



Report on Survey of Registered Members in 2009

March 2010

Transforming Ireland

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Acknowledgements:

Childminding Ireland would like to thank most sincerely all those Childminders who took the time to complete and return the questionnaire for this Survey.

Introduction:

This is *Childminding Ireland's* fifth 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 (818) of *Childminding Ireland* in September 2009. The response rate was 24% which was a decrease on previous years. 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*. Registered Membership of *Childminding Ireland* requires the following:

- Statutory compliance i.e. notified to the HSE if caring for more than 3 non-related pre-school children
- Insured for Childminding
- Cleared by their GP for undertaking Childminding
- All household members free of conviction of any offence in relation to a child

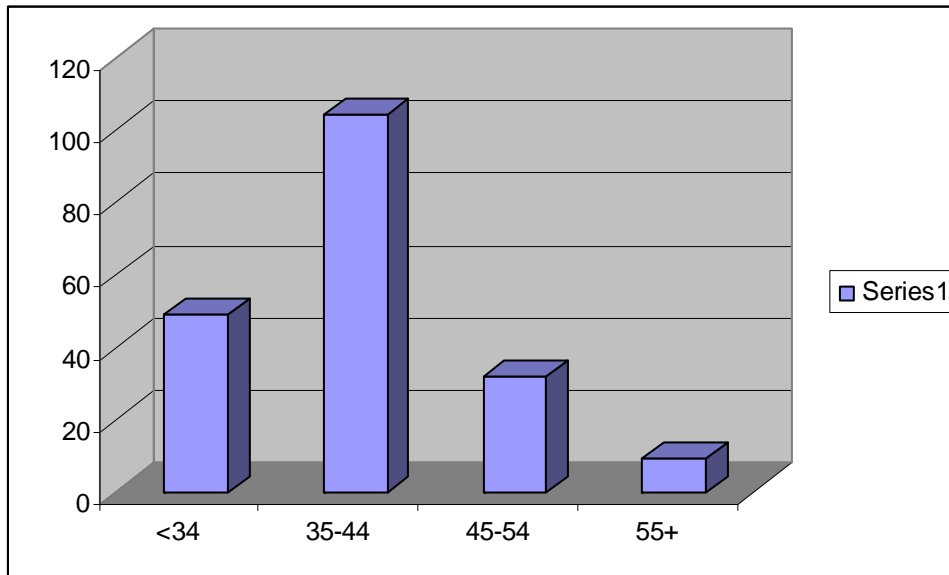
The Findings

Demographics

Age

The age spread of the respondents was as follows which has not varied greatly from survey to survey:

	2009	2008	2007	2006
34 years and under	25%	32%	34%	32%
35-44 years	53%	48%	44%	47%
45-54 years	16%	14%	13%	15%
Aged 55 or over	5%	6%	9%	6%



Geographic Locations

In response to the question “what County do you live in?” Replies came from Childminders located in 25 different counties (see Appendix 3, Figure 1). The respondents were evenly spread between rural and urban locations, with 54% identifying themselves as living in an urban location, and 45% in a rural location. These figures also have remained relatively unchanged since 2005.

Gender

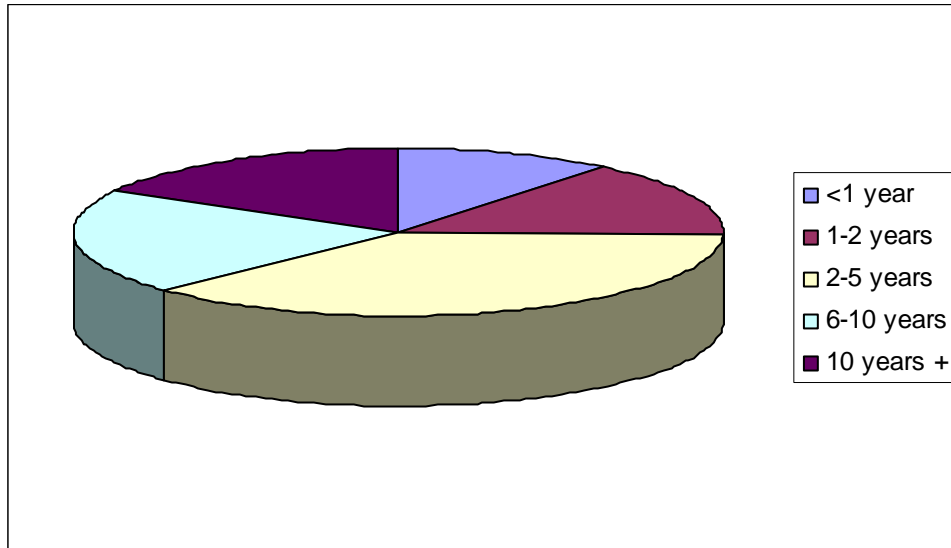
99% of the respondents were female Childminders. Yes there was one male respondent! One small step for mankind.....!

