Families' use of and needs for school aged care

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Outline of presentation

- **Analyses of various Australian datasets to explore care of school-aged children**

    - Types of care attended outside school hours

    - Parental decision-making about care of school-aged children

    - Parents' reports of difficulties in managing care of school-aged children

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Background

- Demand for outsides school hours care:
  - Parental views and preferences about child care
  - Maternal employment (and characteristics of employment)

- Family factors:
  - Presence of younger (below school-age) or older siblings
  - Availability of other family or friends to provide care
  - Child preferences

Data sources

- Australian Bureau of Statistics Early Childhood Education and Care Survey (2005, 2008, 2011).

- Department of Education (formerly Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations) National Survey of Parents' Child Care Choices (2009)

- Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (2003-2012)

  - The HILDA Project was initiated and is funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS) (formerly FaHCSIA), and is managed by the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research (Melbourne Institute).

The views expressed in this presentation are those of the authors and may not reflect those of AIFS, DSS, the Department of Education, the Melbourne Institute or the ABS.

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PATTERNS OF CHILD CARE USE BY SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN

Australian Bureau of Statistics Early Childhood Education and Care Survey (2005, 2008, 2011)

School aged care – children aged 5-11 years

- Australian Bureau of Statistics Early Childhood Education and Care Surveys
  - 2005, 2008 and 2011
  - Excluding children not yet in school
- Trends in school-aged care
- Combinations of care type by age
- Which children are in different types of care
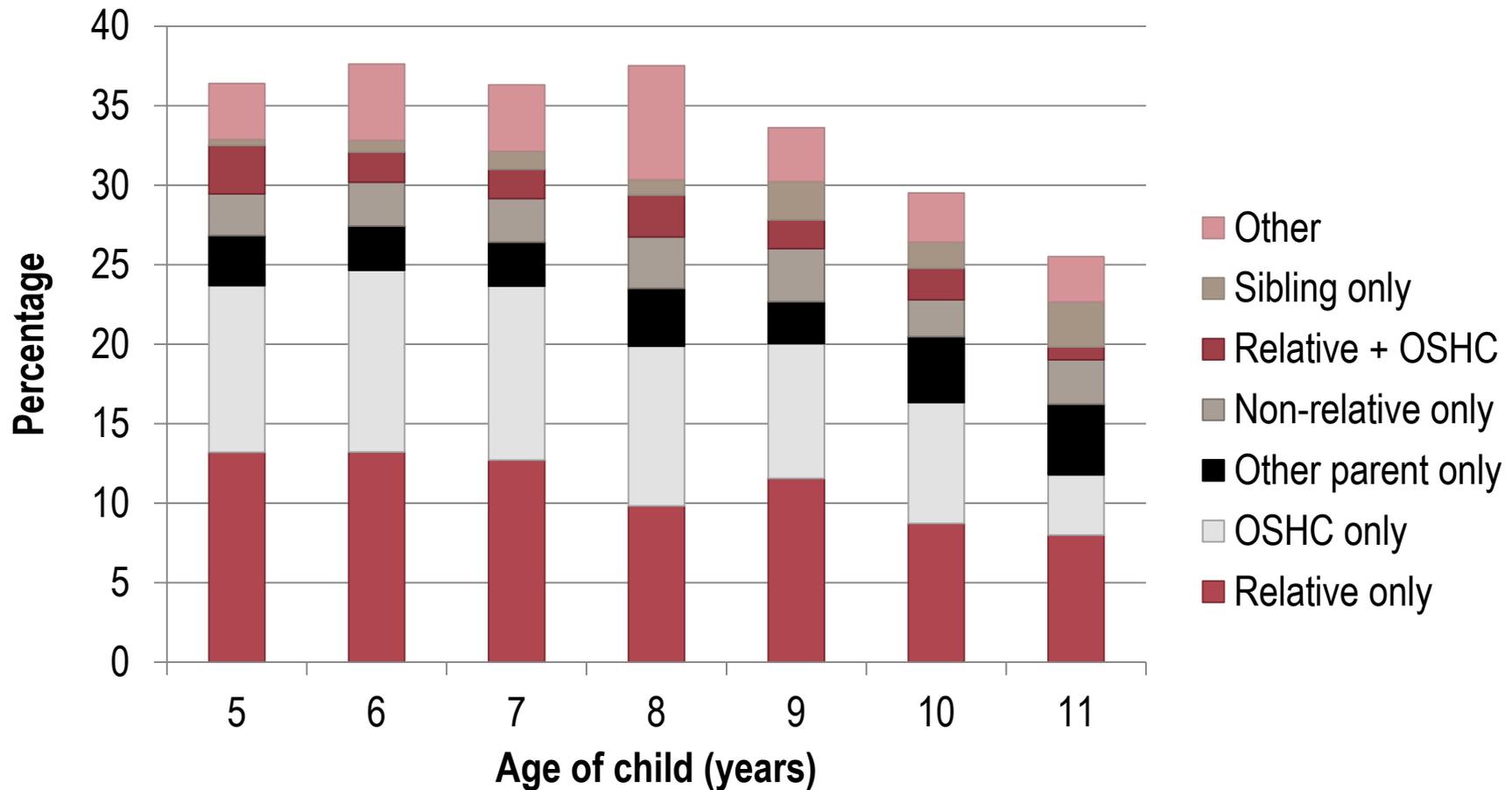 - Multivariate analyses – key findings

