



Report on Survey of Registered Members in 2008

March 2009

Transforming Ireland

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Acknowledgements:

Childminding Ireland would like to acknowledge all the busy Childminders who took the time to complete and return the long questionnaire for this Survey.

Introduction:

This is *Childminding Ireland's* fourth annual Survey of its Members. It is the only annual national snapshot available of the experiences of Childminders in Ireland.

This Report presents the findings of the Survey and will guide *Childminding Ireland's* focus of activity.

Aim of the Survey

The aim of this survey was to:

- Establish the type of services members of *Childminding Ireland* wish to be provided with.
- Identify the member's self-reported training and development needs.
- Annual surveys identify trends within the Childminding sector.

The Setting

A questionnaire (see appendix 1) was posted to all Registered Members (815) of *Childminding Ireland*. The response rate was 31%, our highest response to date. Due to the anonymous nature of the survey, no individual feedback was given to the respondents.

The Sample Selection

The sample selection consisted of Registered Members actively engaged in Childminding who are members of *Childminding Ireland*.

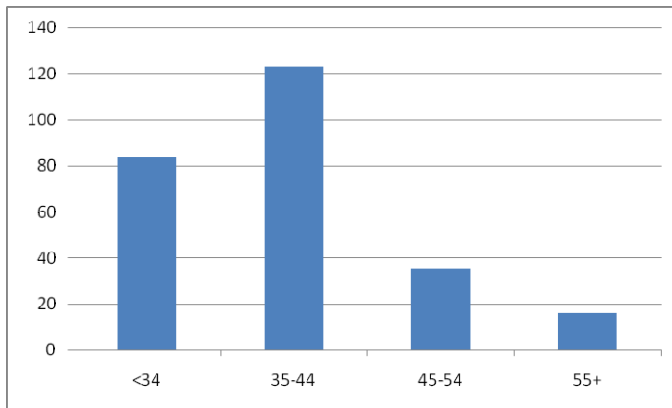
The Findings

Demographics

Age

The age spread of the respondents was as follows:

	2008	2007	2006
34 years and under	32%	34%	32%
35-44 years	48%	44%	47%
45-54 years	14%	13%	15%
Aged 55 or over	6%	9%	6%



Geographic Locations

In response to the question “what County do you live in?” Replies came from Childminders from 26 counties (see Appendix 3, Figure 1).

The respondents were evenly spread between rural and urban locations, with 51% identifying themselves as living in an urban location, and 49% in a rural location. These figures have remained relatively unchanged since the 2005.

Gender

100% of the respondents were female Childminders.

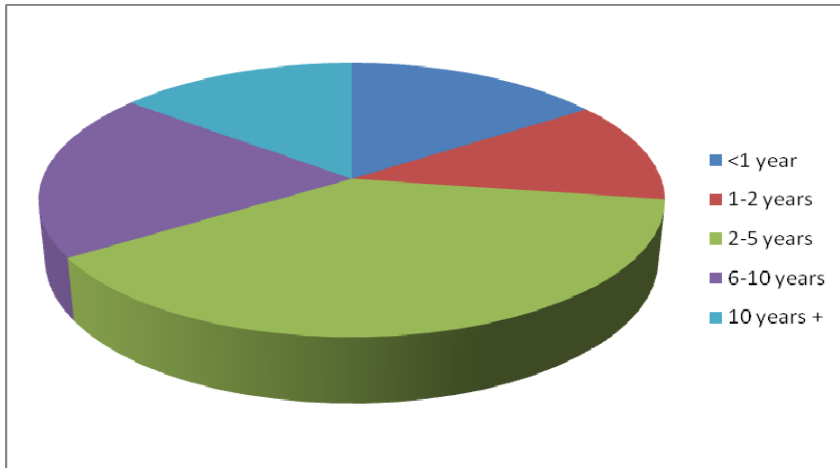
Childcare Responsibilities

In response to the question “Do you have children of your own?” 81% had childcare responsibilities, 42% of respondents had pre-school children, 58% had school going children. Childminders have an average 1.6 children of their own, which is a significant decrease on last year where the average no. of own

children was 2.1. 19% of respondents had no children of their own, which is a increase on last year where 13% had no children.

