

HOUSEHOLD SAFETY

NEW SOUTH WALES

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- For more information about these and related statistics, contact Anne Bartlett on Sydney 02 9268 4660 or any ABS office on the back cover of this publication.

INTRODUCTION

This publication contains results from the October 1998 State Supplementary Survey, Household Safety. The survey aimed to gather information on the presence of a range of household safety devices, as well as usage and purchase patterns of nursery furniture in New South Wales households.

The survey also sought to measure changes with respect to the use of smoke alarms and electrical safety switches since another ABS survey carried out in 1992. For further information on the 1992 survey and changes in legislation since then, see the Explanatory Notes at the back of this publication.



SYMBOLS AND OTHER
USAGES

- n.p. not available for publication but included in totals where applicable
- * subject to sampling variability between 25%–50%
- .. not applicable
- nil or rounded to zero

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Regional Director
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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

HOUSEHOLD SAFETY DEVICES

Smoke alarms

In October 1998, an estimated 1,382,900 households had a smoke alarm, this being 58% of households in NSW. Of these, 81% had all battery powered alarms and 15% all mains powered alarms. Most households (94%) had all of their smoke alarms working. Of those households in Sydney, 55% had a smoke alarm. This proportion has increased from 10% of Sydney households in 1992.

In October 1998 in NSW, smoke alarm installation was higher in dwellings built after 1 January 1990 (72%) compared to those built between 1980 and 1990 (61%) and before 1980 (55%). This difference may partly reflect legislation brought in since July 1994 requiring that new housing construction be fitted with an automatic fire detection system.

Smoke alarm installation varied with respect to a number of household characteristics. Of those households living in a separate house, 63% had a smoke alarm compared to 39% of those living in a flat or apartment. Installation was higher in homes which were owned or being bought (63%) than those rented (48%). In those households with no children aged 0–4 years, 54% had a smoke alarm compared to 65% of households with children usually resident and 66% of households with children visiting in the last four weeks.

Reasons for not having a smoke alarm varied depending on whether a home was owned/being bought or rented. Of those households renting, 69% said the main reason for not having an alarm was that it was a “rental property or landlord’s responsibility”. For those households who owned or were buying their own home the most common reasons for not having an alarm were, “haven’t got around to buying one” (47%), followed by “not required or unnecessary” (16%).

Electrical safety switches

In October 1998, an estimated 1,103,100 households had an electrical safety switch, this being 47% of households in NSW. The majority of these households had at least one switch located in a fuse or meter box (91%). Of those households in Sydney, 49% had a safety switch. This proportion has increased from 21% of Sydney households in 1992.

In October 1998 in NSW, dwellings built after 1 January 1990 were more likely to have an electrical safety switch (74%) than those built between 1980 and 1990 (50%) and before 1980 (41%). Again this difference may partly reflect legislation brought in since July 1990 requiring that new housing construction in NSW be fitted with safety switches.

As for smoke alarms, safety switch installation varied with tenure type. Households who owned or were buying their own home were more likely to have a safety switch (54%) than those households renting (29%). Moreover, only 6% of households who owned or were buying their own home did not know whether a safety switch was installed compared to 21% of households renting.

Reasons for not having a safety switch varied depending on whether a home was owned/being bought or rented. Of those households renting, 75% said the main reason for not having a safety switch was that it was a “rental property or landlord’s responsibility”. For those households who owned or were buying their own home the most common

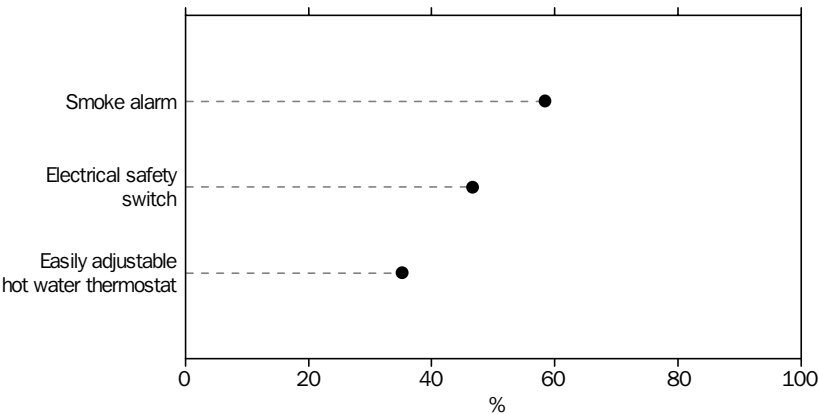
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS continued

reasons for not having a safety switch were “haven’t got around to buying one” (34%), followed by “never thought about it” (31%).

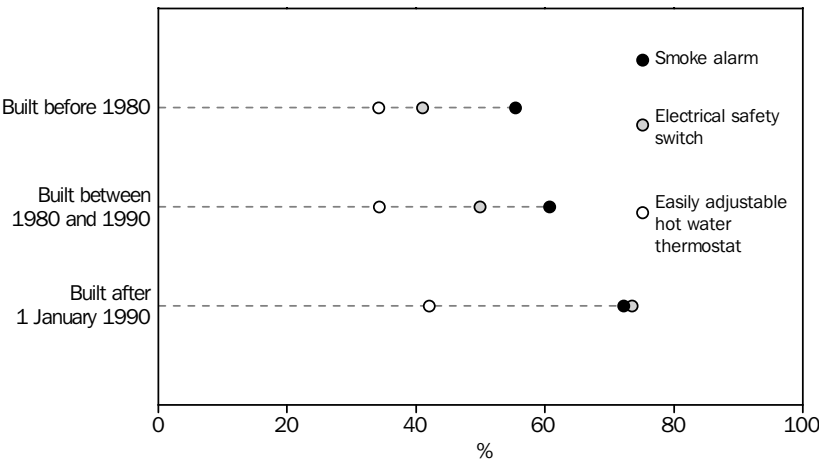
Hot water temperature thermostats

In October 1998 in NSW, an estimated 834,900 or 35% of households said they had an easily adjustable hot water system. Around 873,600 or 37% of households did not have an easily adjustable hot water system and a further 660,900 or 28% did not know whether their hot water system allowed for the temperature to be easily adjusted. Of those households that did have an easily adjustable hot water system, 40% had adjusted their temperature. This proportion was higher in households with gas hot water systems (58%), compared to solar powered (35%) and electric hot water systems (29%).

