

Markets, Migration & the Work of Care



FACT SHEET 2: Child Carers

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This fact sheet draws on data from the 2016 Census. Between 2011 and 2016, the number of child carers in Australia increased from 106,558 to 137,736. Those working in child care tend to be young women, around a third of whom were born overseas. As a group they are more likely than the average worker to identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI). Approximately half of all child carers work part-time. They have a lower income than the average worker.

Demographics

Gender

Child care is a starkly gendered occupation. 95.1% of Australia's child carers are female, whereas women make up 47.5% of the total Australian workforce.

Age

Child carers are substantially younger than the rest of Australia's workforce (Figure 1). The median age group for child carers is between 30-34 years compared to between 40-44 years among the broader workforce.

Indigenous Workers

A higher proportion of the child care workforce identify as ATSI (2.7%) compared to the total workforce (1.7%).

Overseas Born

34.6% of child carers were born overseas, compared to 30.6% within the total Australian workforce (Figure 2). 27.3% of child carers were born in non-main English-speaking countries, compared to 20.1% across the total workforce. The top ten countries of birth for those born overseas are: India, England, New Zealand, China, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Iraq and South Africa.

Who are Australia's Child Carers?

ABS Occupational Definitions (ABS 2018)

Child Care Worker (421111): Provides care and supervision for children in programs, such as long day care and occasional care, in childcare centres, hospitals and educational centres.

Family Day Care Worker (421112): Provides care and supervision for babies and children, usually in the carer's own home and under local government or community-based schemes.

Nanny (421113): Assists parents in the provision of ongoing care and supervision for babies and children, usually in the child's home.

Out of School Hours Care Worker (421114): Provides care for school age children in an out of school hours care program.

Figure 1: Age of Child Carers and Total Workforce, 2016

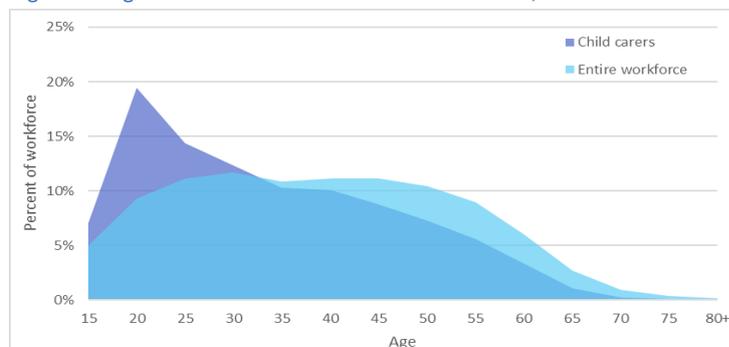
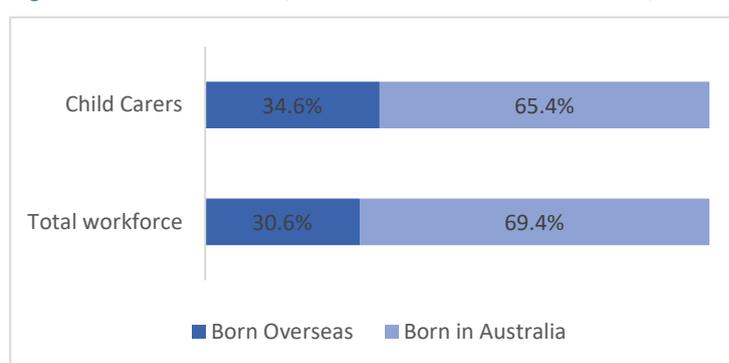


