



CHILDREN AND YOUTH NEWS



ISSUE 4 JAN 2005

WELCOME

Welcome to the fourth edition of Children & Youth News, the newsletter of the ABS National Children and Youth Statistics Unit (NCYSU). Children & Youth News is designed to highlight developments in children and youth related statistics and feature articles analysing data on topical issues related to children and youth.

Progress on the Children and Youth IDP

The ABS is continuing development work on an Information Development Plan (IDP) for children and youth – see issue two of [Children and Youth News](#) for a description of the Plan. In order to ensure stakeholder organisations have input into the development, implementation and maintenance of the IDP, a Steering Committee was recently formed and will guide development work. The Steering Committee will be made up of representatives from the Australian Government departments of Family and Community Services and Education, Science and Training, along with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, and ABS.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Stakeholders will have an opportunity to input into the information development process via two rounds of consultation, expected to occur in March and September next year.

Development	Timing
Release of background papers covering the Key Issues Relating to Children and Youth and the concepts, standards and frameworks associated with this field of statistics	December 2004
Consultation on draft set of information priorities and workplan	from March 2005
Consultation on draft Information Development Plan	from September 2005
Release of final Information Development Plan	December 2005
For more information contact David Povah on 08 9360 5383 (d.povah@abs.gov.au).	

LATEST FINDINGS

The [2003 Survey of Family Characteristics](#) collected information on the composition of families and households. A selection of this information is presented here.

Children aged 0-17 years with a natural parent living elsewhere

There were 1.1 million children aged 0-17 years in 2003 (23% of all children in this age group) who had a natural parent living elsewhere. Of these children, 76% lived in one parent families, 13% in step families and 9% in blended families. Children were more likely to live with their mother than their father after parents separate. The survey found that in 84% of cases it was the father who was the natural parent living elsewhere.

Of the children aged 0-17 years with a natural parent living elsewhere, 50% (or 543,500) saw their non-resident parent frequently (at least once per fortnight), while 31% (339,000) only saw their other natural parent either rarely (once per year, or less often) or never. Of the

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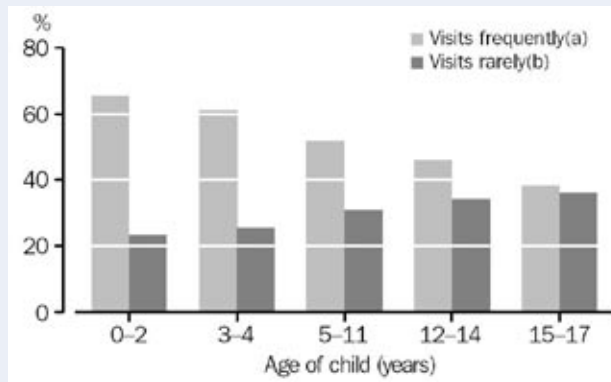


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283,000 children who saw their non-resident natural parent less than once a year or never saw them, 64,300 (23%) had some indirect contact with their parent (e.g. via phone, email or letter).

The proportion of children whose mother or father lived elsewhere who saw their other parent frequently increased from 44% in 1997 to 50% in 2003.

CHILDREN SEEING ANOTHER NATURAL PARENT, Proportion of children seeing other natural parent frequently/rarely



(a) Frequently is defined as at least once per fortnight.

(b) Rarely is defined as at most once per year.

Younger children were likely to see their other natural parent more frequently than were older children. Of children aged 0-2 years, 66% saw their other natural parent frequently while 23% saw them rarely or never. The corresponding proportions for children aged 15-17 years were 38% and 36% respectively.

On average, 50% of children with a parent living elsewhere in 2003 had overnight stays with the other natural parent, compared with 46% in 1997. The proportion of children staying

an average of two nights per week with the non-resident parent was higher in 2003 (6%) compared with 3% in 1997.

Further information is available in [Family Characteristics, Australia, 2003](#) (cat. no. 4442.0).