Households with selected safety devices



Presence of safety devices by age of dwelling



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

NURSERY FURNITURE—HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN

Selected nursery furniture

Of the 891,200 households in NSW in which young children aged 0–4 years were either usually resident or visitors to the household in the previous four weeks, 41% had a pram or stroller, 39% a cot, 33% a high chair, 13% a bunk bed and 8% a baby walker. The proportion of households purchasing these items new in the last five years ranged from 36% of households with a cot through to 66% of households with a pram.

Pram or stroller

Of those households with a pram or stroller, 248,700 or 69% had used their pram or stroller in the last four weeks. Around 76% of prams or strollers used in the last four weeks were purchased new in the last five years, compared to 43% of those not used. The majority of prams or strollers that had a shoulder harness restraint attached were purchased new in the last five years (73%), with a further 11% purchased new more than five years ago. For those prams or strollers that did not have a shoulder harness restraint attached, 34% were purchased new in the last five years, and 30% new more than five years ago.

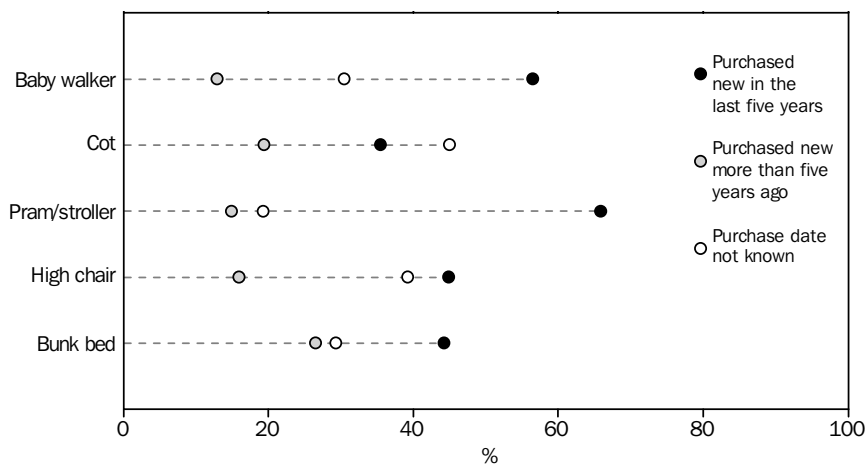
High chair

Of those households with a high chair, 181,900 or 62% had used their high chair in the last four weeks. Just over half (54%) of high chairs used in the last four weeks were purchased new in the last five years, compared to 31% of those that were not used in the last four weeks. For those high chairs with a shoulder harness restraint attached, 60% were purchased new in the last five years and 12% were purchased new more than five years ago. For those high chairs that did not have a shoulder harness restraint attached, 30% were purchased new in the last five years, and 20% were purchased new more than five years ago.

Baby walker

Of the 69,600 households with a baby walker 21,800 or 31% had stairs or steps present inside the home. Around 24,500 or 35% of households with a babywalker had used the baby walker in the last four weeks.

When nursery furniture purchased



1

HOUSEHOLDS, Presence of Smoke Alarm

Selected characteristics	SMOKE ALARM INSTALLED.....		NO SMOKE ALARM INSTALLED(a)		TOTAL.....	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
Total households	1 382.9	58.4	986.5	41.6	2 369.5	100.0
Area of residence						
Sydney	796.4	54.6	663.1	45.4	1 459.5	100.0
Balance of NSW	586.5	64.5	323.5	35.5	910.0	100.0
Dwelling type						
Separate house	1 122.2	62.9	661.9	37.1	1 784.1	100.0
Flat/apartment	156.7	38.7	248.2	61.3	404.8	100.0
Other(b)	104.0	57.6	76.5	42.4	180.6	100.0
Nature of occupancy						
Owned/being bought	1 023.0	62.8	606.3	37.2	1 629.2	100.0
Rented	342.2	48.4	365.4	51.6	707.6	100.0
Other	17.7	54.3	14.9	45.7	32.6	100.0
Age of dwelling						
Built before 1980(c)	938.1	55.4	756.0	44.6	1 694.2	100.0
Built between 1980 and 1990	224.5	60.7	145.6	39.3	370.2	100.0
Built after 1 January 1990	220.3	72.2	84.9	27.8	305.2	100.0
Young children aged 0–4 years						
Usually resident	223.2	65.1	119.4	34.9	342.6	100.0
Visitor only	360.2	65.7	188.4	34.3	548.6	100.0
None present	799.6	54.1	678.7	45.9	1 478.3	100.0

(a) Includes a small percentage of households where the presence of a smoke alarm is not known.

(b) Includes semi-detached/row or terrace house.

(c) Includes households in which age of dwelling is not known.

TYPE OF SMOKE ALARM.....

Selected characteristics	All battery powered.....		All mains powered.....		Other(a).....		Total.....	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
Total households	1 116.2	80.7	205.8	14.9	61.0	4.4	1 382.9	100.0
Area of residence								
Sydney	625.4	78.5	127.3	16.0	43.7	5.5	796.4	100.0
Balance of NSW	490.8	83.7	78.5	13.4	17.3	2.9	586.5	100.0
Dwelling type								
Separate house	947.8	84.5	135.7	12.1	38.7	3.4	1 122.2	100.0
Flat/apartment	97.0	61.9	43.5	27.8	16.2	10.3	156.7	100.0
Other(b)	71.4	68.6	26.6	25.5	6.1	5.9	104.0	100.0
Nature of occupancy								
Owned/being bought	880.8	86.1	109.9	10.7	32.3	3.2	1 023.0	100.0
Rented(c)	235.4	65.4	95.9	26.6	28.7	8.0	359.9	100.0
Age of dwelling								
Built before 1980(d)	780.2	83.2	119.9	12.8	38.0	4.1	938.1	100.0
Built between 1980 and 1990	193.8	86.3	22.7	10.1	8.1	3.6	224.5	100.0
Built after 1 January 1990	142.2	64.6	63.2	28.7	14.9	6.8	220.3	100.0
Young children aged 0–4 years								
Usually resident	175.5	78.7	39.1	17.5	8.5	3.8	223.2	100.0
Visitor only	292.7	81.3	51.5	14.3	16.0	4.4	360.2	100.0
None present	647.9	81.0	115.2	14.4	36.5	4.6	799.6	100.0

(a) Includes households with mixed power sources and households in which the type of smoke alarm is not known.