Length of time Childminding

The majority of respondents have been Childminding between 2-5 years (38%). A further 35% have been Childminding for longer than 5 years.



Qualifications

Childcare Qualifications

- Nationally accredited childcare qualification e.g. FETAC. (58% of the respondents). This represents a 20% increase from last year .
- However 4% of respondents replied they had no childcare qualification, compared to 1% last year.
- The Quality Awareness Programme (59% of respondents), an increase on the 52% last year.
- 37% of respondents had training in Special Needs
- First Aid training proved to be the most popular with 85% of respondents having undertaken training in this.

Non Childcare Qualifications

- 22% had a non-childcare related third level qualification.

Number of Children minded per Childminder

The average number of children minded by respondents was 3, a decrease on last year's survey.

52% of respondents provided after-school care

40% of respondents provided care for a baby (under 15 months old)

90% of respondents minded children aged between 15months and 6 years.

79% of respondents were not related to any of the children they minded.

Vacancies

Most Childminders had no current vacancies (66%).
Of the remainder, most had one vacancy, but a few had three.
The average time a vacancy remains unfilled in 4 months.

Terms and Conditions

Rates of Pay

Survey results revealed significant variances in fees for Childminding throughout the country (see Appendix 3, Figure 2).
For the first year since we have started doing the survey, the national average rate for a full time place has dropped. It is now €148, this represents a decrease of 4.5% since last year.

Prices range from €70 to €250, with a median value of €104.50.

The average part-time rate is €5.40 per hour, representing a 12% decrease since last year.

Most respondents (87%) had a Contract or Agreement in place with parents (Appendix 3, Fig. 3).

Of the respondents who minded siblings, 90% offered a discount for the second and subsequent child(ren). On average Childminders gave a 20% discount for the second child, but this ranged from 5% to 40%.

The following were included in the rates charged:

Breakfast	57%
Lunch	54.5%
Dinner	51%
Snacks	78%
Nappies	1%

Hours Worked

On average, respondents worked 39 hours a week. Many Childminders work part-time, 35% work less than 40 hours a week. 65% of respondents worked over 40 hours, and 27% worked 50 hours or more each week. (Appendix 3, Fig. 4)

Holidays & Sickness

Do you get paid, if due to parent or child's sickness, the child does not attend?

Yes, usual rate	76%
Yes, but reduced rate	8%
No	16%

58% of Childminders are not paid for any holidays.

Of the 42% who get paid for holidays, on average they received holiday pay for 15 days (3 weeks), with a range from 5 to 30 days.

Types of Childcare

Most Childminders work alone (85%), the other 15% work with an assistant, spouse or partner.

7% of respondents provide overnight Childminding.

9% of respondents provide weekend Childminding

52% of respondents provide after-school Childminding

16% of respondents provide drop-in care

23% of respondents have a play-group session as part of their service.

Children with Special Needs

9% of respondents mind a child with special needs. The nature of the special needs varied, and included Autism, language delay, Downs Syndrome and visual impairment.

Tax

There has been an increase in tax compliance since last year. 77% of Childminders are registered for tax.

53% of respondents avail of Childminder's Tax Relief.

Garda Vetting

38% of respondents have applied for Garda Vetting.

Grants

47% of respondents have successfully applied for the Childminder Development Grant, a decrease on 2007. Of those that applied, all were either successful, or their application is pending.

8% of respondents had applied for a Capital Grant, and only 1 was unsuccessful.

No Childminders applied for the Mother-Toddler grant from the Katherine Howard Foundation.

Sources of Support

The respondents use a variety of supports, often gaining advice and support from multiple sources.

Local County Childcare Committee

85% are in contact with their local C/CCC, an increase of 3% on last year

Childminder Advisory Officer

60% are in contact with their local CMAO

A Pre-School Inspector

24% are in contact with a Pre-School Inspector

A Public Health Nurse

13% are in contact with a Public Health Nurse

Local Partnership

3% are in contact with their local Partnership

15% are members of their local Mother & Toddler group.