School aged care – children aged 5-11 years, 2005, 2008, 2011

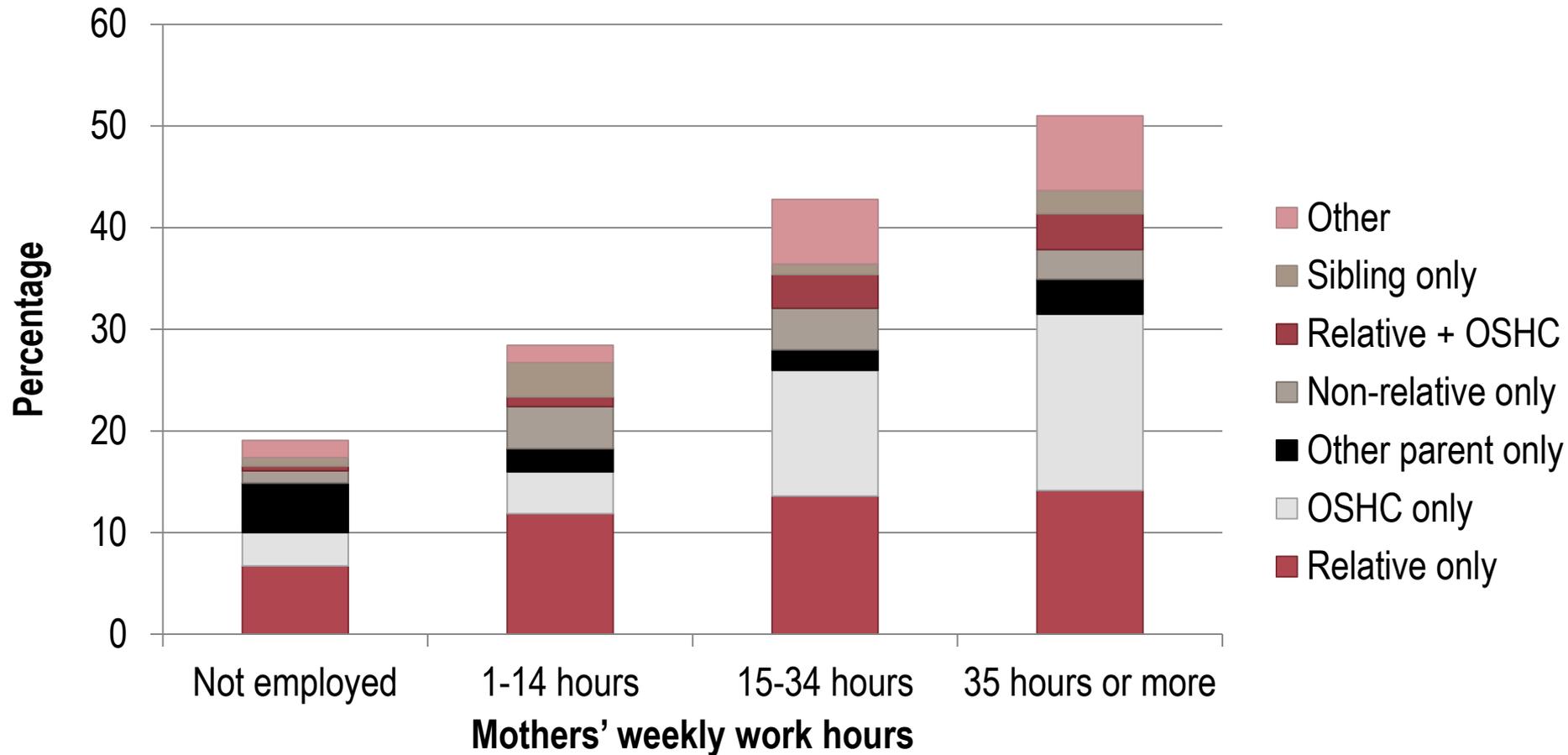|	2005 %	2008 %	2011 %
Any child care	**39**	**40**	**34**
Formal care	**14**	**13**	**15**
After/before school hours care	12	13	13
Family day care	1	1	<1
Informal care	**30**	**31**	**24**
Grandparent	15	17	13
A parent living elsewhere	4	5	5
Sibling	3	2	2
Other relative	3	4	2
Non-relative	7	6	4