(b) Includes semi-detached/row or terrace house.

(c) Includes other types of occupancy.

(d) Includes households in which age of dwelling is not known.

<i>Condition of alarms</i>	SMOKE ALARM TESTED IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS(a).....		SMOKE ALARM NOT TESTED IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS(b).....		TOTAL.....	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
HOUSEHOLDS WITH ONE SMOKE ALARM						
Alarm working	417.9	97.5	141.2	85.7	559.1	94.2
Alarm not working(c)	10.7	2.5	23.5	14.3	34.2	5.8
Total	428.6	100.0	164.6	100.0	593.3	100.0
HOUSEHOLDS WITH TWO SMOKE ALARMS						
All alarms working	379.9	96.9	110.6	90.0	490.5	95.3
At least one alarm not working(c)	12.2	3.1	12.2	10.0	24.4	4.7
Total	392.1	100.0	122.8	100.0	514.9	100.0
HOUSEHOLDS WITH THREE OR MORE SMOKE ALARMS						
All alarms working	206.3	93.2	47.1	88.1	253.4	92.2
At least one alarm not working(c)	15.0	6.8	6.3	11.9	21.3	7.8
Total	221.3	100.0	53.4	100.0	274.7	100.0
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS WITH SMOKE ALARMS						
All alarms working	1 004.1	96.4	298.9	87.7	1 303.0	94.2
At least one alarm not working(c)	37.9	3.6	42.0	12.3	79.9	5.8
Total	1 042.0	100.0	340.9	100.0	1 382.9	100.0

(a) Refers to the six months prior to interview.

(b) Includes households who did not know whether smoke alarms were tested.

(c) Includes households who did not know whether smoke alarms were working.

NATURE OF OCCUPANCY.....

	<i>Owned/being bought.....</i>		<i>Rented(b).....</i>		<i>Total.....</i>	
<i>Main reason no smoke alarm installed</i>	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%

CHILDREN AGED 0–4 YEARS PRESENT(c)

Rental property/landlord's responsibility	..	..	81.8	68.1	81.8	26.8
Haven't got around to buying one	89.7	48.4	18.8	15.6	108.5	35.5
Never thought about it	24.8	13.3	*5.3	*4.5	30.1	9.9
Not required/unnecessary	19.6	10.6	*2.5	*2.1	22.1	7.2
Purchased but not installed	23.3	12.5	*3.1	*2.6	26.4	8.6
Other reasons(d)	28.1	15.2	8.5	7.1	36.6	12.0
Total	185.4	100.0	120.1	100.0	305.5	100.0

NO CHILDREN AGED 0–4 YEARS PRESENT

Rental property/landlord's responsibility	..	..	172.4	69.5	172.4	26.1
Haven't got around to buying one	190.3	46.0	23.3	9.4	213.6	32.3
Never thought about it	62.7	15.2	18.3	7.4	81.0	12.2
Not required/unnecessary	74.6	18.0	9.0	3.6	83.6	12.6
Purchased but not installed	25.2	6.1	*3.5	*1.4	28.7	4.3
Other reasons(d)	60.6	14.7	21.3	8.6	81.9	12.4
Total	413.3	100.0	247.8	100.0	661.2	100.0

TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO SMOKE ALARMS

Rental property/landlord's responsibility	..	..	254.1	69.1	254.1	26.3
Haven't got around to buying one	280.0	46.8	42.1	11.4	322.1	33.3
Never thought about it	87.4	14.6	23.6	6.4	111.1	11.5
Not required/unnecessary	94.2	15.7	11.6	3.1	105.7	10.9
Purchased but not installed	48.4	8.1	6.7	1.8	55.1	5.7
Other reasons(d)	88.7	14.8	29.9	8.1	118.6	12.3
Total	598.7	100.0	368.0	100.0	966.7	100.0

(a) Does not include households where the presence of a smoke alarm is unknown.

(b) Includes other types of occupancy.

(c) Includes households in which children aged 0–4 years were either usual residents or had visited the household in the four weeks prior to interview.

(d) Includes households where the main reason for not having a smoke alarm is unknown.

Selected characteristics	SAFETY SWITCH PRESENT.....		NO SAFETY SWITCH PRESENT		PRESENCE OF SAFETY SWITCH NOT KNOWN.....		TOTAL.....	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
Total households	1 103.1	46.6	1 020.3	43.1	246.1	10.4	2 369.5	100.0
Area of residence								
Sydney	718.3	49.2	600.6	41.2	140.6	9.6	1 459.5	100.0
Balance of NSW	384.8	42.3	419.7	46.1	105.5	11.6	910.0	100.0
Dwelling type								
Separate house	902.2	50.6	743.2	41.7	138.7	7.8	1 784.1	100.0
Flat/apartment	122.9	30.4	202.4	50.0	79.5	19.6	404.8	100.0
Other(a)	78.0	43.2	74.7	41.4	27.9	15.4	180.6	100.0
Nature of occupancy								
Owned/being bought	881.7	54.1	653.2	40.1	94.4	5.8	1 629.2	100.0
Rented	205.9	29.1	354.1	50.0	147.7	20.9	707.6	100.0
Other	15.6	47.8	13.0	39.9	*4.0	*12.3	32.6	100.0
Age of dwelling								
Built before 1980(b)	693.8	41.0	820.9	48.5	179.4	10.6	1 694.2	100.0
Built between 1980 and 1990	185.0	50.0	149.0	40.3	36.2	9.8	370.2	100.0
Built after 1 January 1990	224.3	73.5	50.4	16.5	30.4	10.0	305.2	100.0
Young children aged 0–4 years								
Usually resident	185.4	54.1	117.4	34.3	39.8	11.6	342.6	100.0
Visitor only	271.9	49.6	235.1	42.9	41.6	7.6	548.6	100.0
None present	645.9	43.7	667.8	45.2	164.6	11.1	1 478.3	100.0

(a) Includes semi-detached/row or terrace house.