Underemployed youth

The Underemployed Workers Survey was conducted throughout Australia in September 2003 as a supplement to the Labour Force Survey. The survey provides information on visible underemployment. A selection of this data in relation to youth aged 15-24 years is presented here with a focus on part time workers.

Underemployed workers are employed persons who want, and are available for, more hours of work than they currently have.

There were 1,737,800 employed persons aged 15-24 years in September 2003. Of these 210,800 (12%) usually worked part-time and wanted to work more hours and 196,600 (11%) were underemployed workers, including:

- 189,500 who usually worked part-time and wanted more hours and were available to start work with more hours in the reference week, or within four weeks of interview.
- 7,100 who usually worked full-time but worked part-time hours in the reference week due to economic reasons (being stood down, on short time, or having insufficient work).

There were more part-time underemployed females (106,500) than males (82,900), this being representative of the higher proportion of females who participate in part-time work. Conversely, there are more full-time underemployed males (5,700) than females (1,400).

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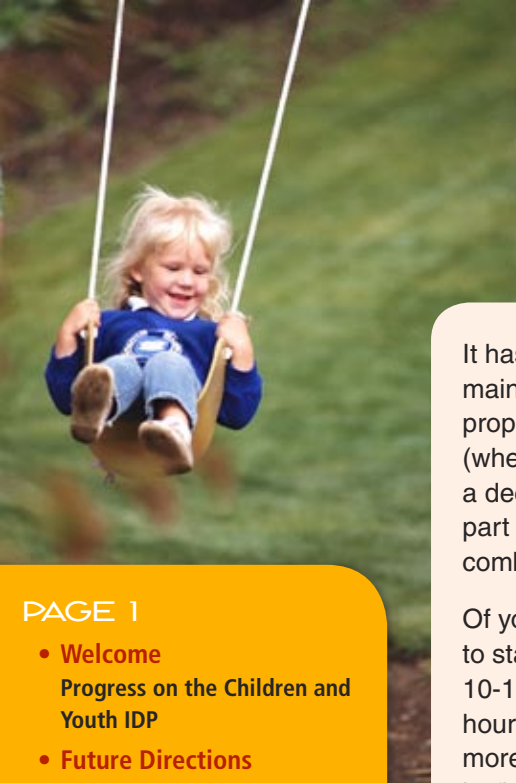
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It has been suggested that the high rate of underemployment mainly among part-time workers is attributable to the high proportion of youth who work in the retail trade industry¹ (where part time casual staff are less costly to employers²), a decline in the availability of full time jobs², and also as part time work provides the opportunity for young people to combine work and study³.

Of youth part-time workers who were looking for or available to start work with more hours, most wanted to work an extra 10-19 hours (41%), with only 12% wanting to work an extra 30 hours or more. Of these workers the main difficulty in finding more hours was 'no vacancies in line of work' (22%), followed by 'insufficient work experience' (12%) and 'lacked necessary skills or education' (10%). This reflects some of the difficulties young people face in the long process of transition from school to full time employment⁴.

In an analysis of HILDA data it was found that the adverse affects of being underemployed were greater for those employed part-time than those for those employed full-time. The detrimental effects of underemployment, such as low life satisfaction were found to be similar for those part-time underemployed and unemployed.

Further information is available in [Underemployed Workers](#), September, 2003 (cat. no. 6265.0).

End Notes

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001, *Australia's Youth*, cat. no. 2059.0, ABS, Canberra.

² Kruger, T 2000, *Underemployment and overwork*, Research Note 27 1999-2000, Parliament of Australia, Statistics Group, Parliamentary Library, Canberra.

³ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001, *Australian Social Trends: Combining study and work*, cat. no. 4102.0, ABS, Canberra.

⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2003, *Australian Social Trends: Pathways from school to work*, cat. no. 4102.0, ABS, Canberra.

⁵ Wilkins, R 2004, *The extent and consequences of underemployment in Australia*, Melbourne Institute Working Paper No. 16/04, Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research, Melbourne.

