



Report on Survey of Registered Members

March 2008

Funded by the Irish Government
under the National Childcare Investment Programme 2006-2010



Contents

Introduction	3
The Findings	
Demographic Data	4
Qualifications	5
Number of Children Minded	5
Terms and Conditions	6
Sources of Support	7
Issues, Concerns & Challenges	7
Limitations of Survey	9
Appendix 1 – Questionnaire	10
Appendix 2 – Letter to Members	18
Appendix 4 – Data	19

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* third 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.

The Setting

A questionnaire (see appendix 1) was posted to all Registered Members (727) of *Childminding Ireland*. The response rate was 29.5%. 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*.

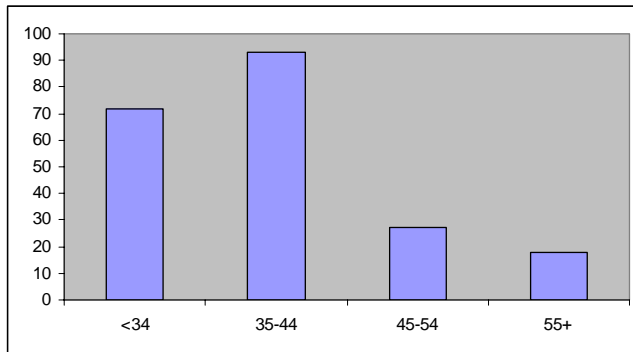
The Findings

Demographics

Age

The age spread of the respondents was as follows:

	2007	2006
34 years and under	34%	32%
35-44 years	44%	47%
45-54 years	13%	15%
Aged 55 or over	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 and 2006 surveys.

Gender

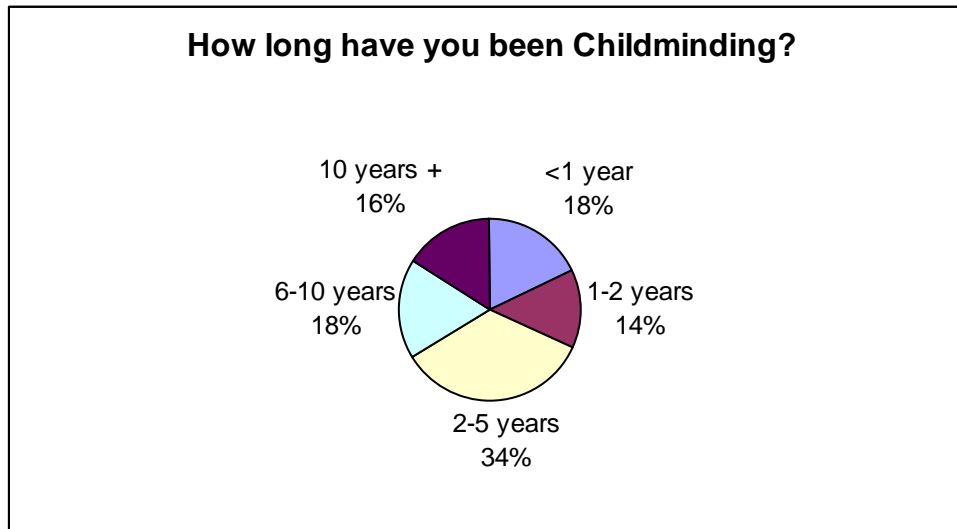
100% of the respondents were female Childminders.

Childcare Responsibilities

In response to the question “Do you have children of your own?” 77% had childcare responsibilities, 43% of respondents had pre-school children, 62% had school going children. Childminders have an average 2.1 children of their own. 13% of respondents had no children of their own.

Length of time Childminding

The majority of respondents have been Childminding between 2-5 years (34%). A further 34% have been Childminding for longer than 5 years.



Qualifications

Childcare Qualifications

- Only 1% of respondents had no Childcare qualifications
- Nationally accredited childcare qualification e.g. FETAC. (48% of the respondents)
- The Quality Awareness Programme (52% of respondents)
- First Aid training proved to be the most popular with 81% of respondents having undertaken training in First Aid, this is a substantial increase on the 43% of respondents who had a First Aid qualification in 2006.
- 34% of respondents had training in Special Needs.
- 58% had another Childcare qualification, including Child Protection, Diploma in Montessori, *Childminding Ireland's* Registered Childminders' course, NNEB, teaching qualifications etc.

Non Childcare Qualifications

22% of respondents had other third level non Childcare qualifications.

Number of Children minded per Childminder

The average number of children minded by respondents was 3.8, a slight decrease on last year's survey.