Childcare Responsibilities

In response to the question “Do you have children of your own?” 84% had childcare responsibilities, 38% of respondents had pre-school children, 60% had school going children. 16% of respondents had no children of their own, which is a decrease on last year where 19% had no children.

Length of time Childminding

The majority of respondents have been Childminding between 2-5 years (37%). A further 37% have been Childminding for longer than 5 years. Less than 1 year (11%), 1-2 years (29%), 2-5 years (37%), 6-10 years (20%) and more than 10 years (17%).



Qualifications

Childcare Qualifications

- Nationally accredited childcare qualification e.g. FETAC/HETAC or NQAI. (59% of the respondents). This is similar to last year.
- Of these respondents 51% hold the Major award at FETAC Level 5 or equivalent and 30% hold 1 or more modules at FETAC Level 5. Unfortunately 18% of these respondents did not provide the details of their qualification for analysis.
- Only 3.5% of respondents reported holding no childcare qualification.
- The Quality Awareness Programme (72% of respondents), a significant increase on the 59% reported last year.
- 37% of respondents to this survey had training in Special Needs
- First Aid training proved to be the most popular with 86% of respondents having undertaken training in this which is similar to 2008 however we would like to see this even higher.

85% of Respondents had attended a training event organised by their local City or County Childcare Committee and 54% of these had attended up to 3 such events. The topics were varied and included; QAP, First Aid, Arts & Crafts, Creative Play, Child Protection, Fire Safety, Nutrition, Manual Handling and many more.

Non Childcare Qualifications

- 56% reported having a non-childcare related qualifications and these qualifications varied hugely from ECDL and Book-keeping to BAs in Maths, Business and Biotechnology.

Síolta, National Quality Framework

In an effort to establish our members' awareness of Síolta we asked a number of questions in 2009 relating to Síolta.

68% of respondents have heard about the Síolta
54% have indicated that they would like to implement Síolta in their Childminding practice

We asked our members to indicate how best *Childminding Ireland* can support them in implementing the Síolta Standards:

Group meeting in your local area	44%
Regional meeting in your region	14%
One-to-one meeting in your home	15%
Telephone support line	23%
Articles in the quarterly newsletter	47%

Other suggestions for support from respondents included online and email support.

Number of Children minded per Childminder

The average number of children minded by respondents is three.

55% of respondents care for 3 children or less.

28% of respondents provide after-school care which reflects a huge decrease on the 52% reported in 2008

49% of respondents provide care for a baby (under 15 months old)

86% of respondents mind children aged between 15months and 6 years which is similar to previous years.

89% of respondents were not related to any of the children they minded.

Vacancies

More than half of the respondents had no current vacancies (57%).

The remaining respondents had 1-2 vacancies (34%).

However, of these respondents 38% had vacancies for more than 6 months. The most popular methods of filling vacancies are word of mouth and advertisements in local papers.

Terms and Conditions

Rates of Pay

Survey results revealed significant variances in fees for Childminding throughout the country (see **Appendix 3, Figure 2**).

The national average rate for a full time place is exactly the same as last year at €148.

Prices ranged from €90 to €300, with a median value of €112.

The national average part-time rate is €5.00 per hour, which represents a slight decrease on the 2008 figures of €5.40

The national average hourly rate for after-school care is €5.50 however this varied from €4.00 to €10 across the country.

Most respondents (93%) had a Contract or Agreement in place with parents an increase of 3% on 2008 (see **Appendix 3, Figure 3**).

Of this year's respondents who minded siblings, only 45% offered a discount for the second and subsequent child(ren). Of these respondents 55% gave a 10% discount for the second child, but discounts ranged from 5% to 50%.