(b) Includes households in which age of dwelling is not known.

LOCATION OF ELECTRICAL SAFETY SWITCHES.....

<i>Selected characteristics</i>	<i>Fuse or meter box.....</i>		<i>Fixed power point.....</i>		<i>Portable power board.....</i>		<i>Total(a)</i>
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%	'000
Total households	1 003.3	90.9	89.0	8.1	58.1	5.3	1 103.1
Area of residence							
Sydney	659.1	91.7	49.5	6.9	30.7	4.3	718.3
Balance of NSW	344.2	89.5	39.4	10.3	27.5	7.1	384.8
Dwelling type							
Separate house	832.9	92.3	67.2	7.4	46.8	5.2	902.2
Flat/apartment	101.9	82.9	16.4	13.4	7.5	6.1	122.9
Other(b)	68.5	87.8	*5.4	*6.9	*3.9	*5.0	78.0
Nature of occupancy							
Owned/being bought	811.4	92.0	67.6	7.7	43.8	5.0	881.7
Rented(c)	191.9	86.7	21.3	9.6	14.3	6.5	221.4
Age of dwelling							
Built before 1980(d)	624.3	90.0	56.4	8.1	44.3	6.4	693.8
Built between 1980 and 1990	167.9	90.8	17.1	9.2	9.7	5.3	185.0
Built after 1 January 1990	211.0	94.1	15.5	6.9	*4.2	*1.9	224.3
Young children aged 0–4 years							
Usually resident	174.6	94.2	11.1	6.0	7.2	3.9	185.4
Visitor only	249.5	91.8	20.0	7.4	10.6	3.9	271.9
None present	579.2	89.7	57.9	9.0	40.3	6.2	645.9

(a) As households could have more than one electrical safety switch, sub-totals will not add to the total number of households with electrical safety switches.

(b) Includes semi-detached/row or terrace house.

(c) Includes other types of occupancy.

(d) Includes households in which age of dwelling is not known.

NATURE OF OCCUPANCY.....

	<i>Owned/being bought.....</i>		<i>Rented(b).....</i>		<i>Total.....</i>	
<i>Main reason no safety switch installed</i>	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%

CHILDREN AGED 0-4 YEARS USUALLY RESIDENT

Rental property/landlord's responsibility	..	..	45.7	71.8	45.7	38.9
Haven't got around to buying one	26.7	49.7	*3.3	*5.2	30.1	25.6
Never thought about it	11.4	21.2	*3.8	*6.0	15.2	13.0
Too expensive to buy/install	n.p	n.p	n.p	n.p	7.6	6.5
Not required/unnecessary	n.p	n.p	n.p	n.p	*2.4	*2.1
Other reasons(a)	8.4	15.7	7.9	12.4	16.3	13.9
Total	53.8	100.0	63.6	100.0	117.4	100.0

CHILDREN AGED 0-4 YEARS VISITING ONLY

Rental property/landlord's responsibility	..	..	54.5	70.5	54.5	23.2
Haven't got around to buying one	56.2	35.6	6.7	8.7	63.0	26.8
Never thought about it	47.7	30.3	9.6	12.4	57.3	24.4
Too expensive to buy/install	n.p	n.p	n.p	n.p	13.8	5.9
Not required/unnecessary	n.p	n.p	n.p	n.p	21.4	9.1
Other reasons(a)	22.1	14.0	*3.0	*3.8	25.1	10.7
Total	157.8	100.0	77.3	100.0	235.1	100.0

NO CHILDREN AGED 0-4 YEARS PRESENT

Rental property/landlord's responsibility	..	..	174.7	77.3	174.7	26.2
Haven't got around to buying one	140.8	31.9	7.2	3.2	148.0	22.2
Never thought about it	142.9	32.4	17.5	7.7	160.4	24.0
Too expensive to buy/install	42.0	9.5	*5.7	*2.5	47.7	7.1
Not required/unnecessary	70.6	16.0	*5.3	*2.4	76.0	11.4
Other reasons(a)	45.2	10.2	15.7	6.9	60.9	9.1
Total	441.6	100.0	226.2	100.0	667.8	100.0

TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO ELECTRICAL SAFETY SWITCH

Rental property/landlord's responsibility	..	..	275.0	74.9	275.0	27.0
Haven't got around to buying one	223.7	34.3	17.3	4.7	241.0	23.6
Never thought about it	202.1	31.0	30.9	8.4	233.0	22.8
Too expensive to buy/install	59.3	9.0	9.8	2.7	69.1	6.8
Not required/unnecessary	92.3	14.1	7.6	2.1	99.8	9.8
Other reasons(a)	75.7	11.6	26.5	7.2	102.3	10.0
Total	653.2	100.0	367.1	100.0	1 020.3	100.0

(a) Includes households in which the main reason for not having a safety switch is unknown.

(b) Includes other types of occupancy.

Selected characteristics	SYDNEY 1992.....					SYDNEY 1998(a).....				
	Yes.....		No(b).....		Total	Yes.....		No(b).....		Total
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	'000	%	'000	%	'000
WHETHER HOUSEHOLD HAS SMOKE ALARMS										
Total households	133.1	10.2	1 168.6	89.8	1 301.6	796.4	54.6	663.1	45.4	1 459.5
Dwelling type										
Separate house	103.5	11.8	771.2	88.2	874.7	601.3	60.2	396.9	39.8	998.2
Flat/apartment	21.7	7.5	266.5	92.5	288.2	119.2	36.2	209.9	63.8	329.1
Other(c)	7.9	5.7	130.8	94.3	138.7	75.9	57.4	56.2	42.5	132.2
Nature of occupancy										
Owned/being bought	107.6	12.0	788.3	88.0	895.9	588.3	59.1	407.0	40.9	995.3
Rented	22.9	6.0	360.6	94.0	383.6	203.8	45.0	248.7	55.0	452.4
Other	*2.5	*11.5	19.6	88.5	22.2	*4.4	*37.3	7.4	62.7	11.8
WHETHER HOUSEHOLD HAS ELECTRICAL SAFETY SWITCHES										
Total households	275.5	21.2	1 026.1	78.8	1 301.6	718.3	49.2	741.2	50.8	1 459.5
Dwelling type										
Separate house	217.5	24.9	657.2	75.1	874.7	559.5	56.1	438.7	43.9	998.2
Flat	27.7	9.6	260.5	90.4	288.2	100.6	30.6	228.5	69.4	329.1
Other(c)	30.4	21.9	108.3	78.1	138.7	58.2	44.1	73.9	55.9	132.2
Nature of occupancy										
Owned/being bought	233.7	26.1	662.2	73.9	895.9	574.6	57.7	420.6	42.3	995.3
Rented	37.2	9.7	346.3	90.3	383.6	137.9	30.5	314.5	69.5	452.4
Other	*4.6	*20.9	17.5	79.1	22.2	*5.8	*49.4	6.0	50.6	11.8

(a) See paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Explanatory Notes for information on data comparability between 1992 and 1998.

