AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS
CANBERRA

EMBARGO: NOON 25 MARCH 1974

Reference No. 17.11

CHILD CARE, MAY 1973 (PRELIMINARY STATEMENT)

In May 1973 a survey, based on the quarterly population survey, was conducted throughout Australia in order to obtain, for persons who were in the labour force and who also had the responsibility for the care of children under twelve years of age, information about the arrangements they made to have their children cared for while they themselves were at work (including arrangements for after-school and school holiday care). The inquiry was directed mainly to working mothers, but males with the sole responsibility for children were also included. The results of a similar survey conducted in May 1969 were published in *Child Care, May 1969 (Preliminary Statement)* and *Child Care, May 1969* (both Reference No. 17.2).

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- 35 per cent of persons responsible for children under 12 years of age were in the labour force (9,700 males, 528,600 females).
- Of employed persons responsible for children under 6 years of age

  44.6 per cent were usually absent from home for eight hours or more on the days they worked

  28.6 per cent worked at home or were usually absent for less than five hours
- Of persons in the labour force responsible for school children aged 4 to 11 years

  almost one in eight reported that they had made no after-school arrangements for child care

  more than one in three worked during school hours or at night
- Of 365,500 children under six years of age, who were the responsibility of employed persons, almost one in three remained at home in the care of relatives or friends and about one in ten attended nurseries, creches, home care centres, etc

EXPLANATORY NOTES

2. The sample used in the survey covered the whole of Australia. About 27,000 private dwellings as well as a sample of other dwellings were enumerated, the information being obtained by personal interviews during a four-week period.

3. Questions were not asked of persons under 15 years of age, persons aged 60 years and over, males who had never married or who were married but not permanently separated (i.e. those who were widowed, divorced or permanently separated were included), persons attending school, university, etc. full time, persons permanently unable to work and patients in institutions such as hospitals, sanatoria, gaols, etc., for whom, for the purposes of the survey, the institution was regarded as their dwelling. Members of the permanent armed forces, national servicemen enlisted in the Regular Army Supplement and certain diplomatic personnel customarily excluded from census and estimated populations were also excluded from the survey.

4. Since the estimates in this statement are based on a sample, they may differ from the figures that would have been obtained from a complete census using the same questionnaires and procedures. One measure of the likely difference is given by the standard error, which indicates the extent to which an estimate might have varied by chance because only a sample, and not the whole population, was enumerated. Estimates less than 4,000 have not been shown as they would be subject to such high standard errors (relative to the size of the estimate) as to detract seriously from their value for most reasonable uses. Although in some cases figures for these small components can be derived by subtraction, they should not be regarded as reliable. More information on this topic, together with a table of standard errors, is given in the August 1973 issue of *The Labour Force* (Reference No. 6.20).

5. This statement contains only a summary of the more important results of the survey. More detailed estimates, which will be published in a bulletin to be issued as soon as possible, are available on request. The estimates shown are preliminary and are subject to revision.

DEFINITIONS

6. For the purposes of the survey, a *child care centre* was defined as a registered or unregistered establishment, other than a private dwelling, where care was provided for five or more children below compulsory school age. Some other common names given to these centres are "child minding centre", "creche", "cot room", "day nursery" and "nursery school". Centres such as pre-schools and kindergartens were also included in this category. A *home care centre* was defined as one operated on a commercial basis in a private dwelling, in which the proprietor generally lived.

7. The *person responsible* for the care of a child under twelve years of age was defined as the person who, being a member of the household to which the child belonged, ranked highest in the following list:

(a) Child's mother, step-mother, foster mother, female guardian

(b) Child's father, step-father, foster father, male guardian

(c) Any other person considered by the respondent as being responsible for the child.

8. The *labour force* comprises all persons who, during the survey week, were employed or unemployed, according to the definitions customarily used in the population survey. For detailed definitions see *The Labour Force* (Reference No. 6.20).

NOTE. Any discrepancies between totals and sums of components in tables are due to rounding.

TABLE 1. – PERSONS (a) RESPONSIBLE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 12 YEARS OF AGE, BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND NUMBER OF CHILDREN, MAY 1973 (b)
('000)

Number of children under 12 years of age	*In the labour force*			*Not in the labour force*	*Total*
	Employed	*Unemployed*	*Total*		
One	242.9	7.8	250.7	359.3	610.0
Two	187.6	5.4	192.9	367.1	560.0
Three	70.0	*	72.1	187.8	259.9
Four or more	22.0	*	22.5	83.5	106.0
Total	**522.5**	**15.8**	**(c) 538.3**	**997.7**	**1,536.0**

(a) Persons aged 15 to 59 years. See page 1, paragraph 3. (b) For definition of "person responsible" see page 1, paragraph 7. (c) Comprises 9,700 males and 528,600 females.