Note: Children may be in multiple forms of formal and informal child care. Excludes children not attending school. A change in questionnaire design in 2011 may have resulted in changes to responses and may have contributed to declines in reported percentages using care

Source: ABS Childhood Education and Care Survey, 2005, 2008, 2011

Combinations of care for school-aged children by age of child, 2011

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Combinations of care for school-aged children by mothers' work hours, 2011

Which children are in child care? Results of multivariate analyses

	Any child care	Formal care	Informal care
Year (2005, 2008, 2011) (But note change in questions in 2011)	Lower in 2011	Lower in 2008 and 2011 than 2005	Lower in 2011
Age of child	Declines with age	*As for "any"*	Lower for ages 9-11 years than 5-8 years
Mothers' weekly work hours	Increases with work hours	*As for "any"*	*As for "any"*
Father presence and for couples, weekly work hours	Lowest if father not full-time employed; Highest for single parent families	Lowest if father working longer hours. Highest for single parent families	*As for "any"*
Parental income	Higher for higher income	*As for "any"*	*As for "any"*
Number of children and whether child is youngest in family	Lower if more children in family, or if child is youngest	*As for "any"*	*As for "any"*
Remoteness of region of residence	Lower in more remote areas	Lower in areas outside major cities	*As for "any"*

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Beyond these figures….for formal care

- Findings for "formal care" largely reflect findings for before/after school care, which is the predominant "formal" care type for this age group

- The main difference for Family Day Care is that there is <u>not</u> lower usage in more remote areas compared to major cities

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Beyond these figures….informal care

- Grandparents
  - No variation by parental income or by number of children in family; otherwise findings as for overall informal care

- A parent living elsewhere
  - Very much more likely in single parent families and more likely when mothers work full-time hours; less likely in outer regional/remote areas

- Siblings
  - <u>More</u> likely as children get older; more likely when the child is the youngest child.

- Other relatives
  - More likely in single parent families and when fathers work longer hours

- Non-relative carers (friends, neighbours, nannies)
  - More likely in single parent families and as income increases

PARENTAL DECISION MAKING ABOUT SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN

Department of Education
(formerly Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations)
National Survey of Parents' Child Care Choices, 2009

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Qualities considered in choosing formal child care for school aged children

