

IS MY INVOLVEMENT IN THIS STUDY IMPORTANT?

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Participation in the **Living in Australia** study is voluntary. However, to make the most of the information you provided last year, we seek your continuing support. Indeed, the success of the study depends upon it as every individual and family provides unique information that no-one else can give!

HOW IS MY PRIVACY PROTECTED?

All the information you give is treated in strict confidence. ACNielsen removes all personal details (such as name, address and phone number) and any identifying information given during your interview, before passing your answers to the Melbourne Institute. Researchers using these data will not know who has participated.

If you would like to know more about how your identity is protected, or would like further information concerning your privacy and the information you provide, please contact ACNielsen on the phone number provided below.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY?

The results of the study will, in the first instance, be used by Government. In particular, they will find the data collected of great benefit in planning the future provision of services in the areas of income support, health, education and housing. The data will also be used by university researchers to help them understand and explain what is currently happening in Australian society.

WHAT IF I MOVE?

As the study is ongoing, it is important that we keep your address details up to date. If you are moving, or planning to move, please take the time to forward your new address details to ACNielsen using the reply-paid post card enclosed with this letter. Alternatively, you can call 1800 656 670 to register your new address or email these details to livinginaustralia@acnielsen.com.au. Your help is much appreciated.

WHO IS CARRYING OUT THIS STUDY?

This study is being run by the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research at the University of Melbourne and is funded by the Commonwealth Government. ACNielsen has been contracted to carry out the interviews.

HOW DO I GET MORE INFORMATION?

If you want to get a message to your interviewer, or get more information, please telephone **1800 656 670** or visit our web site www.livinginaustralia.org. Our interviewer will also be able to help with any queries you may have.

Looking forward to your continued support.

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HELP US SHAPE AUSTRALIA'S FUTURE

The 'Living in Australia' study newsletter - 2002



Remember the study you took part in last year?

THANK YOU

Thankyou for taking part in the **Living in Australia** study last year. The study has been a clear success with approximately 7,700 households and 14,000 people taking part. The information you have given us is invaluable. It will assist researchers in the important work of understanding the many economic and social changes that affect the way Australians live.

The table below shows the proportion of interviews conducted in the metropolitan and rural areas within each state. As you can see from the table, 17 per cent of all interviews involved people living in the metropolitan regions of New South Wales while 2 per cent were with people living in the Australian Capital Territory. (The number of interviews we conducted in each area was based on the number of people who lived there).

Percentage of interviews by area

	Metropolitan	Rural
New South Wales	17	14
Victoria	18	8
Queensland	8	11
South Australia	6	3
Western Australia	7	3
Tasmania	1	2
Northern Territory	1	1
Australian Capital Territory	2	-

YOUR INVOLVEMENT THIS YEAR

In 2002, we are returning to every household that participated in the study last year to seek a second interview with members of these households.

An ACNielsen interviewer will visit your household within the next two months. As was done last year, the interviewer will ask everyone in your household aged 15 years and older to answer some questions. This should take about 30 minutes each. Similar to last year, the questions will cover topics such as education, employment, retirement, income, family life, and how you feel about various aspects of your life. There will also be new questions on assets and debts.

One person will also be asked some questions about your household structure, childcare and housing.

If the interviewer calls at your house at a time that is not convenient for you, he or she will be happy to make an appointment to conduct the interview at a time that suits you better.

In appreciation of your household's help with this study we will send a cheque for \$50 to households where all eligible household members participate. If only some of the household members participate, we will send your household a cheque for \$20.

We will continue to keep you up-to-date with the results of the study as it progresses. Please let us know if you have moved address as we would like to interview you again next year. (For information on how best to do this please read "What if I move" on the last page of this newsletter).

DO WE LIKE WHERE WE LIVE?

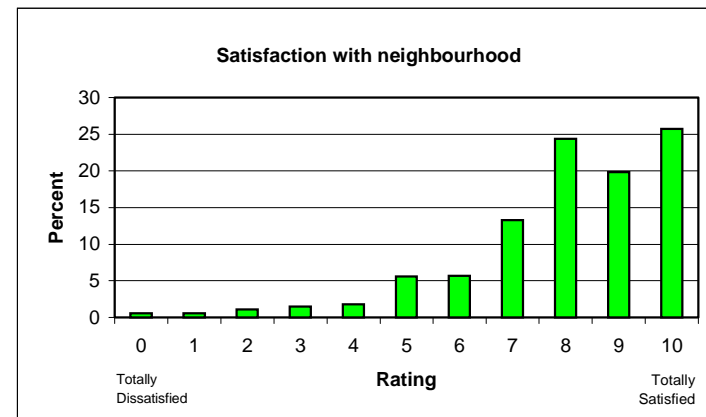
SOME RESULTS FROM LAST YEAR

Most Australians like where they live. When asked to rate their neighbourhood on a 0 to 10 scale, 70 per cent of respondents to the **Living in Australia** study gave a rating of 8 or higher. Satisfaction levels were especially high in rural areas, particularly in Victoria and South Australia. Residents of Darwin and Canberra were also particularly satisfied with their neighbourhoods.