* Less than 4,000. See page 1, paragraph 4.

TABLE 2. – PERSONS (a) IN THE LABOUR FORCE AND RESPONSIBLE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 12 YEARS OF AGE, BY NUMBER AND AGE OF CHILDREN, MAY 1973 (b)
('000)

	Responsible for children under 6 years of age				*Not responsible for any children under 6*	*Total*
	One child under 6	*Two children under 6*	*Three or more children under 6*	*Total*		
Responsible for children aged 6-11 –						
One child	59.4	16.4	*	76.9	151.5	228.4
Two children	27.6	6.9	*	35.5	79.5	115.0
Three or more children	7.6	*	*	9.5	25.6	35.1
Total	*94.7*	*24.2*	*	*121.9*	*256.6*	*378.4*
Not responsible for any children aged 6-11	99.2	54.1	6.5	159.8		159.8
Total	**193.9**	**78.3**	**9.5**	**281.7**	**256.6**	**538.3**

(a) See note (a) to Table 1. (b) For definition of "person responsible" see page 1, paragraph 7.

* Less than 4,000. See page 1, paragraph 4.

TABLE 3. – EMPLOYED PERSONS (a) RESPONSIBLE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 6 YEARS OF AGE, BY USUAL DAILY PERIOD OF ABSENCE FROM HOME, MAY 1973 (b)

Usual daily period of absence from home (hours)	*Number ('000)*	*Usual daily period of absence from home (hours)*	*Number ('000)*
Under 5	28.4	10 and over	40.3
5 and under 8	39.9	Varied daily	32.7
8 " " 9	29.9	Worked at home (c)	48.8
9 " " 10	50.3	Total	270.3

(a) See note (a) to Table 1. (b) For definition of "person responsible" see page 1, paragraph 7. (c) Includes working in a shop or other business on the same premises in which the person lived.

TABLE 4. – PERSONS (a) IN THE LABOUR FORCE RESPONSIBLE FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN AGED 4-11 YEARS, BY AFTER-SCHOOL AND HOLIDAY CHILD-CARE ARRANGEMENTS, MAY 1973 (b)
('000)

Type of after-school arrangement	*Persons responsible*	*Type of holiday arrangement*	*Persons responsible*
Worked during school hours or at night	122.6	Stopped work, took leave	74.7
Child's father at home	37.6	Worked at night	21.9
With other relatives (c) at home	74.3	With relatives (c) at home	108.0
With relatives or friends, not at child's home	53.2	With relatives or friends, not at child's home	91.5
Other arrangements	13.5	Other arrangements	20.7
No arrangements	43.7	No arrangements	28.2
Total	344.9	Total	344.9

(a) See note (a) to Table 1. For unemployed persons, includes proposed care arrangements. (b) For definition of "person responsible" see page 1, paragraph 7. Excludes persons working at home. (c) Includes brothers and sisters of the children.

TABLE 5. – CHILDREN UNDER 6 YEARS OF AGE WHO WERE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EMPLOYED PERSONS (a), BY TYPE OF CARE ARRANGEMENTS AND USUAL DAILY PERIOD OF ABSENCE OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON FROM HOME, MAY 1973 (b)
('000)

Type of care arrangement	*Usual daily period of absence of responsible person (hours)*							
	Under 5	*5 and under 8*	*8 and under 9*	*9 and under 10*	*10 and over*	*Varied daily*	*Worked at home (c)*	*Total*
Nursery, creche, care centre, home care centre, etc. (d)	*	6.3	5.5	11.2	7.1	*	..	35.9
Child at school	4.6	11.4	5.2	7.5	4.7	5.8	..	39.2
At home with relatives (e) or friends	22.1	23.5	13.7	20.9	15.5	18.0	..	113.6
Relatives, not at child's home	4.4	8.0	6.5	10.6	12.8	7.9	..	50.2
Other, not at child's home	*	4.6	6.6	12.7	10.3	5.7	..	42.1
Person responsible worked at home (c)	..	..	..	..	..	..	70.1	70.1
Other arrangements	4.0	*	*	*	*	4.7	..	14.5
Total	41.1	56.8	38.3	64.1	51.0	44.1	70.1	365.5

(a) See note (a) to Table 1. (b) For definition of "person responsible" see page 1, paragraph 7. (c) Includes working in a shop or other business on the same premises in which the person lived. (d) For definitions see page 1, paragraph 6. (e) Includes brothers and sisters of the children.

* Less than 4,000. See page 1, paragraph 4.

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NOTE. Inquiries concerning these statistics may be made in Canberra by telephoning Mr M. Griffiths on 63 9111 extension 2349 or, in each State capital, by telephoning the office of the Australian Bureau of Statistics.