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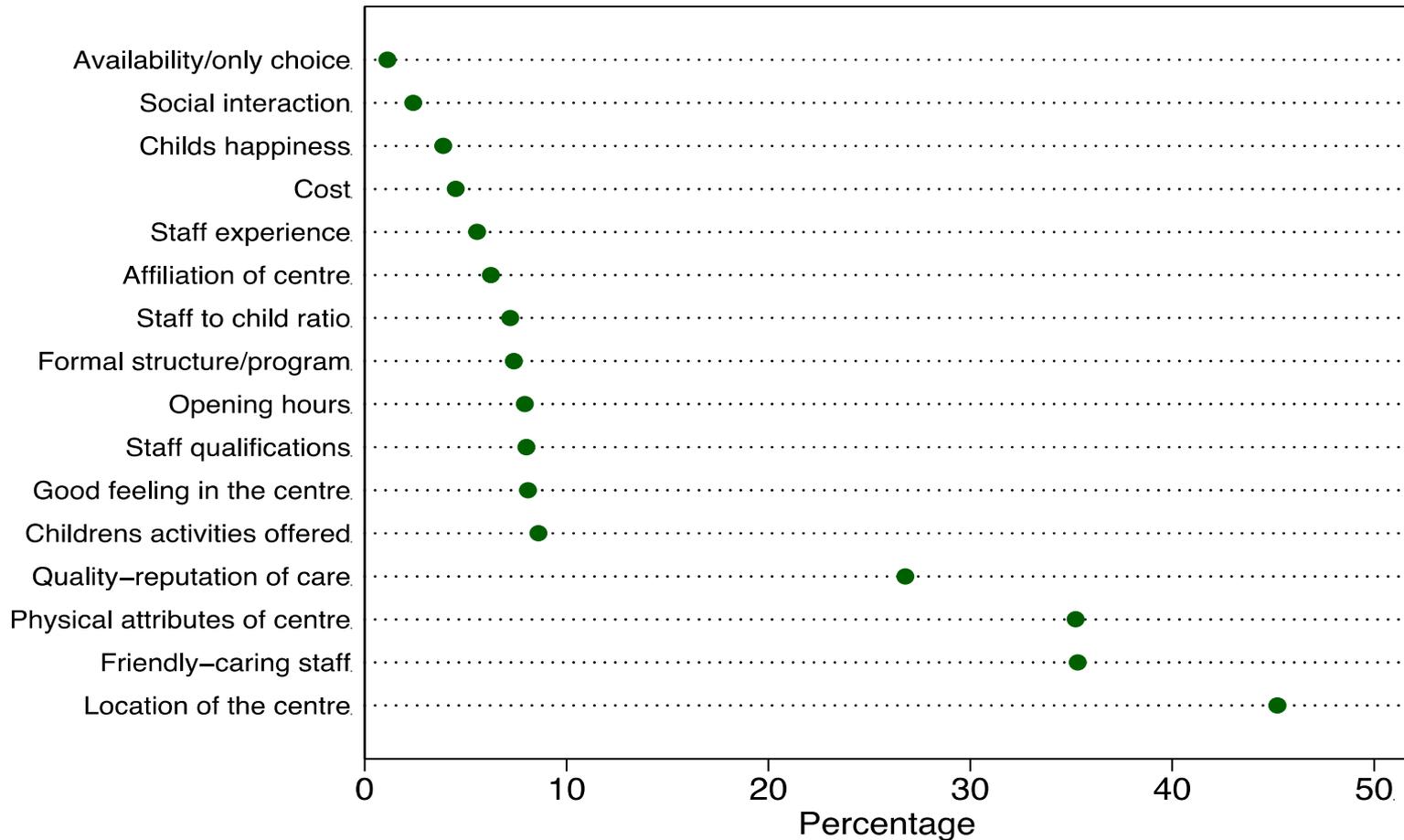
Attributes and Location – more detail