51% of respondents are members of a local Childminding Network.

Other sources of support cited were peers on training courses, Barnados and library playgroups.

Notification & Inspection

85% of respondents had notified to their City / County Childcare Committee, and 2% are in the process of doing so.

65% of respondents are notified to the HSE.

Many Childminders who are notified to the HSE, also use their local County Childcare Committee for support.

82% of Childminders who have been through the inspection process found it a positive experience.

Comments on the inspection process included “straight forward...unobtrusive & respectful...thorough...over-long....standards too high....awful....positive...great advice....daunting”

Issues, Concerns & Challenges

The following issues were highlighted as being challenging regarding the managing the professional aspect of the respondents work:

Childminders continue to struggle with dealing/negotiating with parents. 44% of Childminders cited this as a challenge.

There has been an increase in the number of Childminders struggling with Book-keeping (36% from 29% last year), this may be due to the increased number of Childminders who are tax compliant and unable to avail of the Childminder’s Tax Relief.

42% find it a challenge to keep up to date with legislation.

Other challenges were:

Keeping Child Records	15%
Meeting Standards for Inspection	18%

Other items specified were:

Isolation

Difficulty in getting paid

How others view the role of Childminder

Filling vacancies
Very tiring
Parental timekeeping

Aspects of childcare were also challenging for respondents:

22% Children's eating habits and patterns
6% Children's sleeping habits/patterns
36% Getting out and about with children
26% Providing a range of activities for children

Other issues cited were managing children's behavior, supervising homework and balancing Childminding with the care of own child/ren.

Although more Childminders are bringing the children out and about than last year. (excluding school pick-ups), this is still an area that needs to be improved.

Daily	30%
At least twice a week	32%
Less often	28%
Hardly ever	10%

Childminders see "being valued by parents" as the most important issue for them as Childminders (77%).

Training and ongoing professional development is also important to them (60%). Other issues viewed as important were information on regulations and quality improvement (47%) insurance (43%), payrates (31%) and tax (26%) and marketing (11%).

Limitations of Survey

All respondents were members of *Childminding Ireland*.

As with all questionnaires / surveys, there may have been some bias due to the respondent effect (i.e. giving the answer you think the researcher wants) and to subjective self-reporting.

Appendix 1

About You

1. How long have you been Childminding?

- Less than one year
- Between one and two years
- Between two and five years
- Between six and ten years
- Longer than ten years

2. Please indicate your age group?

- Less than 34
- 35 - 44
- 45 - 54
- 55 and over

3. What is your nationality?

4. In what language do you deliver your service?

5. What county do you live in?

6. Do you have childcare qualifications?

- Nationally accredited childcare qualification (eg FETAC)
- QAP (Quality Awareness Programme)
- First Aid
- Other (*please specify*)

7. What non-childcare qualifications do you have, if applicable?

8. Do you have children of your own?

Please give their ages

9. Are you?

- Female
 Male

10. Do you live in?

- A City
 A Town
 A Village
 A rural community

About your Childminding Service

11. How many children do you mind?

- _____ Aged 0 to 15 months
_____ 15 months to 6 years
_____ Aged 7+ years

12. How many vacancies do you currently have, that you wish to fill?

13. If you have vacancies, how long have these been unfilled?

14. How many of the children you mind are related to you or your spouse (excluding your own)?

15. Are you notified to your Health Service Executive?

- Yes
 No

16. Have you been inspected by a Pre-School Inspection Officer

- Yes
 No

17. If yes, please comment on the inspection process

18. Are you in contact with your local:

- County Childcare Committee
- Childminders Advisory Officer
- Pre-School Inspector
- Public Health Nurse
- Local Partnership
- Mother & Toddler Group
- Other (*please specify*) _____

19. Are you voluntarily notified to your City/County Childcare Committee?

- Yes
- No
- In the process of becoming voluntarily notified

20. Do you have Garda Vetting?

- Yes
- No

If yes, how long did the process take?

If no, have you applied?

- Yes
- No

21. Were you required to get Garda Vetting from another jurisdiction?

- Yes
- No

If yes, were you successful?

