Separated, divorced or widowed             | 11                                 | 58              | 31                 | 127    |
| <hr/>                                      |                                    |                 |                    |        |
| TOTAL LONE MOTHERS                         | 7                                  | 44              | 48                 | 265    |
| <hr/>                                      |                                    |                 |                    |        |
| <u>Partnered mothers x marital status:</u> |                                    |                 |                    |        |
| Never married                              | 4                                  | 22              | 74                 | 73     |
| Separated, divorced or widowed             | 9                                  | 59              | 32                 | 44     |
| Married and living with spouse             | 3                                  | 29              | 68                 | 1656   |
| <hr/>                                      |                                    |                 |                    |        |
| TOTAL PARTNERED MOTHERS                    | 3                                  | 29              | 67                 | 1773   |

25. Lone mothers who had never been married were more likely to have become teenage mothers than never-married mothers who were living with a partner.

The future

26. Mothers who reported that they were able to have more children were asked if they in fact wanted more children. Two-thirds of all mothers who were asked this question said that they did want more children and, overall, mothers bringing up children on their own did not differ from mothers living with a partner in the desire for more children.
27. However, as Table 7 shows, the desire for more children varied with marital status within both groups of mothers. Lone mothers whose marriages had ended in separation, divorce or widowhood were rather less likely (59 per cent) to want to increase their families than those who had never been married (68 per cent). Conversely, partnered mothers whose marriages had broken down or ended were rather more likely (75 per cent) to want to increase their families than those who had never been married (68 per cent), but this difference was due to greater uncertainty among the latter group.

TABLE 7

Desire for more children among lone and partnered mothers by marital status (base = 1994 mothers who reported that they were able to have more children)

|  | <u>Whether wanted more children</u> |           |                                  | N=100%*     |
|--|-------------------------------------|-----------|----------------------------------|-------------|
|  | <u>Yes</u>                          | <u>No</u> | <u>Don't know/<br/>uncertain</u> |             |
| <u>Lone mothers x marital status:</u>      | %                                   | %         | %                                |             |
| Never married                              | 68                                  | 27        | 5                                | 138         |
| Separated, divorced or widowed             | 59                                  | 29        | 12                               | 124         |
| <b>TOTAL LONE MOTHERS</b>                  | <b>64</b>                           | <b>28</b> | <b>8</b>                         | <b>262</b>  |
| <u>Partnered mothers x marital status:</u> |                                     |           |                                  |             |
| Never married                              | 68                                  | 22        | 10                               | 73          |
| Separated, divorced or widowed             | 75                                  | 25        | -                                | 44          |
| Married and living with spouse             | 66                                  | 27        | 6                                | 1615        |
| <b>TOTAL PARTNERED MOTHERS</b>             | <b>66</b>                           | <b>27</b> | <b>7</b>                         | <b>1732</b> |

\*Information on desire for more children is unavailable for 3 lone mothers and 41 partnered mothers

28. About a quarter of all mothers said that they did not want any more children. This response did not vary with marital status or with the presence or absence of a partner.
  
29. Mothers who had never been married, or who were separated, divorced or widowed when interviewed, were asked if they wanted to get married (or remarried). Perhaps it is not surprising that a higher proportion of those living with a partner (67 per cent) said that they wanted to marry than those bringing up children on their own (58 per cent). This was not because lone mothers positively did not want to marry; 11 per cent were uncertain about it, compared with only five per cent of the partnered mothers.
  
30. The desire to marry, however, varied with marital status in both groups. Again, as with the desire for more children, mothers whose marriages had broken down or ended were very much more likely to say that they wanted to re-marry if they were living with a partner (74 per cent) than if they were bringing up children on their own (44 per cent). On the other hand, mothers who had never been married were more likely to want to marry if they were bringing up children on their own, as Table 8 shows.