48% of respondents provided after-school care

52% of respondents provided care for a baby (under 15 months old)

92% of respondents minded children aged between 15 months and 6 years.

29% of Childminders had vacancies, and were looking for children to mind. Of those that had vacancies, 43% had been waiting longer than 6 months to fill the place.

83% of respondents were not related to any of the children they minded.

17% of respondents were related to at least one minded child.

11% of respondents are minding a child with special needs. The nature of the special need included Downs Syndrome, Autism, ADHD, PKU, Cerebral Palsy etc.

Terms and Conditions

Rates of Pay

Survey results revealed significant variances in fees for Childminding throughout the country (see Appendix 3, Figure 4).

The overall national average rate for a full-time place is €155.

The average rate in 2006 was €135.

Prices range from €100 to €300, with a median value of €150.

The average part-time rate is €6.20 per hour.

Most respondents (81%) had a Contract or Agreement in place with parents (Appendix 3, Fig. 5).

Of the 134 of respondents who minded siblings, 85% offered a discount for the second and subsequent child(ren). On average Childminders gave a 20% discount for the second child.

The following were included in the rates charged:

Breakfast	57%
Lunch	57%
Dinner	52%
Snacks	75%
Nappies	2%

Hours Worked

On average, respondents worked 40 hours a week. Many Childminders work part-time, 31% work less than 40 hours a week. 69% of respondents worked over 40 hours, and 32% worked 50 hours or more each week. (Appendix 3, Fig. 6)

Holidays & Sickness

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

Yes, usual rate	80%
Yes, but reduced rate	7%
No	13%

56% of Childminders are not paid for any holidays.

Of the 44% 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 (84%), the other 16% work with an assistant, spouse or partner.

9% of respondents provide overnight Childminding.

8% of respondents provide weekend Childminding

48% of respondents provide after-school Childminding

14% of respondents provide drop-in care

19% of Childminders have a formal playgroup session as part of their Service.

Tax

67% of Childminders are registered for tax.

43% of respondents avail of Childminder's Tax Relief.

Grants

54% of respondents have successfully applied for the Childminder Development Grant, a slight increase on 2006.

22 respondents had applied for a Capital Grant, 18 were successful.

3 Childminders applied for the Mother-Toddler grant from the Katherine Howard Foundation, and 1 was successful.

Sources of Support

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

Local County Childcare Committee

81% are in contact with their local C/CCC, an increase of 3% on last year

Childminder Advisory Officer

51% are in contact with their local CMAO (+8% increase)

A Pre-School Inspector

22% are in contact with a Pre-School Inspector (+4% increase)

A Public Health Nurse

16% are in contact with a Public Health Nurse (+ 1% increase)

Local Partnership

3% are in contact with their local Partnership (-2% decrease)

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

49% of respondents are members of a local Childminding Network.

76% of respondents have attended training, seminars, conferences or events organised by their local County Childcare Committee.

Notification & Inspection

82% of respondents had notified to their City / County Childcare Committee, and 3.5% are in the process of doing so.

61% of respondents are notified to the HSE.
27% of those notified to the HSE have not yet been inspected.

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

Childminders were 4 times more likely to find the inspection a positive experience than to find it negative.

36% of respondents have applied for Garda Vetting, and a further 41% intend to apply.

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. 38% of Childminders cited this as a challenge.

There has been a drop in the amount of Childminders struggling with Book-keeping (35%-2006, 29%-2007), and keeping up to date with legislation (44%-2006, 22%-2007)

Other challenges were:

Keeping Child Records	16%
Meeting Standards for Inspection	22%

Other items specified were:

Isolation

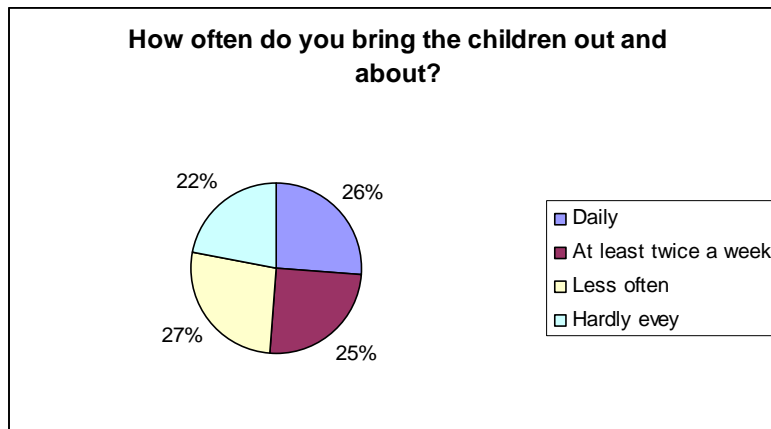
Difficulty in getting paid

Filling vacancies

Lack of support for Childminders minding children with special needs

Parental timekeeping

Respondents did not find the childcare element of their work challenging, although “getting out and about with the children” was an issue for 38% of Childminders, which may explain why a large number of Childminders bring the children out and about less often than twice a week (excluding school pick-ups).