Attributes of the centre

Location

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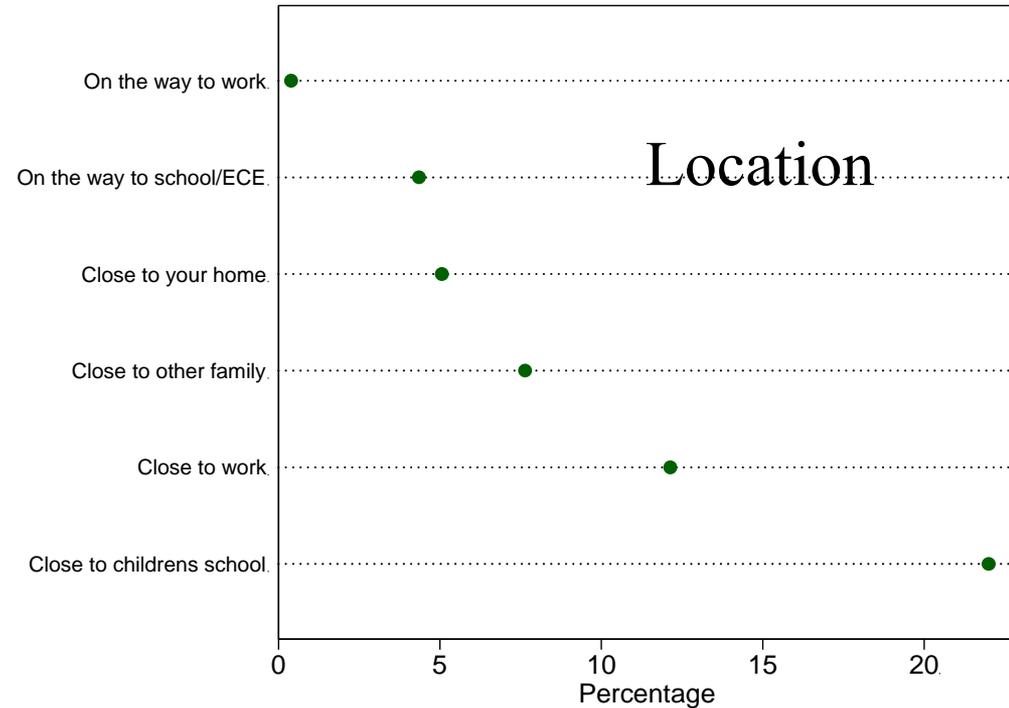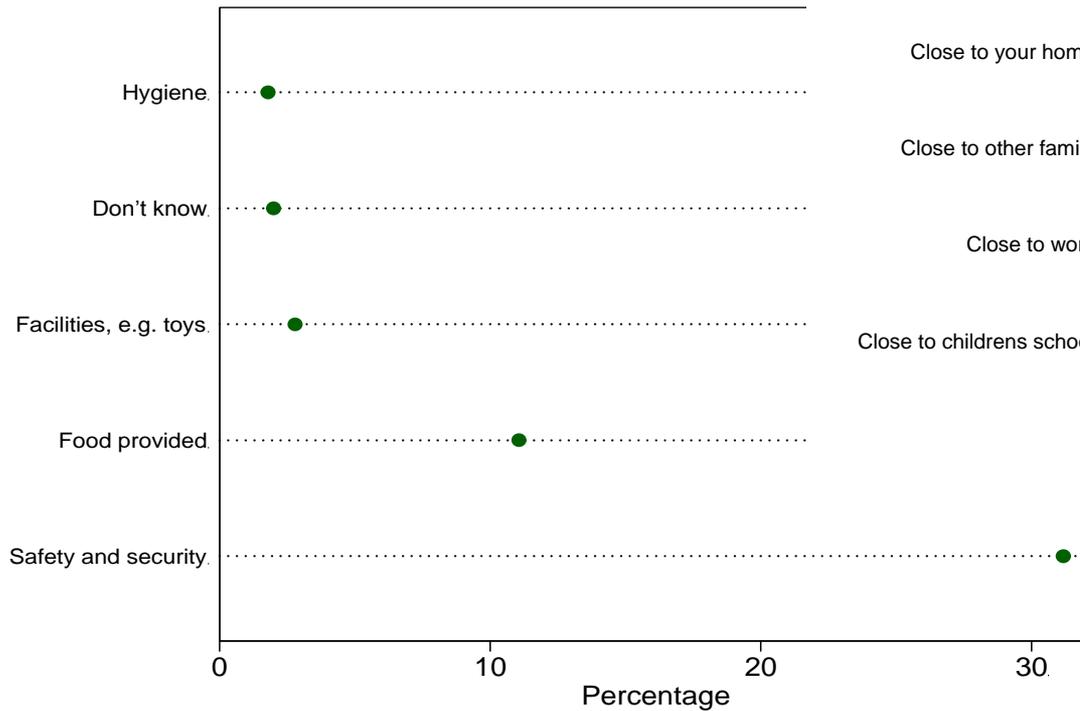
CHILD CARE DIFFICULTIES REPORTED BY PARENTS OF SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN

Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (2001-2012)