Statistical analysis suggests that people who were most satisfied with their neighbourhood were typically:

- older,
- female,
- married,
- employed full-time,
- born in Australia,
- in good health, and
- resident at the same address for a long period.

As we can see from the far right column in the graph below, 26 per cent of people gave their neighbourhood top marks with a 10-out-of-10 rating, followed by 20 per cent who gave a 9-out-of-10 rating.

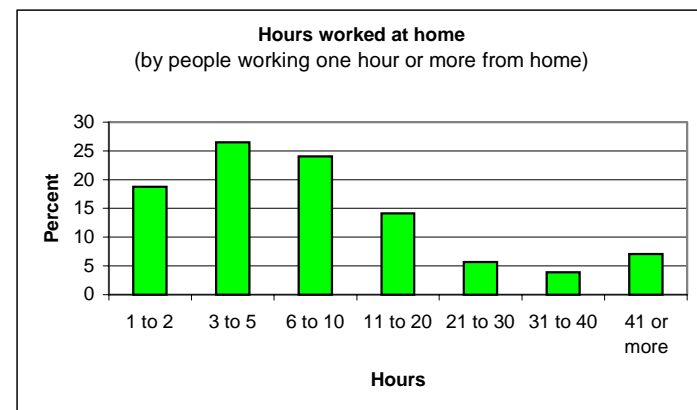


WORKING FROM HOME

With the advances in information technology, it has been suggested that many of us in the future will no longer have to leave home to go to work. Data from the **Living in Australia** study suggest that this trend may already have begun, with 28 per cent of employed respondents working some of their paid hours from home.

For the large majority, however, working at home represents only a small fraction of the working week, with around half working 5 hours or less per week from home. People who were self employed were among those who worked most from home.

Nevertheless, the **Living in Australia** study data indicates that hours worked at home represent 10 per cent of all hours worked, which is quite a significant result.

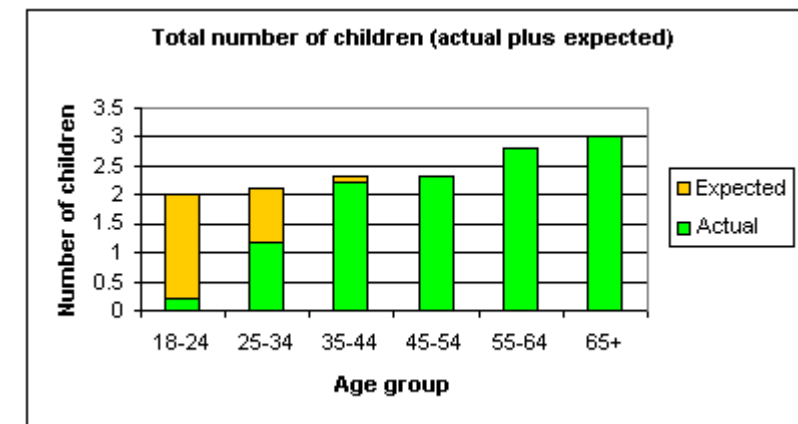


CHILDREN – DO WE STILL WANT THEM?

Like most other western nations, women in Australia are having fewer children. In 1970 the average number of children that women were likely to have was 2.9. Now - around 30 years on - the number has fallen to 1.7.

This trend is reflected in our study with younger females having (or planning to have) fewer children than earlier generations of females. In the following graph we see that women aged 65 years or over were likely to have had 3 children while women aged 18 to 24 years are planning to have 2 children only.

Although younger women may expect to have 2 children, the actual number of children they have is lower. This suggests that some women are not having as many children as they originally planned. Future research will be investigating the reasons that might explain this gap between intentions and actual experience.



ISSUES THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU

You may recall being asked how you rated the importance of various issues in your life on a scale of 0 to 10. Most people ranked their family as being of greatest importance to them, followed by their health. As shown in the table below, the importance of religion was higher for older people, with people aged 65 years or over typically rating it sixth compared to younger people who typically rated it last, at eight. From the table we also see that leisure activities held more importance for the youngest age group (rated third behind family and health), and that financial matters were more important for people aged 25 to 44 years than for other age groups. The importance people placed on their home increased with age. Despite concerns that Australians may have become more focused on money and the things that money can buy, it is interesting to note that family and personal health consistently ranked higher than financial situation.

Average rankings by age group

	15-24 yrs.	25-44 yrs.	45-64 yrs.	65+ yrs.
Your family	1	1	1	1
Your health	2	2	2	3
Leisure activities	3	5	5	4
Your home	4	4	3	2
Your financial situation	5	3	4	5
Your employment situation	6	6	6	8
Involvement in your community	7	7	7	7
Religion	8	8	8	6