- Yes
- No

22. Do you have any comments about the Garda Vetting process?

23. Have you attended any training, seminars, conferences or events organised by your local Childminders' Advisor or City/County Childcare Committee?

- Yes

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No

24. Roughly how many events have you attended in the past year? _____

25. Have you heard of the Siolta Standards for Childminders?

Yes

No

26. Would you like to implement the Siolta Standards in your Childminding practice?

Yes

No

27. How could *Childminding Ireland* best support you in implementing the Siolta Standards in your Childminding practice?

Group meeting in your local area

Regional meeting in your region

One-to-one meeting in your home

Telephone support line

Articles in the quarterly newsletter

Other (*please specify*) _____

28. Are you a member of a local Childminder's Network?

Yes

No

29. Do you have a written contract/agreement in place with parents?

Yes

No

30. How many hours do you work Childminding in an average week?

31. What rate do you charge?

Full day-care rate (give weekly amount per child)

Part-time rate (give hourly rate per child)

32. If you mind siblings, what discount do you give for the second child?

33. As part of your rate do you provide:

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner
- Snacks
- Nappies

34. Do you get paid holidays?

- Yes
- No

How many days per year _____

35. Are you registered for tax?

- Yes
- No

36. Do you avail of the Childminder's Tax Relief?

- Yes
- No

37. Do you provide?

- Overnight Childminding
- Weekend Childminding
- After-school care
- Drop-in Childminding
- Other non-traditional Childminding (*please specify*) _____

38. Do you mind any children with special needs?

- Yes
- No

What is the nature of the special need?

Have you undertaken any training in Special Needs?

- Yes
- No

39. Do you charge if, due to parent or child sickness, the child does not attend?

- Yes usual rate
- Yes, but reduced rate
- No

40. For each child that you mind, roughly how many days a month would the child be sick during his/her scheduled time in your Childminding service?

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Child 1 _____
Child 2 _____
Child 3 _____
Child 4 _____
Child 5 _____

41. Out of these days, roughly how many days would each child be absent from your service?

Child 1 _____
Child 2 _____
Child 3 _____
Child 4 _____
Child 5 _____

42. If the child is present in your service, do you provide prescription medicine at parents' request?

- Yes
 No

43. Do you provide non-prescription medicine e.g. Calpol, at parents' request?

- Yes
 No

44. Are you willing to mind a child who is on prescription medicine?

- Yes
 No
 Depending in the illness (*please specify*)
-

45. Do you work:

- Alone
 With spouse
 With an Business Partner
 With an Employee/Assistant

46. Do you have a formal playgroup session included in your Service?

- Yes
 No

47. Have you applied for (Y/N):

	Applied	Successful
CM Development Grant	_____	_____
Capital Grant €5,000	_____	_____
Parent & Toddler Grant	_____	_____

If you have received the Capital Grant, what did you use it for?

If you did not apply for the Capital Grant, why did you choose not to?

48. What was your experience of the grant application process?

49. What do you see as the most Challenging aspects of the professional practice area of your work?

- Keeping Accounts
 - Keeping Child Records
 - Negotiating/Dealing with Parents
 - Staying up to date with changing legislation
 - Meeting standards for Inspection
 - Other (*please specify*)
-

50. What do you find the most difficult in terms of the child-care element of your work?

- Children's eating habits and patterns
 - Children's sleeping habits/patterns
 - Getting out and about with children
 - Providing a range of activities for children
 - Other (*please specify*)
-

51. What is/are the most important issue(s) to you as a Childminder?

- Training and Professional Development
- Information on regulation and best practice
- Pay rates
- Insurance
- Marketing your Service
- Tax Compliance / Contributory Pension
- Being valued by parents
- Other (*Please specify*)

52. How often do you bring the children out and about (other than school pick ups)?

- Daily
- At least twice a week
- Less often
- Hardly ever/never

About Childminding Ireland

53. Please indicate on the list below the main reasons you joined *Childminding Ireland* (*tick all that apply*)

- Group Insurance Scheme
- Information offered
- Support and advice offered

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- Support in dealing with parents
- Training offered
- Business forms offered
- Member of a Professional Organisation
- Vacancy Placement Service
- Contact with other Childminders
- Newsletter
- Other (*Please state*)