Figure 2: Location of Birth, Child Carers and Total Workforce, 2016

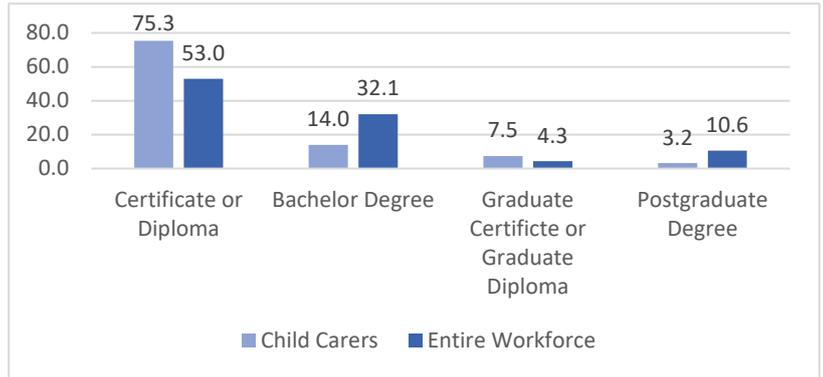


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Education

Child carers are more likely to have vocational qualifications than is the case for the total workforce. That is, they are more likely to hold a certificate or diploma, or a graduate certificate or diploma (Figure 3). Compared to the total workforce, they are notably less likely to hold a bachelor or postgraduate degree.

Figure 3: Post-School Qualifications of Child Carers vs the Total Australian Workforce, 2016

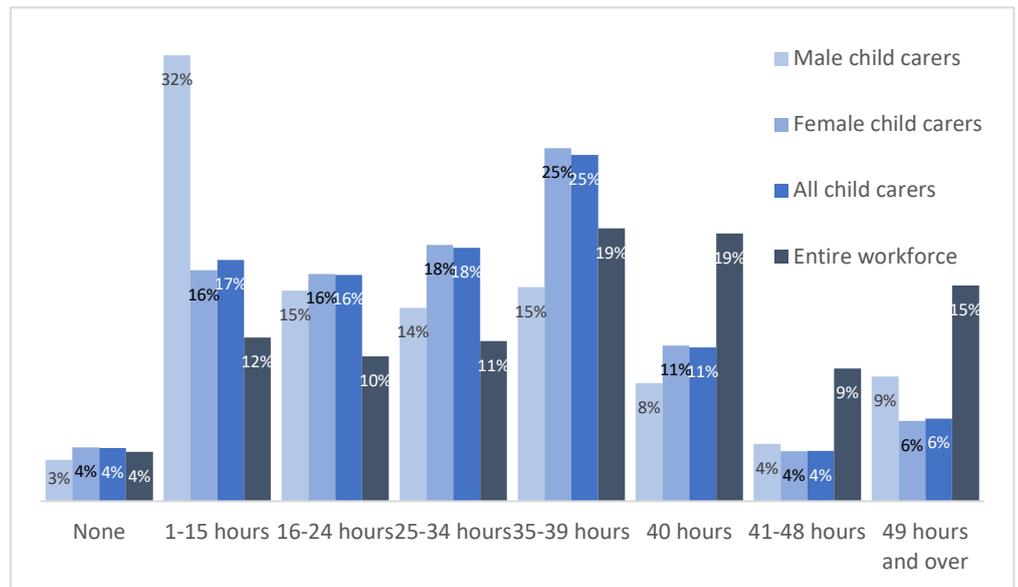


Employment and Income Characteristics

Part-Time Work

Over half of child carers work part-time (53.2%); a substantially greater proportion than in the total workforce (34.5%), and even greater than for women's employment in general (48.8%). Only 21.8% of all male workers are employed part-time compared to 62.2% of male child carers. Of interest is that female child carers are less likely than their male counterparts to work part-time (52.8%).

Figure 4: Hours Worked in All Jobs during Previous Week, Child Carers and Total Workforce, 2016



Working Hours

Figure 4 shows hours worked by female and male child carers compared to the total workforce. A far higher proportion of child carers work very short part-time weekly hours (1-15 hours) compared to the total workforce (17% vs 12%). Male child carers are twice as likely than female child carers to work very short part-time hours (32% vs 16%). Child carers are also much more likely to work short part-time hours (16-24 hours) than is the case for the total workforce (16% vs 10%).

Income

Child carers report a lower median weekly income than other workers (Figure 5). They have a median income of \$500-649 per week (\$26,000-\$33,799 annually) compared to a median income of \$1,000-\$1,249 per week (\$52,000-\$64,000 annually) for the total workforce.

Figure 5: Weekly Income, Child Carers and Total Workforce, 2016