Whilst most respondents (81%) do not offer a discount when a child moves on to pre-school/playgroup 38% of respondents offer a discount that ranges from 5% to as much as 50% in some cases. The average discount offer was 10%

The following were included in the rates charged:

Breakfast	60%
Lunch	65%
Dinner	59%
Snacks	82%
Nappies	0.5%

Hours Worked

On average, respondents worked 39 hours a week. Many Childminders work part-time, 37% work less than 40 hours a week. 64% of respondents worked over 40 hours, and 30% worked 50 hours or more each week. (see **Appendix 3, Figure 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	10%
No	14%

We altered our questioning this year in relation to paid holidays and according to our 2009 respondents only 23% of Childminders are not paid for any holidays which is a huge decrease on the 58% reported in 2008. 40% are paid for some holidays and 70% are paid when parents take holidays (i.e. separate from the Childminder's own holidays). On average the respondents reported receiving 15 days (3 weeks) holidays but this ranged from 5 to 30 days.

We also enquired this year about levels of absenteeism of children from the Childminding service due to illness. Please note that 77% of children are either rarely sick or miss only 1 – 2 days per year due to illness. (see **Appendix 3, Figure 5**)

We also asked questions in relation to administration of medication and caring for a child who is on prescription medication and received the following responses:

94% of respondents reported that they will administer prescription medicine (at parents' request)

94% of respondents reported that they will administer non-prescription medicine (at parents' request)

66% of respondents reported that they will mind a child who is on prescription medicine and a further 30% will mind a child on prescription medicine depending on the illness. Respondent specified that the child must not be contagious or pose any risk to other minded children.

Types of Childcare

Most Childminders work alone (82%), the other 18% work with an assistant, spouse or partner.

14% of respondents provide overnight Childminding.

12% of respondents provide weekend Childminding

55% of respondents provide after-school Childminding

25% of respondents provide drop-in care

23% of respondents operate a formal playgroup session as part of their Childminding service

Other non-traditional Childminding services mentioned by respondents were babysitting, playgroups/preschool and evening/overnight.

Children with Special Needs

8% of respondents mind a child with special needs. The nature of the special needs varied, and included Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Downs Syndrome and language delay.

Tax

70% of the respondents are registered for tax indicating a high level of tax compliance (see **Appendix 3, Figure 6**)

51% of respondents avail of the Childminder's Tax Relief.

Garda Vetting

56% of respondents have Garda Vetting and of these respondents the process is reported to have taken between 1-2 months (73%) however this varied in range from one month to 1 year. A further 17% of respondents reported that they have applied for Garda Vetting and 10% of respondents had to seek Garda Vetting from other jurisdictions and they were 86% successful.

There were many positive comments from Respondents regarding the Garda Vetting process and compliments for the help provided by the Barnardos Vetting Service. A number of other comments included: process too long; forms not clear; there should be one Garda Vetting process for all jurisdictions; Garda Vetting should be compulsory.

Grants

66% of respondents had applied for the Childminder Development Grant and these were 92% successful and some applications are still pending. The CMDG was used to purchase toys, books, safety equipment and outdoor equipment etc.

Only 9 respondents had applied for a Capital Grant, and 3 were successful.

Only one Childminder successfully applied for the Parent-Toddler grant.

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme

10% of respondents have applied to participate in the new ECCE scheme and a further 10% intend to apply. We asked members to indicate if they have any/all of the criteria for eligibility to the ECCE scheme:

HSE Notified (inspected & compliant)	30%
FETAC L5 (Core Modules) or Higher	37%
5 Children in identified age group	13%
Appropriate learning programme & equipment	25%
Awareness of Siolta	24%
Trading as a Sole Trader & Tax Compliant	37%

Only 8% of the above respondents could meet all the criteria indicated.

Sources of Support

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

Local City or County Childcare Committee

87% are in contact with their local C/CCC, an increase of 2% on last year

Childminder Advisory Officer

55% are in contact with their local CMAO

A Pre-School Inspector

15% are in contact with a Pre-School Inspector

A Public Health Nurse

21% are in contact with a Public Health Nurse

Local Partnership

4% are in contact with their local Partnership

16% are members of their local Parent & Toddler group.

54% of respondents are members of a local Childminding Network.

Other sources of support cited were other Childminders, preschools, playgroups and schools.

Notification & Inspection

85% of respondents had notified to their City / County Childcare Committee and Childminder Advisory Officer, and 3.5% are in the process of doing so.

56% of respondents are notified to the HSE.