(b) Includes not known whether smoke alarm or electrical safety switch present.

(c) Includes semi-detached/row or terrace house.

HOT WATER TEMPERATURE.....								
Selected characteristics	Easy to adjust.....		Not easy to adjust.....		Don't know.....		Total.....	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
Total households	834.9	35.2	873.6	36.9	660.9	27.9	2 369.5	100.0
Area of residence								
Sydney	493.7	33.8	578.3	39.6	387.4	26.5	1 459.5	100.0
Balance of NSW	341.2	37.5	295.3	32.5	273.5	30.1	910.0	100.0
Dwelling type								
Separate house	695.4	39.0	621.3	34.8	467.4	26.2	1 784.1	100.0
Flat	83.6	20.6	194.3	48.0	127.0	31.4	404.8	100.0
Other(b)	55.9	31.0	58.1	32.2	66.6	36.9	180.6	100.0
Nature of occupancy								
Owned/being bought	651.1	40.0	572.6	35.1	405.6	24.9	1 629.2	100.0
Rented	173.1	24.5	288.6	40.8	245.9	34.8	707.6	100.0
Other	10.7	33.0	12.5	38.3	9.4	28.7	32.6	100.0
Age of dwelling								
Built before 1980(c)	578.9	34.2	652.1	38.5	463.2	27.3	1 694.2	100.0
Built between 1980 and 1990	127.4	34.4	137.8	37.2	104.9	28.3	370.2	100.0
Built after 1 January 1990	128.6	42.1	83.8	27.5	92.8	30.4	305.2	100.0
Young children aged 0–4 years								
Usually resident	125.4	36.6	116.4	34.0	100.7	29.4	342.6	100.0
Visitor only	223.7	40.8	185.2	33.8	139.7	25.5	548.6	100.0
None present	485.8	32.9	572.0	38.7	420.5	28.4	1 478.3	100.0
Type of hot water system								
Electric	500.1	28.5	723.9	41.3	530.1	30.2	1 754.1	100.0
Gas	312.1	61.1	96.4	18.9	102.7	20.1	511.2	100.0
Solar/solar combination	17.7	25.8	41.5	60.5	9.4	13.7	68.6	100.0
Other	*5.0	*13.9	11.9	33.3	18.8	52.7	35.6	100.0

(a) That is, whether the hot water system allows for water temperature to be manually adjusted by the householder.

(b) Includes semi-detached/row or terrace house.

(c) Includes households in which age of dwelling is not known.

HOT WATER TEMPERATURE.....

Selected characteristics	Have adjusted(b).....		Have not adjusted(c).....		Total.....	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
Total households	330.8	39.6	504.1	60.4	834.9	100.0
Area of residence						
Sydney	193.5	39.2	300.2	60.8	493.7	100.0
Balance of NSW	137.3	40.2	203.9	59.8	341.2	100.0
Dwelling type						
Separate house	282.5	40.6	412.9	59.4	695.4	100.0
Flat	26.5	31.7	57.1	68.3	83.6	100.0
Other(d)	21.8	39.0	34.1	61.0	55.9	100.0
Nature of occupancy						
Owned/being bought	266.8	41.0	384.3	59.0	651.1	100.0
Rented	59.3	34.3	113.8	65.7	173.1	100.0
Other	*4.7	*43.4	6.1	56.6	10.7	100.0
Age of dwelling						
Built before 1980(e)	226.4	39.1	352.5	60.9	578.9	100.0
Built between 1980 and 1990	49.0	38.5	78.4	61.5	127.4	100.0
Built after 1 January 1990	55.5	43.1	73.2	56.9	128.6	100.0
Young children aged 0–4 years						
Usually resident	60.3	48.1	65.1	51.9	125.4	100.0
Visitor only	90.9	40.6	132.8	59.4	223.7	100.0
None present	179.6	37.0	306.2	63.0	485.8	100.0
Type of hot water system						
Electric	143.2	28.6	356.9	71.4	500.1	100.0
Gas	179.4	57.5	132.8	42.5	312.1	100.0
Solar/solar combination	6.2	35.2	11.5	64.8	17.7	100.0
Other	*2.0	*40.1	*3.0	*59.9	*5.0	*100.0

(a) That is, a hot water system which allows for the hot water temperature to be manually adjusted by the householder.

(b) The hot water temperature has been adjusted by someone in the current household.

(c) Includes households which don't know whether the hot water temperature has been adjusted by a member of the household.

(d) Includes semi-detached/row or terrace house.

(e) Includes households in which age of dwelling is not known.

<i>Nursery furniture</i>	CHILDREN USUALLY RESIDENT....		CHILDREN VISITING ONLY.....		TOTAL.....	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
.....						
Total households with children aged 0–4 years	342.6	100.0	548.6	100.0	891.2	100.0
Households with a baby walker						
Used in last four weeks(b)	n.p	n.p	n.p	n.p	24.5	2.7
Not used in last four weeks(c)	n.p	n.p	n.p	n.p	45.1	5.1
Households with no baby walker(d)	280.6	81.9	541.0	98.6	821.6	92.2
Households with a cot						
Used in last four weeks(b)	162.5	47.4	44.5	8.1	207.1	23.2
Not used in last four weeks(c)	70.6	20.6	69.9	12.7	140.5	15.8
Households with no cot(d)	109.4	31.9	434.2	79.1	543.6	61.0
Households with a pram/stroller						
Used in last four weeks(b)	220.7	64.4	28.0	5.1	248.7	27.9
Not used in last four weeks(c)	61.6	18.0	52.2	9.5	113.8	12.8
Households with no pram/stroller(d)	60.2	17.6	468.5	85.4	528.7	59.3
Households with a high chair						
Used in last four weeks(b)	134.9	39.4	47.0	8.5	181.9	20.4
Not used in last four weeks(c)	64.2	18.7	49.2	9.0	113.4	12.7
Households with no high chair(d)	143.5	41.9	452.4	82.5	595.9	66.9
Households with a bunk bed						
Used in last four weeks(b)	61.5	18.0	39.5	7.2	101.0	11.3
Not used in last four weeks(c)	*4.9	*1.4	12.7	2.3	17.6	2.0
Households with no bunk bed(d)	276.2	80.6	496.4	90.5	772.6	86.7
.....						