RECENT RELEASES

[Suicides: Recent Trends, Australia, 1993 to 2003](#)

(cat. no. 3309.0.55.001) Release date: December 2004

[Education and Work, Australia](#)

(cat. no. 6227.0) Release date: December 2004

[Family Characteristics](#)

(cat. no. 4442.0) Release date November 2004

To find out more about these and other ABS publications, see [ABS Catalogue](#).

UPCOMING RELEASES

Demography, Australia

(cat. no. 3311.0.55.001) - to be released in February 2005

Schools, Australia

(cat. no. 4221.0) - to be released in February 2005

NON-ABS RESEARCH

The Australian Early Development Index: Building Better Communities for Children

This is an exciting new project that will enable up to 60 communities throughout Australia to utilise the Australian Early Development Index.

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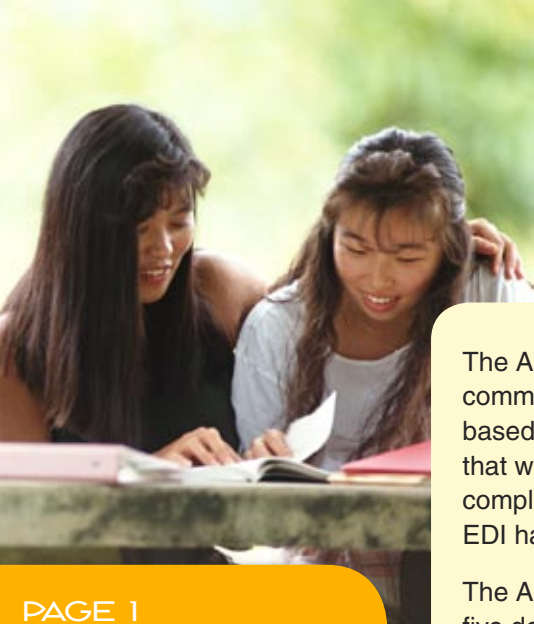
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The Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) is a community-level measure of young children's development based on a teacher-completed checklist (the AEDI checklist) that was originally developed in Canada. It has been completed on over 150,000 Canadian children. The Canadian EDI has been adapted for Australia for use in this project

The AEDI consists of over 100 questions measuring five developmental domains: language and cognitive skills; emotional maturity; physical health and wellbeing; communication skills and general knowledge; and, social competence.

The Building Better Communities for Children project is conducted by the Centre for Community Child Health in partnership with the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research. It is an initiative of the Australian Government's National Agenda for Early Childhood and supported by Shell Australia.

In 2004 seven communities from Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia have implemented the AEDI. Around 170 schools have been involved this year and data have been entered on the secure web-based data entry system by 330 teachers on over 6,000 children. The results and community profiles from 2004 will be available in early 2005.

In 2005 a further 30 communities from around Australia will be selected to join the project. Expressions of interest are now open and due 28th February 2005. For more information visit the website www.australianedi.org.au or phone (03) 9345 3650.

STAFFING CHANGE

There have been some changes in staffing in the NCYSU. Carrington Shepherd, the inaugural head of the Unit is moving to another area in the ABS. He made a significant contribution to the Unit over the last 18 months and we wish him well in his new role.

David Povah, who has worked in the Unit almost since its inception is acting as head of the Unit until the position is substantively filled. This is expected to occur early in 2005. David's contact details are below.



CHILDREN AND YOUTH THEME PAGE

A Children and Youth Statistics Theme Page on the ABS website contains relevant information from the ABS and other organisations. This page highlights the type and range of data available for analysis of children and youth issues and is updated to highlight new data releases as they become available.

CONTACT US

For information about the full range of ABS data: National Information and Referral Service

telephone: 1300 135 070
email: client.services@abs.gov.au fax 1300 135 211

For further information on the NCYSU and its activities:

David Povah
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email: d.povah@abs.gov.au

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