54. How long have you been a member of *Childminding Ireland*?

- Less than one year
- Between one and three years
- Longer than three years

55. How often do you contact *Childminding Ireland*?

- Frequently
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

56. How satisfied are you with *Childminding Ireland's* newsletter?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Not at all satisfied

Please comment / what would you like to see articles on: _____

57. If you have used our information line, how satisfied were you with the level of customer service and the quality of information given?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Not at all satisfied

Please comment: _____

58. How often have you attended *Childminding Ireland's* Annual General Meeting?

- More than twice

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- Twice
- Once
- Never

What are the barriers to attending our Annual General meeting?

What workshops/talks would you like to see at our Annual General Meeting?

59. Do you feel the information given to new members is adequate?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

60. Do you have a computer at home?

- Yes
- No

61. Do you use www.childminding.ie?

- Yes
- No

62. If you use www.childminding.ie, how satisfied are you with the information available on it?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Not at all satisfied

Please comment / what would you like to see included:

63. What services, events or activities can *Childminding Ireland* provide, to encourage development of Childminding and promote Membership of *Childminding Ireland*?

64. *Childminding Ireland* holds the International Presidency of IFDCO, the International Family Day Care Organisation, how can this be used to gain the most for Childminding in Ireland?

65. In order to assist us with effectively marketing membership to Childminders, please answer the following questions:

What daily newspaper(s) do you regularly read?

What Sunday newspaper(s) do you regularly read?

What magazine(s) do you regularly read?

What TV station do you watch most often?

What radio station do you listen to most often?

What websites do you regularly visit?

Additional comments

Appendix 2



Childminding Ireland

9 Bulford Business Campus
Kilcoole
Co Wicklow
T 01 287 8466
F 01 287 8465
E info@childminding.ie

Dear Member,

Help Us to Help You & Win €500!!

Once again, it is time for our annual Survey of Members, *the only national survey in Ireland dedicated to Childminders!*

The survey forms do not identify the person completing them, so you can express your opinions free in the knowledge that your response is confidential and anonymous.

Here at *Childminding Ireland* we believe it is necessary to consult you, the members, about the work of the organisation and the type of services you wish to see provided by *Childminding Ireland*.

We are also very interested to know about the most common challenges you experience in your Childminding practice. This may identify areas of children's behaviour for further study and will assist with the development of training which will then be useful and relevant to your work with children.

Completing the survey will take some of your valuable time, so to encourage your response, all surveys have a raffle ticket attached and tickets from completed surveys will be placed in a draw for a **cash prize of €500**.

The raffle tickets are randomly attached to the surveys, so as to preserve your anonymity as some of the questions are personal.

To enter the draw, here's what to do:

Complete and return the survey

Detach part B of the raffle ticket and keep it safely, (but not so safe that you cannot find it)!

Leave Part A of the raffle ticket attached to the completed survey.

Post the completed survey in the pre-stamped envelope, to arrive in time for the raffle on **October 24th 2008**

The winning number will be published on our website and in the Winter Newsletter, which will be circulated in early December.

We urge you to participate fully in the work of *Childminding Ireland* by taking the time to complete and return this survey. The findings from last year's survey were published in a report and distributed widely. The report is available from *Childminding Ireland* or from www.childminding.ie.

Thanking you in advance – and remember, if you're not in, you can't win!

Childminding Ireland

Appendix 3

Figure 1

Carlow	6
Cavan	2
Clare	21
Cork	10
Donegal	3
Dublin	40
Galway	11
Kerry	7
Kildare	16
Kilkenny	2
Laois	1
Leitrim	1
Limerick	14
Louth	6
Mayo	15
Meath	12
Monaghan	1
Offaly	3
Roscommon	7
Sligo	4
Tipperary	15
Waterford	
Waterford	16
Westmeath	3
Wexford	3
Wicklow	19

Figure 2

Fees for Childminding

Because of the low rates of response in some counties, these figures should be treated as illustrative only.