(a) Includes households in which children aged 0–4 years were either usual residents or had visited the household in the four weeks prior to interview.

(b) Refers to the four weeks prior to interview.

(c) Includes households in which use of the item is not known.

(d) Includes households in which presence of the item is not known.

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HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN(a), With Selected Furniture

	BABY WALKER...		COT.....		PRAM/ STROLLER..		HIGH CHAIR.....		BUNK BED.....	
<i>When purchased and whether used</i>	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
Total households with children with selected nursery furniture	69.6	100.0	347.6	100.0	362.4	100.0	295.3	100.0	118.6	100.0
When purchased										
Purchased new in the last five years	39.3	56.5	123.6	35.5	238.5	65.8	132.5	44.9	52.4	44.2
Purchased new more than five years ago	9.0	12.9	67.5	19.4	54.2	14.9	47.1	16.0	31.4	26.5
Purchase date not known(b)	21.2	30.5	156.6	45.0	69.8	19.3	115.7	39.2	34.8	29.3
Whether used										
Used in last four weeks(c)	24.5	35.2	207.1	59.6	248.7	68.6	181.9	61.6	101.0	85.1
Not used in the last four weeks(d)	45.1	64.8	140.5	40.4	113.8	31.4	113.4	38.4	17.6	14.9

(a) Includes households in which children aged 0–4 years were either usual residents or had visited the household in the four weeks prior to interview.

(b) Includes items which were purchased second hand, borrowed or handed down through the family.

(c) Refers to the four weeks prior to interview.

(d) Includes households in which use of the item is not known.

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HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN(a) AND A BABY WALKER, Presence of Stairs/Steps(b)

	STAIRS/STEPS PRESENT.....		NO STAIRS/STEPS PRESENT.....		TOTAL.....	
<i>Whether baby walker used</i>	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
Used in last four weeks(b)	8.5	34.8	16.0	65.2	24.5	100.0
Not used in last four weeks(c)	13.3	29.5	31.8	70.5	45.1	100.0
Total	21.8	31.3	47.8	68.7	69.6	100.0

(a) Includes households in which children aged 0–4 years were either usual residents or had visited the household in the four weeks prior to interview.

(b) Refers to stairs or steps inside the home.

(c) Refers to the four weeks prior to interview.

(d) Includes households in which use of the baby walker is not known.

	PRAM/STROLLER USED(b).....		PRAM/STROLLER NOT USED(c).....		TOTAL.....	
<i>When pram/stroller purchased</i>	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
PRAM/STROLLER HAS A SHOULDER HARNESS RESTRAINT						
Purchased new in the last five years	174.5	79.6	41.0	54.3	215.5	73.1
Purchased new more than five years ago	15.1	6.9	18.6	24.6	33.7	11.4
Purchase date not known(d)	29.5	13.5	16.0	21.1	45.5	15.4
Total	219.2	100.0	75.6	100.0	294.7	100.0
PRAM/STROLLER DOES NOT HAVE A SHOULDER HARNESS RESTRAINT(e)						
Purchased new in the last five years	15.3	52.0	7.6	19.9	22.9	33.9
Purchased new more than five years ago	*4.7	*16.0	15.7	41.2	20.4	30.2
Purchase date not known(d)	9.4	32.0	14.9	39.0	24.3	35.9
Total	29.5	100.0	38.2	100.0	67.7	100.0
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN AND A PRAM/STROLLER						
Purchased new in the last five years	189.9	76.4	48.6	42.7	238.5	65.8
Purchased new more than five years ago	19.8	8.0	34.3	30.2	54.2	14.9
Purchase date not known(d)	38.9	15.7	30.8	27.1	69.8	19.3
Total	248.7	100.0	113.8	100.0	362.4	100.0

(a) Includes households in which children aged 0–4 years were either usual residents or had visited the household in the four weeks prior to interview.

(b) Pram/stroller used in the four weeks prior to interview.

(c) Pram/stroller not used in the four weeks prior to interview. Includes households in which use of the pram/stroller is not known.

(d) Includes items which were purchased second hand, borrowed or handed down through the family.

(e) Includes households in which presence of a shoulder harness restraint is not known.

	HIGH CHAIR USED(b),.....		HIGH CHAIR NOT USED(c)		TOTAL.....	
<i>When high chair purchased</i>	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
HIGH CHAIR HAS A SHOULDER HARNESS RESTRAINT						
Purchased new in the last five years	63.3	67.1	24.6	47.4	87.9	60.1
Purchased new more than five years ago	7.2	7.6	9.8	18.9	17.0	11.6
Purchase date not known(d)	23.9	25.3	17.6	33.7	41.4	28.3
Total	94.3	100.0	52.0	100.0	146.4	100.0
HIGH CHAIR DOES NOT HAVE A SHOULDER HARNESS RESTRAINT(e)						
Purchased new in the last five years	34.1	39.0	10.4	17.0	44.6	29.9
Purchased new more than five years ago	13.8	15.7	16.4	26.6	30.1	20.2
Purchase date not known(d)	39.6	45.3	34.6	56.4	74.3	49.9
Total	87.5	100.0	61.4	100.0	148.9	100.0
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN AND A HIGH CHAIR						
Purchased new in the last five years	97.4	53.6	35.1	30.9	132.5	44.9
Purchased new more than five years ago	20.9	11.5	26.2	23.1	47.1	16.0
Purchase date not known(d)	63.5	34.9	52.2	46.0	115.7	39.2
Total	181.9	100.0	113.4	100.0	295.3	100.0

(a) Includes households in which children aged 0–4 years were either usual residents or had visited the household in the four weeks prior to interview.

