



April Survey – Childcare, what it should look like

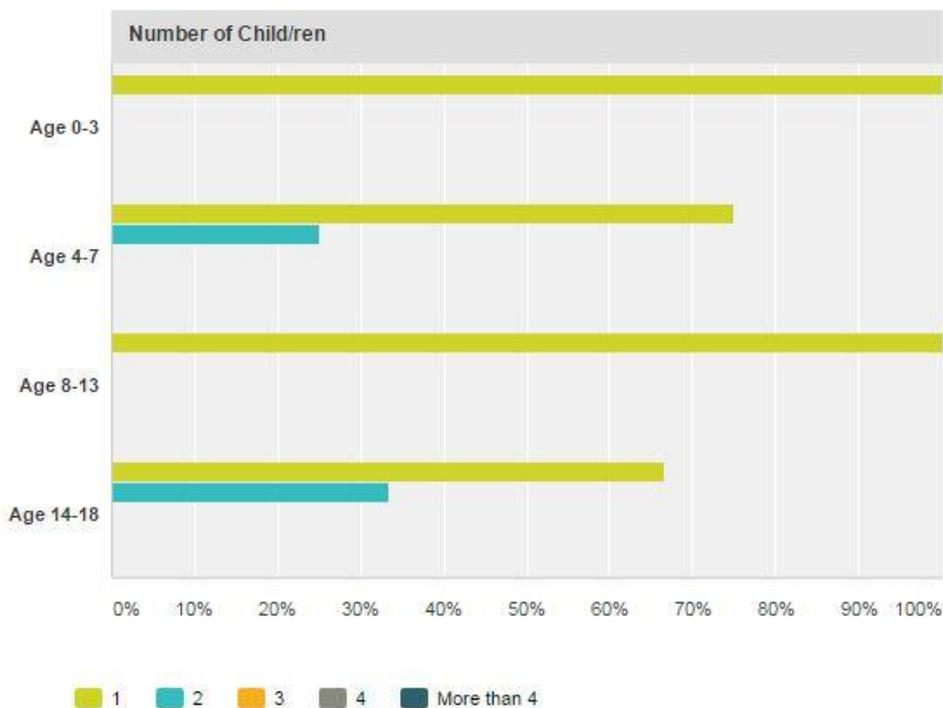
Every month we invite a response to our online survey. Our survey for April 2015 - following on from March's childcare survey about the provision, type and cost of local out of school childcare services - further explored how a childcare service should look like so that one-parent families can more readily access employment and/or education opportunities.

The Questions

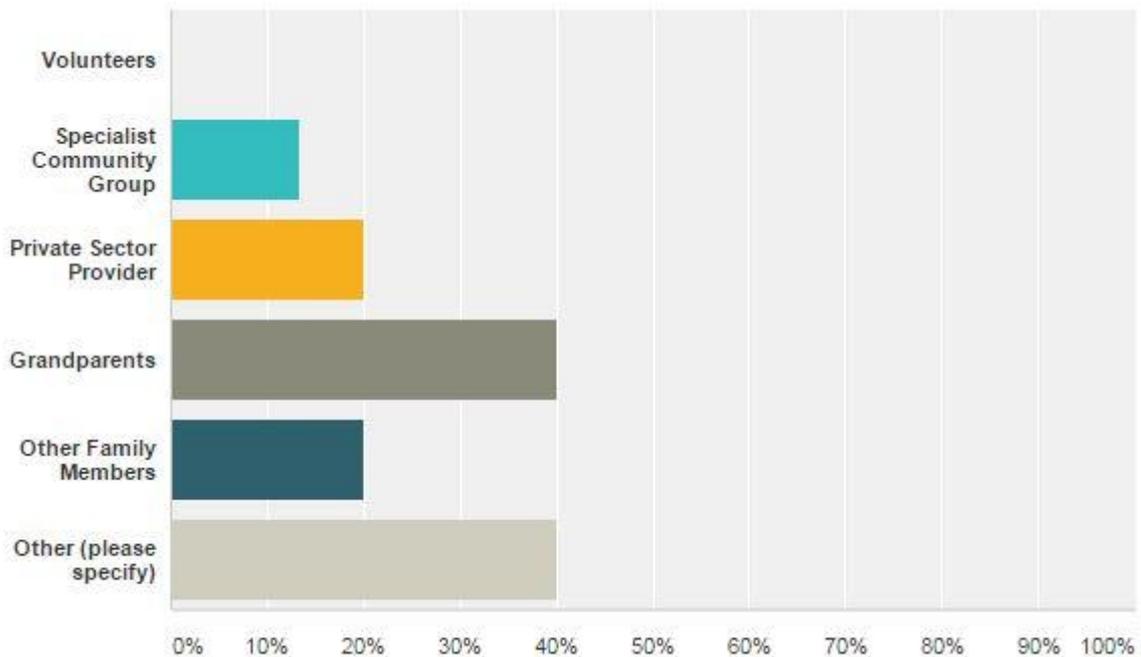
1. How many children do you have and what age/s is/are they currently?
2. What service provider options are currently accessed by you?
3. When selecting a childcare service, which aspect do you most consider?
4. When considering quality, accessibility, location, opening hours and affordability, what would your ideal childcare/ out of school care service offer? That is, what do you think childcare in Ireland should look like?
5. Lastly, what childcare/out of school supports would you like to see for:
 - Older children/teenagers
 - Children with special needs

The Results

Q1 How many children do you have and what age/s is/are they currently?