County	Full time rate	Part-time
Carlow	155.00	5.50
Cavan	135.00	2.25
Clare	150.00	5.30
Cork	166.00	6.50
Donegal	128.30	4.00
Dublin	170.65	5.95
Galway	135.00	4.50
Kerry	159.00	4.28
Kildare	187.11	5.32
Kilkenny	150.00	8.00
Laois		12.00
Leitrim	100.00	3.50
Limerick	116.40	5.96
Louth	141.25	7.00
Mayo	145.60	5.50
Meath	158.84	5.53

Monaghan	150.00	
Offaly	126.00	
Roscommon	125.00	4.63
Sligo	140.00	5.66
Tipperary	123.07	5.08
Waterford	145.07	5.53
Westmeath	150.00	4.00
Wexford	138.33	4.00
Wicklow	170.16	5.74

Figure 3
Do you have a contract in place?

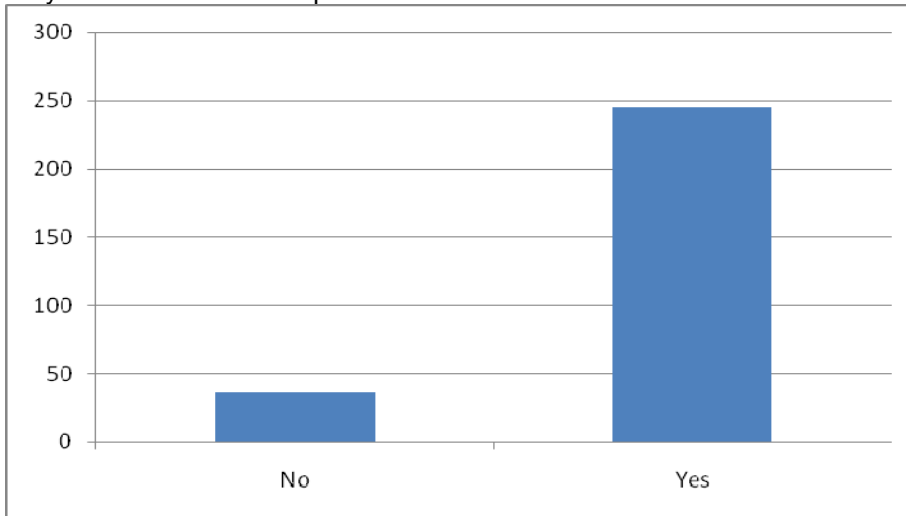


Figure 4
Hours worked in an average week

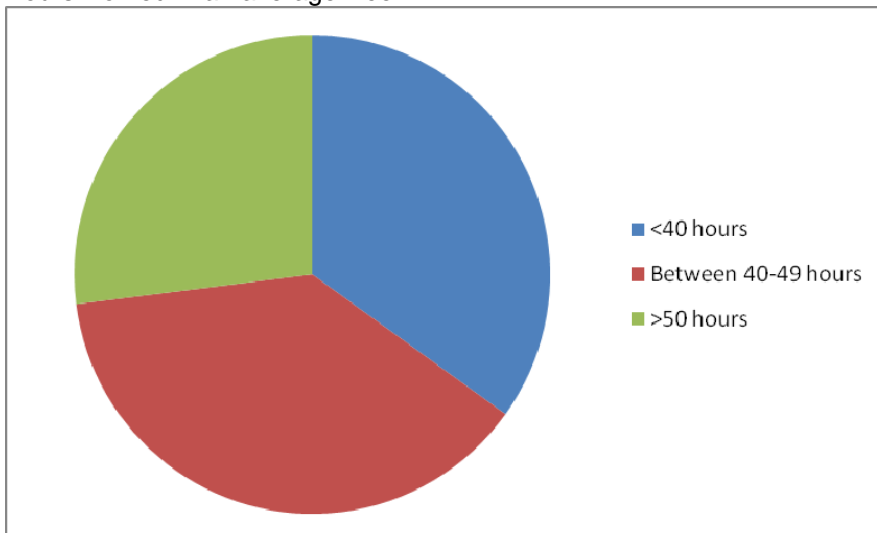


Figure 5
Are you registered for tax?