(b) High chair used in the four weeks prior to interview.

(c) High chair not used in the four weeks prior to interview. Includes households in which use of the high chair is not known.

(d) Includes items which were purchased second hand, borrowed or handed down through the family.

(e) Includes households in which presence of a shoulder harness restraint is not known.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1 This publication contains results from the 1998 NSW State Supplementary Survey, Household Safety. The survey was conducted throughout NSW during the two weeks commencing Monday, 12 October 1998, as a supplement to the ABS Monthly Population Survey (MPS).

MONTHLY POPULATION SURVEY

2 The MPS is a multi-stage area sample of private dwellings and non-private dwellings (hotels, motels, caravan parks, etc.). Information is obtained from the occupants of selected dwellings by specially trained interviewers.

3 For details of the MPS design, scope and coverage, readers should refer to any recent edition of the ABS publication *Labour Force, Australia* (Cat. no. 6203.0) and the *Information Paper: Labour Force Survey Sample Design* (Cat. no. 6269.0).

SUPPLEMENTARY SURVEY

Collection details—Scope

4 Information was collected by either face-to-face or telephone interview from one responsible adult per household. This survey was conducted using seven-eighths of the full sample of private dwellings in New South Wales that were included in the MPS and excluded:

- visitors to the household;
- members of the permanent defence forces;
- certain diplomatic personnel of overseas governments, customarily excluded from censuses and surveys;
- overseas residents in Australia; and
- members of non-Australian defence forces (and their dependants) stationed in Australia.
- residents of non-private dwellings such as hospitals and motels.

5 Information was sought from approximately 6,200 households in scope for this survey. Of these, approximately 5,600 (90%) responded.

Collection details—Coverage

6 In the survey, coverage rules were applied which aimed to ensure that each person was associated with only one dwelling, and hence had only one chance of selection in the survey.

NSW legislation—Household safety items and nursery furniture

- 7** It is mandatory in NSW that all new housing construction be fitted with:
- an automatic fire detection system, for example a smoke alarm—from July 1994
 - electrical safety switches—from July 1990

All cots sold from July 1998 must comply with specific clauses of standard AS/NZS 2172:1995. This standard attempts to regulate cot design in order to prevent:

- child injury through climbing/falling out of cots,
- strangulation hazards,
- entrapment injuries and
- finger/toe injuries.

Under the Fair Trading (Product Safety Standards) Regulations for 1995, baby walkers are required to have a label affixed to them bearing a specific safety warning.

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

Comparability with 1992 data—Table 8

- 8** Data presented in the 1992 publication, *Household Safety, Sydney* (Cat. no. 4387.1) was collected from the Sydney Statistical Division only, whereas the scope of the 1998 survey was all of NSW. As such, regional NSW data collected in the 1998 survey has no 1992 equivalent for comparison.
- 9** In 1992 information was collected face-to-face from one responsible adult per household. Information from the 1998 survey was collected by either a face-to-face or telephone interview, from one responsible adult per household. The weighting and estimation methodology has also changed since the 1992 survey was conducted.

EFFECTS OF ROUNDING

- 10** Estimates have been rounded and discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

- 11** The ABS produces a wide range of publications of social and demographic statistics. Other ABS publications which relate to this survey topic include:
- *Community Fire Safety, NSW, October 1994*, Cat. no. 8715.1.
 - *Household Safety Devices, Western Australia, October 1996*, Cat. no. 4387.5.
 - *Household Safety, Sydney, November 1992*, Cat. no. 4387.1.
 - *Safety in the Home, Melbourne, November 1992*, Cat. no. 4387.2.
 - *Safety in the Home, Queensland, October 1996*, Cat. no. 4387.3.
 - *Safety in the Home, Victoria, October 1998*, Cat. no. 4387.2.

TECHNICAL NOTES

ESTIMATION PROCEDURE

1 Estimates derived from this survey were obtained using a post-stratification estimation procedure. This procedure ensured that the survey estimates conformed to an independently estimated distribution of population, by the number of adults and children within the household, and part of state, rather than to the distribution among respondents.

RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES

Non-sampling errors

2 Estimates in this publication are subject to non-sampling and sampling errors.

3 Non-sampling errors may arise as a result of errors in the reporting, recording or processing of the data and can occur even if there is a complete enumeration of the population. Non-sampling errors can be introduced through: inadequacies in the questionnaire; non-response; inaccurate reporting by respondents; errors in the application of survey procedures; incorrect recording of answers; and errors in data entry and processing.

4 It is difficult to measure the size of the non-sampling errors and the extent of these errors could vary considerably in significance from survey to survey and from question to question. However, every effort is made in the design of the survey and development of survey procedures to minimise the effect of these errors.

Sampling errors

5 Sampling error is the error which occurs by chance because the data were obtained from a sample and not the entire population.

ESTIMATES OF SAMPLING ERROR

6 One measure of the variability of estimates which occurs as a result of surveying only a sample of the population is the *standard error* (SE).

7 There are about two chances in three (67%) that a survey estimate is within one standard error of the figure that would have been obtained if all persons had been included in the survey. There are about 19 chances in 20 (95%) that the difference will be less than two standard errors.

8 Linear interpolation should be used to calculate the standard error of estimates falling between the sizes of estimates listed in the table.

9 The standard error can also be expressed as a percentage of the estimate and this is known as the *relative standard error* (RSE). The RSE is determined by dividing the standard error of an estimate $SE(x)$ by the estimate x and expressing it as a percentage. That is—

$$RSE(x) = \frac{100SE(x)}{x}$$

(where x is the estimate). The relative standard error is a useful measure in that it provides an indication of the percentage errors likely to have occurred due to sampling.

TECHNICAL NOTES *continued*

ESTIMATES OF SAMPLING ERROR *continued*

10 Proportions and percentages formed from the ratio of two estimates are also subject to sampling error. The size of the error depends on the accuracy of both the numerator and the denominator. The formula for the relative standard error of a proportion or percentage is—

$$RSE(x/y) = \sqrt{[RSE(x)]^2 + [RSE(y)]^2}$$

11 For all tables in this publication only estimates with relative standard errors of 25% or less, and percentages based on such estimates are considered sufficiently reliable for most purposes. However, estimates and percentages with relative standard errors between 25% and 50% have been included, preceded by the symbol * to indicate that they are subject to high standard errors and should be used with caution.