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

Of those who commented on their inspections 81% were positive. The inspection process was seen as necessary, helpful and informative however some negative comments were also reported such as: 'very stressful', 'awful experience', 'too long', 'too much focus on paperwork'.

Issues, Concerns & Challenges

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

Childminders continue to struggle with dealing/negotiating with parents. 45% of Childminders cited this as a challenge.

34% of respondents reported Keeping Accounts as one of the most challenging aspects of their professional practice area of work.

43% find it a challenge to keep up to date with legislation.

Other challenges were:

Keeping Child Records	11%
Meeting Standards for Inspection	21%

Other challenges reported in relation to the professional/business aspect of the business were: paperwork, maintaining daily records, filling vacancies and wear & tear on the household.

The challenges reported by respondents in relation to the Childcare aspect of their work included the following:

34%	Children's eating habits and patterns
10%	Children's sleeping habits/patterns
72%	Getting out and about with children (huge increase from 36% in 2008)
51%	Providing a range of activities for children (another big increase from 26% in 2008)

Concerns in relation to getting out and about with children and providing a range of activities for children have increase greatly since last year.

Some of the issues cited by respondents as posing difficulties for them in the Childcare aspect of their work are as follows: parental attitudes/expectations, school collections,

homework, menus to suit all children, ensuring balance between own and minded children, dealing with behavioural problems.

Although there are an increasing number of respondents reporting that they are bringing children out and about on a daily basis conversely there are also an increasing number of respondents reporting that they hardly ever/never bring children out and about.

	2009	2008
Daily	69%	30%
At least twice a week	44%	32%
Less often	44%	28%
Hardly ever/never	36%	10%

The two primary barriers identified by Childminders were transport i.e. no car, size of car or lack of public transport (32%) and insurance (11%).

Respondents reported “being valued by parents” as the most important issue for them as Childminders (86%).

Training and ongoing professional development is also important to them (64%). Other issues viewed as important were information on regulations and best practice (49%) insurance (47%), fees (26%) and tax (27%) and marketing (18%).

Limitations of Survey

As the population surveyed consists of the Registered Members of Childminding Ireland, who are self-selecting in seeking to provide a quality, professional childminding service, the survey does not claim to represent the childminding sub-sector as a whole, but can provide useful information on trends by comparing data obtained with previous, similar surveys.

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?

- QAP (Quality Awareness Programme)
- First Aid - Paediatric
- FETAC/HETAC/NQAI

Please give details & number of FETAC Level 5 modules completed:

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, not including your own children? _____

Please break down by age group:

_____ Aged 0 to 15 months

_____ 15 months to 6 years

_____ Aged 7+ years

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

13(a). How many vacancies do you currently have?

13(b). How do you normally fill vacancies?

14. How long have you had these vacancies?

15. Are you notified to your Health Service Executive?

Yes

No

16. Have you been inspected?

Yes

No

17. If yes, please comment on the inspection process

18(a). Are you in contact with your local?:

City/County Childcare Committee

Childminder Advisor

Pre-School Officer

Public Health Nurse

Local Partnership

Parent & Toddler Group

Other (*please specify*) _____

18(b). Are you involved in a Childminder's Network?

Yes

No

19. Are you Voluntarily Notified to?

City/County Childcare Committee

Childminder Advisor

In the process of becoming voluntarily notified

Not voluntary 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 Childminder Advisor or City/County Childcare Committee?

- Yes
- No

24. Please list the types of events attended e.g. QAP etc.

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

26. Have you heard of the Siolta National Quality Framework?

- Yes
- No

27. Would you like to implement the Siolta National Quality Framework in your Childminding practice?

- Yes
- No

28. 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*) _____

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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 fees do you charge?

Full day-care (give **weekly** fee **per child**)

Part-time (give **hourly** fee **per child**)

After-School (give **hourly** fee **per child**)

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

33. Do you offer a discount when a child moves on to pre-school/playgroup?

- Yes
- No

If so, how much? _____

34. Does your fee include?

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner
- Snacks
- Nappies

35(a). Do you get paid for your holidays?

- Yes
- No

How many days per year _____

35(b). Do you get paid when parents/children take holidays (**if separate from your own holidays**)?