TABLE 8

Desire for (re)marriage among unmarried and separated lone and partnered mothers by marital status (base = 379 mothers who were not married and living with their husband)

|  | <u>Whether wanted to (re)marry</u> |           |                             | N=100%* |
|--|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|---------|
|  | <u>Yes</u>                         | <u>No</u> | <u>Don't know uncertain</u> |         |
| <u>Lone mothers x marital status:</u>      | %                                  | %         | %                           |         |
| Never married                              | 70                                 | 22        | 7                           | 138     |
| Separated, divorced or widowed             | 44                                 | 41        | 15                          | 124     |
| <hr/>                                      |                                    |           |                             |         |
| TOTAL LONE MOTHERS                         | 58                                 | 31        | 11                          | 262     |
| <hr/>                                      |                                    |           |                             |         |
| <u>Partnered mothers x marital status:</u> |                                    |           |                             |         |
| Never married                              | 63                                 | 30        | 7                           | 73      |
| Separated, divorced or widowed             | 74                                 | 23        | (1)                         | 44      |
| <hr/>                                      |                                    |           |                             |         |
| TOTAL PARTNERED MOTHERS                    | 67                                 | 27        | 5                           | 117     |

\*Information on desire for (re)marriage is unavailable for three lone mothers.

31. It is not surprising that, among lone mothers, the separated, divorced or widowed were almost twice as likely to say that they did not want to marry as those who had never been married.

Former lone parents

- 32 So far, this paper has been concerned with mothers who were lone parents when interviewed (265 individuals) and has compared their characteristics with those of married and cohabiting mothers. However, 236 women and ten men had been lone parents at some time previously, and the characteristics of those former lone parents will now be examined. Again, because of the very few men involved, findings will be presented only for women.

33. When interviewed, 222 of the former lone mothers were living with a husband or cohabitee and bringing up children. Fourteen women who had been lone mothers were no longer bringing up children, because either the children had died or were living apart from their mothers; these women have been excluded from analysis.
34. Almost one quarter of all mothers had experienced lone parenthood, and the prevalence of former lone motherhood among those living with a partner was almost as high (12 per cent) as the prevalence of current lone motherhood (13 per cent).
35. However, as Table 9 shows, the prevalence of former lone parenthood varied with current marital status. Cohabiting mothers, particularly those who had previously been married, were considerably more likely to have been lone parents than married mothers. And among cohabiting mothers, those who had been married were almost three times as likely to have been lone mothers as those who had never been married.

TABLE 9

Former lone parenthood among partnered mothers by marital status  
 (base = 1773 mothers who were cohabiting, or married and living with a spouse when interviewed)

|                                   | <u>Former lone<br/>parents</u> | <u>Never been<br/>lone parents</u> |             |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------|
|                                   | %                              | %                                  | N=100%      |
| Never married                     | 20                             | 80                                 | 73          |
| Separated, divorced or<br>widowed | 57                             | 43                                 | 44          |
| Married and living with<br>spouse | 11                             | 89                                 | 1656        |
| <b>TOTAL PARTNERED MOTHERS</b>    | <b>12</b>                      | <b>87</b>                          | <b>1773</b> |



36. Overall, former lone mothers were less likely (12 per cent) to have experienced two or more periods of lone parenthood than current lone mothers (21 per cent). The number of cohabiting mothers who had been lone parents is very small, as Table 10 shows, but they were twice as likely to have experienced more than one period of lone parenthood as married mothers.

TABLE 10

Number of periods of lone parenthood experienced by former lone mothers by marital status (base = 222 former lone mothers who were cohabiting, or married and living with a spouse when interviewed)

|                                   | <u>No. of periods of lone parenthood</u> |                         | N=100%     |
|-----------------------------------|--|-------------------------|------------|
|                                   | <u>One</u><br>%                          | <u>Two or more</u><br>% |            |
| Never married                     | (11)                                     | (4)                     | 15         |
| Separated, divorced or<br>widowed | 80                                       | 20                      | 25         |
| Married and living with<br>spouse | 90                                       | 10                      | 182        |
| <b>TOTAL PARTNERED MOTHERS</b>    | <b>88</b>                                | <b>12</b>               | <b>222</b> |

