

National Survey for Wales 2014-15: Childcare ^[1]

Author: StatsWales

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AVAILABILITY

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Introduction

In 2013 the Welsh Government's Building a Brighter Future: Early Years and Childcare Plan set out their commitment to improve the life chances and outcomes of all children in Wales.

The plan states that: "Attending a high-quality childcare setting or early years education provider has a significant influence on a child's development, especially those children who come from a disadvantaged background. Affordable, flexible and accessible childcare also enables parents to work or access training, and supports our drive to increase economic growth, tackle poverty and reduce inequalities."

It also states that the Welsh Government wishes to: "improve the quality of childcare, develop proposals for flexible delivery of Flying Start childcare, parenting and early language support, consider a more flexible approach to the Foundation Phase, look at ways to improve the availability of wrap-around holiday childcare and play provision."

The National Survey questions on childcare were introduced in order to provide further evidence to support the policy development around childcare, to provide an evidence base and to help inform the progress of these initiatives. The questions asked will help determine whether factors such as the lack of childcare or its cost or inaccessibility may influence a parent's decision not to work, or to work fewer hours. The availability of Welsh-medium childcare provision is also of particular interest to the Welsh Government.

The Building a Brighter Future policy will be refreshed over the coming months and the results from the National Survey will be used to inform both the plan and the Welsh Government's free childcare offer.

The full questionnaire and results on childcare as well as a range of other National Survey topics can be found on the National Survey for Wales web pages. Additional tables can be accessed via StatsWales. More information about the survey methodology, potential uses of the results, and definitions of terms used in the bulletin, can be found in the Key Quality Information section at the end of this bulletin.

Key findings

- 49% of parents with children aged 0 to 14 said that they used childcare.
- 77% of these parents used unpaid family or friends to care for their children; 24% combined this with more formal childcare.
- 46% find it difficult to afford childcare; 52% of those with children aged 3 or 4 find it difficult.
- 40% with a child aged 5 to 14 find it difficult to get childcare during the school holidays.
- 64% said that they did, or would be able to, access Welsh language childcare.
- 93% were satisfied with the quality of the formal childcare they use (69% very satisfied, 24% fairly satisfied).

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