Childminders see “being valued by parents” as the most important issue for them as Childminders (80%).

Training and ongoing professional development is also important to them (54%). Other issues viewed as important were information on regulations and quality improvement (48%) and insurance (36%).

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 county do you live in?

4. Do you have childcare qualifications?

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

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

6. Do you have children of your own?

Please give their ages

7. Are you?

- Female
- Male

8. Do you live in?

- A City

- A Town
- A Village
- A rural community

About your Childminding Service

9. How many children do you mind?

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

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

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

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

13. Are you notified to your Health Service Executive?

- Yes
- No

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

- Yes
- No

If yes, please comment on the inspection process

(use additional pages if necessary)

15. Are you in contact with your local:

- County Childcare Committee
- Childminders Advisory Officer
- Pre-School Inspector

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- Public Health Nurse
- Local Partnership
- Mother & Toddler Group
- Other (*please specify*) _____

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

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

17. Have you applied for Garda Vetting?

- Yes
- No

18. If no, do you intend to apply for Garda Vetting?

- Yes
- No

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

- Yes
- No

Roughly how many in the past year? _____

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

- Yes
- No

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

- Yes
- No

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

23. What rate do you charge?

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

Part-time rate (give hourly rate per child)

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

25. As part of your rate do you provide

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner
- Snacks
- Nappies

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

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

27. Do you get paid holidays?

- Yes
- No

How many days per year _____

28. Are you registered for tax?

- Yes
- No

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

- Yes
- No

30. Do you provide?

- Overnight Childminding
- Weekend Childminding
- After-school care
- Drop-in Childminding
- Other non-traditional Childminding

31. 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

32. Do you work:

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

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

- Yes
- No

34. Have applied for:

	Applied For	Successful
Childminder Development Grant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Capital Grant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent & Toddler Grant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

35. 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*)
-
-

36. 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*)
-

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

- Training and Professional Development
- Information on regulation and best practice

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- Pay rates
 - Insurance
 - Marketing your Service
 - Tax Compliance / Contributory Pension
 - Being valued by parents
 - Other | *Please specify*
-

38. 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

39. 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
 - 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*
-
-

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

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

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

- Frequently
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

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

- Very satisfied

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- Satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Not at all satisfied

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

43. 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: _____

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

- More than twice
- 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?

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

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

43. Do you have a computer at home?

- Yes
- No

44. Do you use www.childminding.ie?

- Yes
- No

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

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied

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- Fairly satisfied
- Not at all satisfied

Please comment / what would you like to see included:

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

47. *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?

48. 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?

Appendix 2

Dear Member

Help Us to Help You & Win €500!!

Once again, it is time for our annual Survey of members.

We would appreciate if you take the time to complete this questionnaire and return in the enclosed envelope. The envelope is pre-stamped to make it easy to return.

The survey forms do not identify the person completing them, so the information is anonymous.

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.

It will take some of your valuable time to complete the questionnaire and to encourage your response, completed questionnaires will have a raffle ticket attached which will be placed in a draw for a cash prize of **€500**.

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

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

Detach part B of the raffle ticket and keep it somewhere safe.

Keep Part A of the raffle ticket attached to the questionnaire, which you should complete and return.

Post the completed questionnaire in the pre-stamped envelope, to arrive in time for the raffle on **23rd January 2008**

The winning number will be published on our website and in the Spring newsletter.

We urge you to participate fully in the work of *Childminding Ireland* by taking the time to complete and return this questionnaire and wish you all a very happy Christmas. The findings from the Survey last year were published in a report and distributed widely. The report is available from *Childminding Ireland* or from www.childminding.ie .