- Yes
- No

How many days per year _____

36. Are you registered for tax?

- Yes
- No

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

- Yes
- No

38. Do you provide?

- Overnight Childminding
- Weekend Childminding

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

39. 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

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

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

41. What is the level of absenteeism due to illness of the children in your care?

- One or two days per year
- One week per year
- Two weeks per year
- Children are rarely sick

42. Do you administer prescription medicine **at parents' request**?

- Yes
- No

43. Do you administer 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 a grant what did you use it for?

If you did not apply for a grant, why did you choose not to?

48(a) Have you applied for the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE)?

- Yes
- No

48(b) Do you intend to apply for the ECCE scheme in the future?

- Yes
- No

48(c) Do you meet any/all of the following criteria for eligibility to the ECCE scheme (please tick):

- HSE Notified, Inspected & Compliant
- FETAC Level 5 (Core Modules) or higher
- 5 children in the identified age group
- Appropriate learning programme & equipment
- Awareness of Siolta
- Trading as Sole Trader & Tax Compliant

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 **childcare** 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
- Fees
- Insurance
- Marketing your Service
- Tax Compliance / Contributory Pension
- Being valued by parents
- Other (*please specify*)

52(a). 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

52(b). What are the barriers to bringing children out and about?

- Transport (no car or size of car)
- No public transport
- Insurance
- Other (please specify)

Please return in the Stamped Addressed Envelope provided. REMEMBER to keep one portion of your raffle ticket and return the other with your completed survey.

Thank you for your time and attention in completing this Survey.

Appendix 2

Dear Childminder,

RE: Survey of Registered Members 2009 – Have your voice heard.

Help us get a valuable insight into Childminding in Ireland and win a luxury break in the Athlone Sheraton Hotel with €100 spending money!

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

The survey forms are completely anonymous so please express your opinions freely in the knowledge that your response is confidential.

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 interested to find the most common challenges that 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 to assist your work with children.

We appreciate that 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 luxury stay in the Athlone Sheraton hotel and €100 spending money.

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 with attached raffle ticket in the pre-stamped envelope, to arrive in time for the raffle on November 2nd, 2009**

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 www.childminding.ie.

Thank you in advance for your time – and remember if you're not in, you can't win!

Appendix 3

Figure 1

Counties from which we received responses and number of responses received.

County	Number of Responses
Carlow	3
Cavan	2
Clare	8
Cork	7
Donegal	4
Dublin	37
Galway	8
Kerry	5
Kildare	11
Kilkenny	3
Leitrim	2
Limerick	19
Louth	6
Mayo	9
Meath	17
Monaghan	1
Offaly	3
Roscommon	6
Sligo	3
Tipperary	4
Waterford	13
Westmeath	3
Wexford	3
Wicklow	11
No county marked	10

Figure 2

Fees for Childminding

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

County	F/T	P/T	After School
Carlow	153	7.00	6.00
Cavan	135	4.00	4.00
Clare	136	4.50	7.00
Cork	162	5.00	5.50
Donegal	128	6.00	10.00
Dublin	185	6.00	6.00
Galway	143	4.00	5.00
Kerry	151	5.00	5.00
Kildare	176	5.50	5.00
Kilkenny	168	5.00	5.00
Leitrim	105	3.50	
Limerick	125	5.00	6.00
Louth	150	5.00	5.00
Mayo	146	5.50	4.50
Meath	174	5.50	6.00
Monaghan	120		
Offaly	152	5.00	5.00
Roscommon	135	5.00	5.00
Sligo	143	5.00	5.00
Tipperary	128	5.00	5.00
Waterford	146	4.00	5.00
Westmeath	165	4.00	4.50
Wexford	140	4.00	4.50
Wicklow	188	6.00	6.00

Figure 3

Do you have a contract in place?