STANDARD ERRORS OF ESTIMATES OF HOUSEHOLDS—1992 AND 1998

	SYDNEY NOVEMBER 1992		NEW SOUTH WALES OCTOBER 1998	
SIZE OF ESTIMATE	Standard error	Relative standard error	Standard error	Relative standard error
No. of households	No.	%	No.	%
1 000	730	72.7	690	69.0
1 500	860	57.6	770	51.1
2 000	980	48.9	880	44.0
2 500	1 100	43.1	1 000	39.2
3 000	1 150	38.9	1 050	35.6
3 500	1 250	35.7	1 150	32.9
4 000	1 350	33.1	1 250	30.6
4 500	1 400	31.0	n.a.	n.a.
5 000	1 450	29.3	1 350	27.3
6 000	1 600	26.5	n.a.	n.a.
7 000	n.a.	n.a.	1 600	22.8
8 000	1 800	22.6	n.a.	n.a.
10 000	2 000	20.0	1 900	18.9
20 000	2 750	13.8	2 300	15.2
30 000	n.a.	n.a.	2 600	13.0
50 000	4 250	8.5	3 150	10.4
100 000	5 900	5.9	3 550	8.9
200 000	8 300	4.2	3 950	7.9
300 000	10 200	3.4	5 400	5.4
500 000	13 200	2.6	6 450	4.3
1 000 000	18 800	1.9	7 350	3.7
2 000 000	n.a.	n.a.	8 750	2.9

G L O S S A R Y

Adjustable hot water temperature thermostat	A device connected to the hot water system which allows the owner to easily regulate the temperature of the hot water (usually 40°–60°C). All gas storage and solar hot water systems have an easily adjustable thermostat device, and most recent electric systems have one. Adjustable thermostats can be adjusted by the householder, for example, by using a dial on the side of recent electrical hot water systems. A plumber or electrician is not needed.
Baby walker	A wheeled frame in which a toddler learns to walk, by sitting and moving the whole device with his/her legs.
Bunk bed	Two beds located one above the other as a unit. In this survey beds on top of wardrobes or desks and those more than one metre from the floor are considered to be bunk beds.
Cot	Refers to cots designed for use in household situations but does not include travel cots, portable cots, bassinets or cradles.
Electrical safety switch	A device that cuts off power to prevent electrocution. There are three main types of electrical safety switch: those which are installed at the main electrical switchboard can be set up to protect all of the house or just a particular circuit; a powerpoint safety switch which can simply replace standard powerpoints, giving protection to all other powerpoints ‘downstream’ on the same circuit; a portable safety switch which plugs into a normal power outlet, for example, power boards that have the safety switch built into the power board. Safety switch power boards do not include the surge protector power boards used to protect computer equipment from power surges.
High chair	An infant’s chair, usually with long legs and a tray used at meals. This does not include infant’s chairs which can be attached to another chair or table.
Household	A group of residents of a dwelling who share common facilities and meals or who consider themselves to be a household. It is possible for a dwelling to contain more than one household, for example, where regular provision is made for groups to take meals separately and where persons consider their households to be separate.
Shoulder harness restraint	A belt or strap arrangement which fastens a child by the shoulders and prevents them from slipping or falling out of the device. The harness must come over both shoulders of the child for it to be considered an effective shoulder harness restraint.
Smoke alarm	A smoke alarm or detector is any device which is installed, usually in a fixed location to detect the presence of smoke. The device must provide some indication, either audible or visual, when smoke is detected.
Young children resident	Includes households in which children aged 0–4 years are usual residents.
Young children visiting only	Includes households which had children aged 0–4 years visiting in the four weeks prior to interview.
No young children present	Includes households with no children aged 0–4 years either resident or visiting in the four weeks prior to interview.

DO YOU NEED ADDITIONAL DATA ?

In addition to the statistics provided in this publication, the ABS can produce upon request customised tables cross-classifying any of the following information. Inquiries should be made to the contact person shown at the front of this publication. Information collected in the survey included:

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Demographic

Type of household, e.g. person living alone, married couple only, etc.
Australian/other main English-speaking countries/other
Sydney/balance of State
Area of Residence
Whether children aged 0–4 years resident in the household
Whether children aged 0–4 years visited the household in last four weeks
Number of visitors and frequency of visits

Dwelling characteristics

Type of dwelling
Nature of occupancy
Age of dwelling

Smoke alarms

Whether installed
Number of smoke alarms
How many working
Type of smoke alarm
Location in the home
Whether tested in last six months
Whether disabled in last six months
Why disabled
Whether alarm ever activated by a fire
When this occurred
How fire extinguished
Reasons for not having a smoke alarm

Electrical safety switches

Whether installed
Number of safety switches
Type of safety switch
Location in the home
Reasons for not having a safety switch

Hot water systems

Type of hot water system
Whether water temperature is easily adjustable
Whether adjusted by household
How adjusted

Telephone ownership

Home access to communication services and equipment including
a normal telephone, answering machine and voice mail
Number of company and private mobile telephones in the household

DO YOU NEED ADDITIONAL DATA ? *continued*

HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN AGED 0–4 YEARS

Stairs/steps and safety guards

Presence of stairs/steps in the home
Number of steps in the highest stairway
Presence of stair guards/gates

Baby walker

Presence of a baby walker in the household
When purchased/how obtained
Whether used in last four weeks
Frequency of use

Cot

Presence of a cot in the household
When purchased/how obtained
Whether used in last four weeks

Pram/stroller

Presence of a pram/stroller in the household
When purchased/how obtained
Whether used in last four weeks
Whether pram/stroller has a harness

High chair

Presence of a high chair in the household
When purchased/how obtained
Whether used in past four weeks
Whether high chair has a harness

Bunk bed

Presence of a bunk bed in the household
When purchased/how obtained
Whether used in last four weeks
Age of youngest child in upper bunk

Dogs

Presence of dogs
Number of dogs
Height of largest dog

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