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Appendix 3

Figure 1

Carlow	4
Cavan	1
Clare	9
Cork	10
Donegal	4
Dublin	26
Galway	9
Kerry	4
Kildare	14
Kilkenny	1
Laois	1
Leitrim	2
Limerick	17
Longford	1
Louth	7
Mayo	18
Meath	16
Monaghan	2
Offaly	5
Roscommon	5
Sligo	2
Tipperary	9
Waterford	13
Westmeath	3
Wexford	4
Wicklow	16

Figure 2

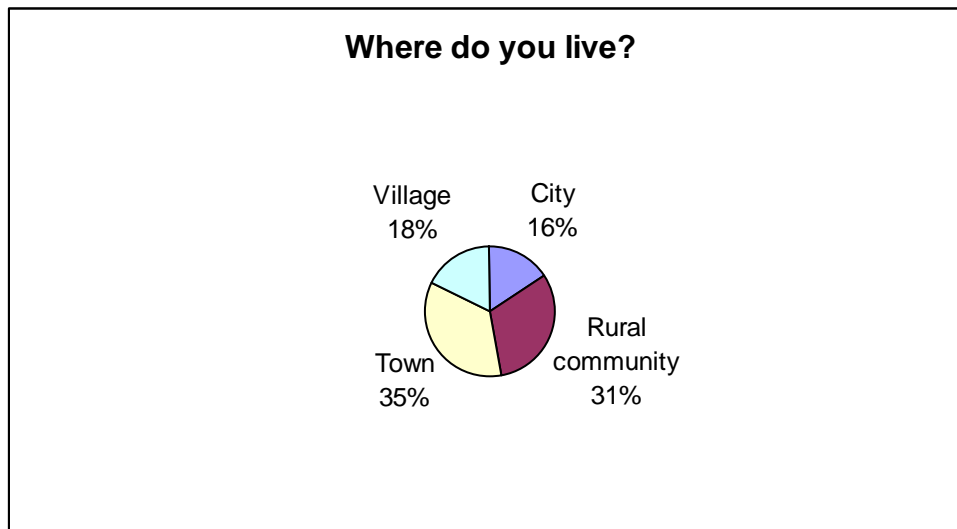


Figure 3

Length of time Childminding

<1 year	43	16%
1-2 years	43	16%
3-5 years	85	32%
6-10 years	47	18%
10+ years	47	18%

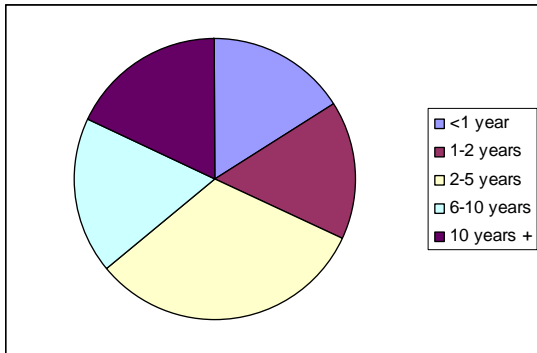


Figure 4

Fees for Childminding

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

County	Full time weekly rate	Hourly part-time rate
Carlow	150	4
Cavan	125	2.5
Clare	122	4.6
Cork	150	4.7
Donegal	180	4.5
Dublin	175	5.4
Galway	154	4.7
Kerry	167	5
Kildare	168	4.85
Kilkenny	150	5
Laois	75	5
Leitrim	125	4.5
Limerick	125	4.72
Longford	150	5
Louth	112	3.95
Mayo	135	5.5

Meath	153	6.1
Monaghan	140	4
Offaly	156	4.75
Roscommon	114	5
Sligo	125	
Tipperary	139	6.5
Waterford	157	4.35
Westmeath	163	4.5
Wexford	126	4.5
Wicklow	156	5.71

Figure 5

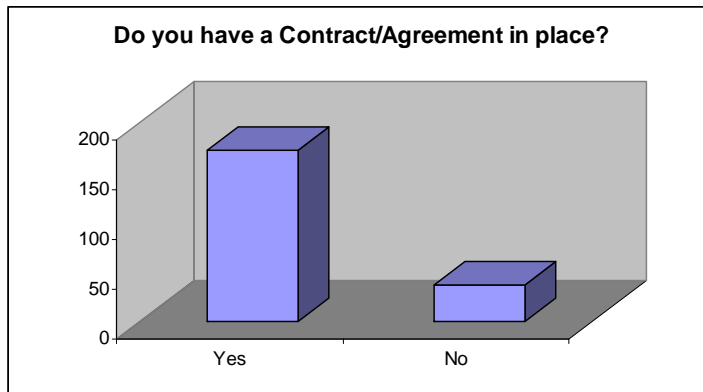


Figure 6

Hours worked in an average week