SUMMARY AND PROPOSALS FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS

37. This preliminary examination of lone mothers in the fourth follow-up of the NCDS cohort is concerned with 262 women who were lone parents when interviewed; 222 women who had been lone parents in the past but who were married or cohabiting when interviewed; and 1551 mothers who had never been lone parents.
38. The main emphasis of this paper is on comparisons between women who were lone mothers when interviewed and those who were living with a partner at that time. However, it should be borne in mind that one in eight of the partnered mothers had been lone parents in the past; in future analysis, it will be necessary to distinguish between these three groups of mothers.
39. Thirteen per cent of women who were bringing up children were lone parents when interviewed. Overall, 12 per cent of children being cared for by respondents were being brought up in a one-parent family.
40. The prevalence of former lone parenthood was associated with marital status at the time of interview: mothers who were separated, divorced or widowed were more likely to have been lone parents than those who had never been married or those currently married and living with their husbands. Current lone parenthood, on the other hand was not associated with marital status at the time of interview.
41. Mothers bringing up children on their own differed from those bringing up children in two-parent families in terms of family size, economic activity, and the age at which they became parents. Lone mothers had fewer children, were more likely to be working or seeking work, and were more likely to have had their first child whilst still in their teens.
42. However, family size, economic activity, social position and the age at which women became parents was associated with the marital status of current lone mothers. Lone mothers who had never been married had fewer children, were more likely to be working or seeking work, were more likely to be engaged in non-manual occupations, and were more likely to have had their first child when they were aged twenty or older than lone mothers whose marriages had ended or broken down.

43. Attitudes to marriage and children among current lone mothers also differed according to their marital status. Lone mothers whose marriages had ended or broken down were less likely to want more children and were more likely to report that they did not want to marry than lone mothers who had never been married. They differed in this from separated, divorced or widowed cohabiting mothers, who were more likely to want more children and more likely to want to marry than cohabiting mothers who had never married.
44. Before listing proposals for further analysis, it should be pointed out that the data on family formation was collected in the form of time periods; the date of birth of children and the start and end dates of all partnerships are available. Consequently, life table or survival methods appear to be the most appropriate form of analysis for most of these data. These methods will compare circumstances preceding and following lone parenthood with the circumstances of women who did not become lone parents at the same point in time.
45. Further analysis should examine:
- (a) The duration of lone parenthood, in order to establish the probability of a period of lone parenthood lasting for a specific duration, for different ages of mother at the start of the period; presence or absence of a partner at the start; social position, educational status and economic status at the start; and number and ages of children at the start. Life table methods will enable us to find out the extent to which the likelihood of lone parenthood ending in the formation of a new partnership depends on the above factors.
  - (b) The effect of the number of children and the age of the youngest child on the probability of breakdown of a partnership followed by lone parenthood; the mother's age at the start of the partnership and the duration of the partnership will be taken into account.
  - (c) The effect of the number of children and the age of the youngest child on the probability of forming a partnership following a period of lone parenthood; the age of the mother at the start of the period and her partnership status at that time will be taken into account in survival analyses.

- (d) The effect of lone parenthood on economic activity, among those who were without a partner before the start of lone parenthood; economic activity before the start of the period of lone parenthood will be compared with economic activity at a specific point after the start of the period (to be established following examination of duration of lone parenthood) relative to the changes in economic activity among women without partners or children during the same period. For this analysis, each lone mother might be matched to women who were without a partner or children throughout the lone parenthood period and who had the same economic activity at the start.
- (e) The housing circumstances; i.e. type of accommodation, tenure, whether living with parents or parents-in-law, of lone parents relative to partnered parents, controlling for family size.
- (f) The weekly family income of lone parents relative to partnered parents, and the proportion of that income derived from state benefits in the two groups.
- (g) The incidence of disability and ill-health among lone parents relative to partnered parents.