Q2 What service provider options are currently accessed by you?



The majority of respondents have no choice but to rely on grandparents and other family members for childcare support. While this can be beneficial for all family members in some ways, parents worry that it is not sustainable and not a practical, long-term option, especially when their own parents are aging or in cases where there are health concerns or illness. It is also not a sustainable full-time option, meaning that parents cannot plan a return to work full-time.

Parents who do not have accessible family members who can or will care for their children, or make school runs, are even more greatly restricted in returning to employment or education.

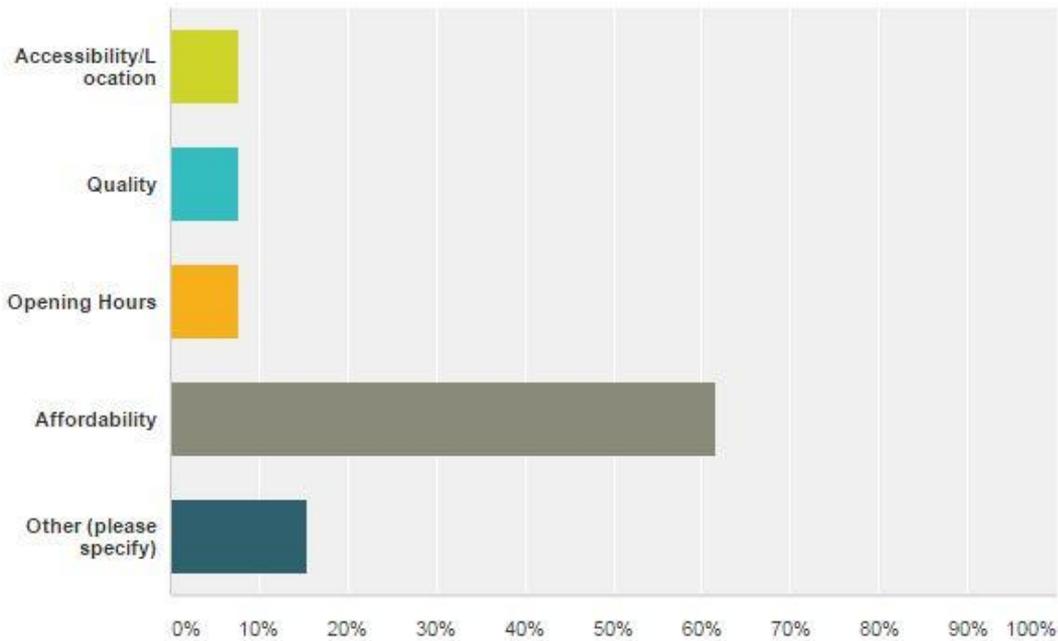
One respondent noted, in relation to childcare for her daughter:

“I sometimes have to bring her to work with me.”

Some others availed of the services of a childminder, which usually means that other supports are required, e.g.:

“Childminder / combined with summer camps and extended care.”

Q3 When selecting a childcare service, which aspect do you most consider?



Most respondents noted that the primary consideration for them has to be affordability, aligned with other factors. Most parents would prefer to be able to select childcare for their children based on quality, accessibility and other suitability.

“It is really a combination. Reality is that my net salary is €500 per week. I cannot afford expensive childcare. Sometimes I have to work Saturdays which is cost prohibitive.”

Q4 When considering quality, accessibility, location, opening hours and affordability, what would your ideal childcare/out of school care service offer? That is, what do you think childcare in Ireland should look like?

Most responses highlighted the need for:

- Flexibility,
- Accessible community provided childcare,
- Opening hours that are practical for working parents,
- Out of school care.



Other responses included:

“Community support childcare”

“I would prefer my baby be minded in a home setting”

“It should be part of the school programme”

“Flexibility, should be state subsidised.”

“Afterschool service either in the school or close by with pick up service, quality play and homework supervision, sessional care available and holiday camps- state subsidised according to means on sliding scale but with an affordable maximum contribution cap. Hours to suit working hours at least til 6.30 pm.”

“Childcare should be run by the community for the community. It should be open from 8-6, provide after school and out of term time services. Fees should be based on income.”

“Should be more ccs providers.”

“After school and put of school care that incorporated activities that children would enjoy, not simply warehousing them til collection time.”

Q5 Lastly, what childcare/out of school supports would you like to see for:

- **Older children/teenagers**

“Youth club, activities”

“All children must be in some activities outside of schools”

“Summer camps which provide a range of engaging activities not a parking facility. Teenagers need to want to go there.”

“Affordable community run centres that run sports or hobbies in the afternoon.”

- **Children with special needs**

“Activities, community get together and supports”

“Meets their needs, understanding staff with low staff turnover”

“inclusive childcare, no segregation”

“Again they should be in the community with easy access for parents, they should be affordable and be adequate for the children's needs”

“Au-pair , nanny.”