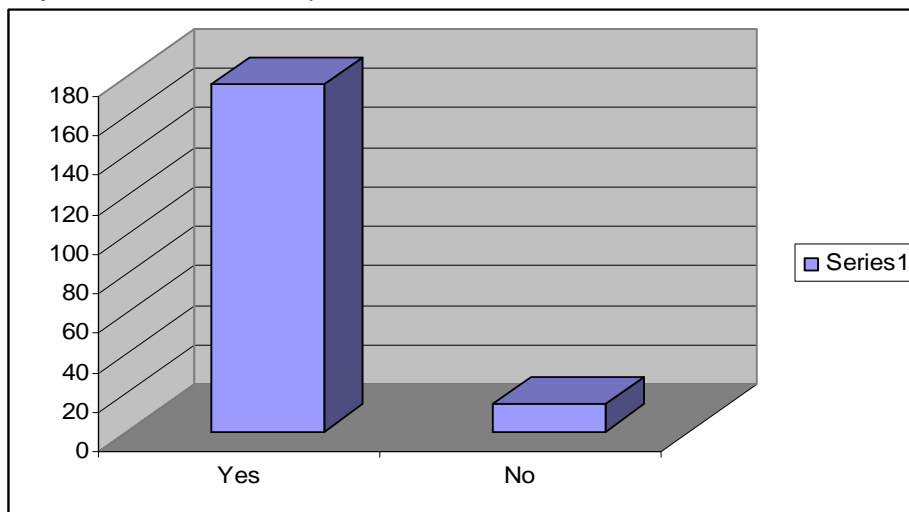


Figure 4

Hours worked in an average week

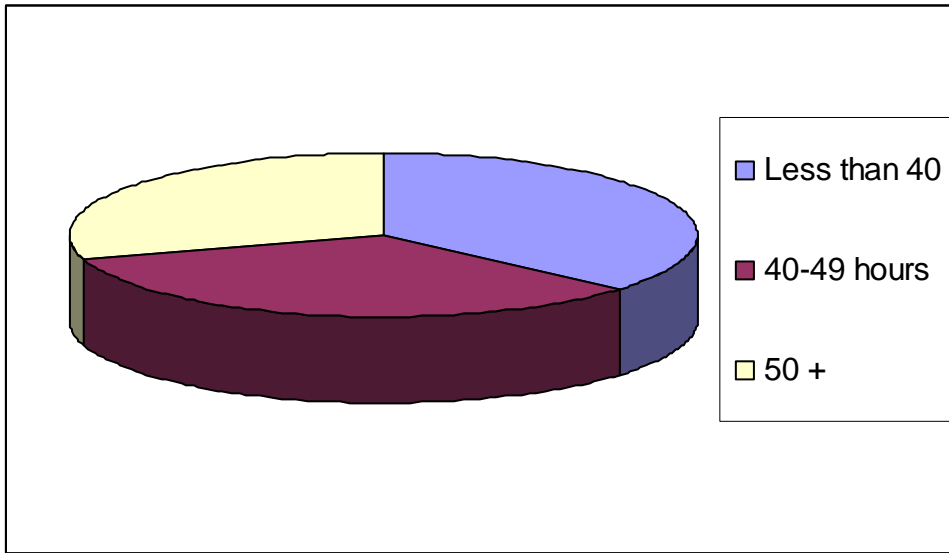


Figure 5

Level of absenteeism of children from their Childminding service due to illness?

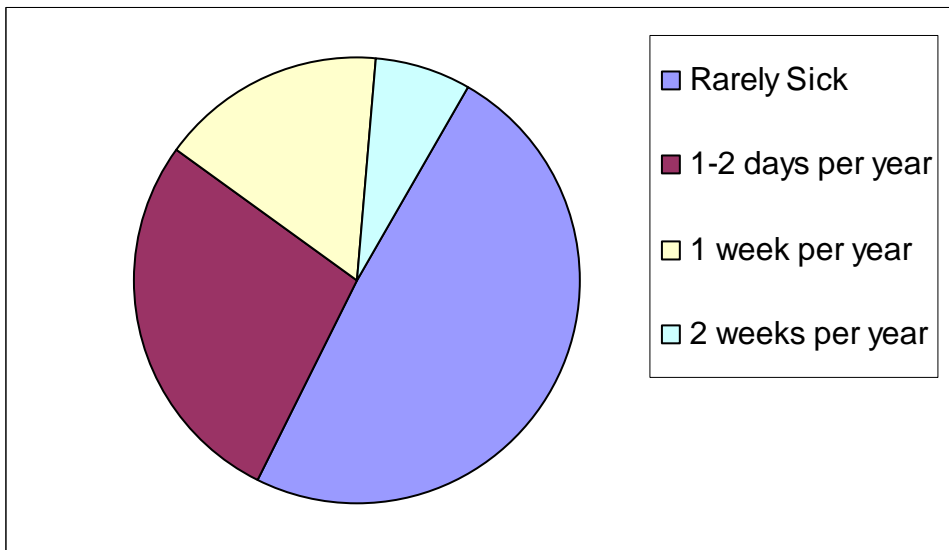


Figure 6

Are you registered for tax?