Child care difficulties reported by mothers of school aged children

As reported by mothers in families with youngest child aged 6-12 years, who used or considered using child care for work in last 12 months
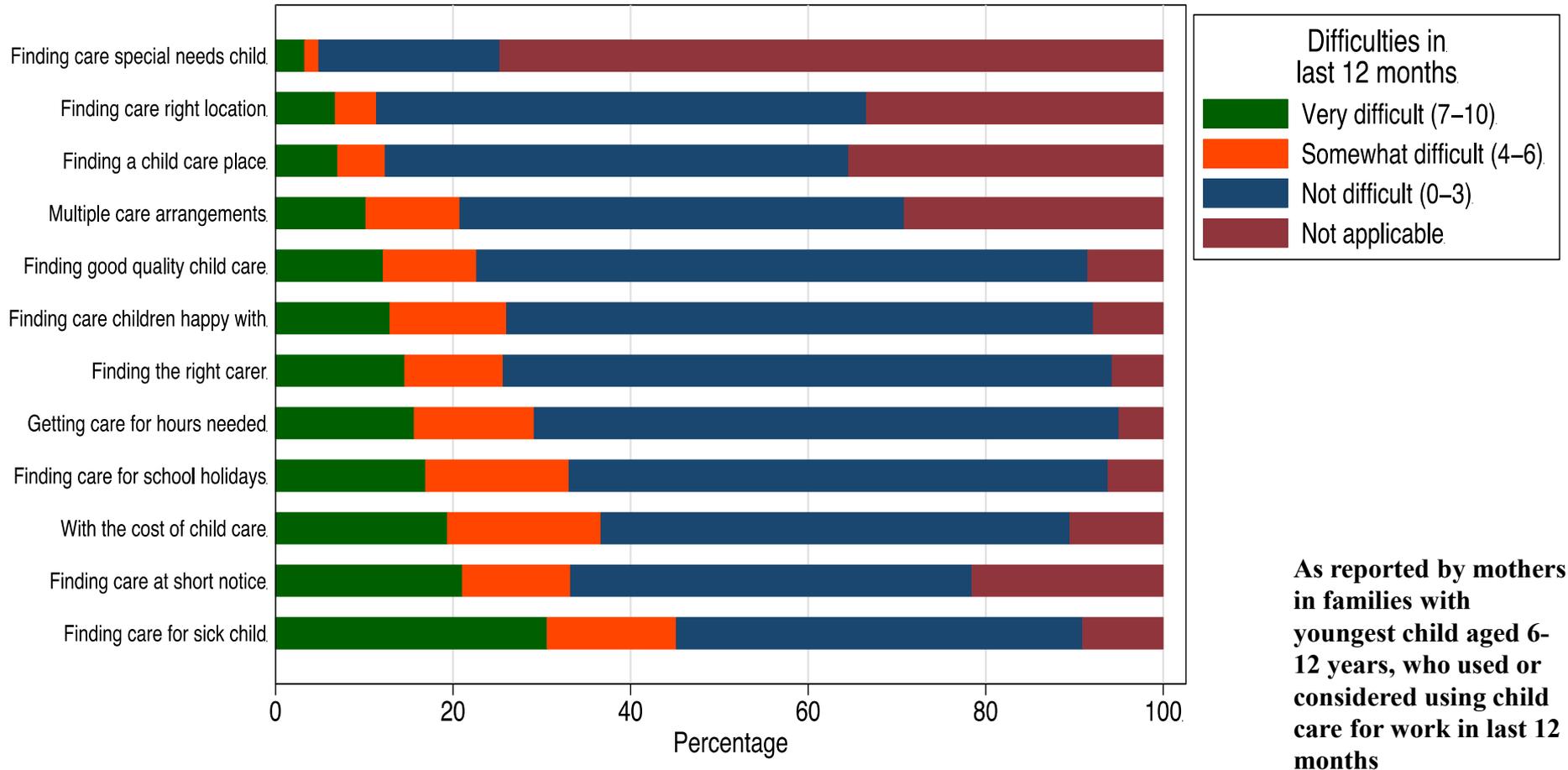
Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey, Waves 1-12

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Child care difficulties for school aged children by type of work-related care

Work–related child care at time of survey.
- ■ Parental only.
- ◇ Formal only.
- ● Informal only.
- △ Both.

Percentage with this difficulty (scored 7–10 out of 10) in last 12 months

As reported by mothers in families with youngest child aged 6-12 years, who used or considered using child care for work in last 12 months
Denominator includes those reporting "not applicable"
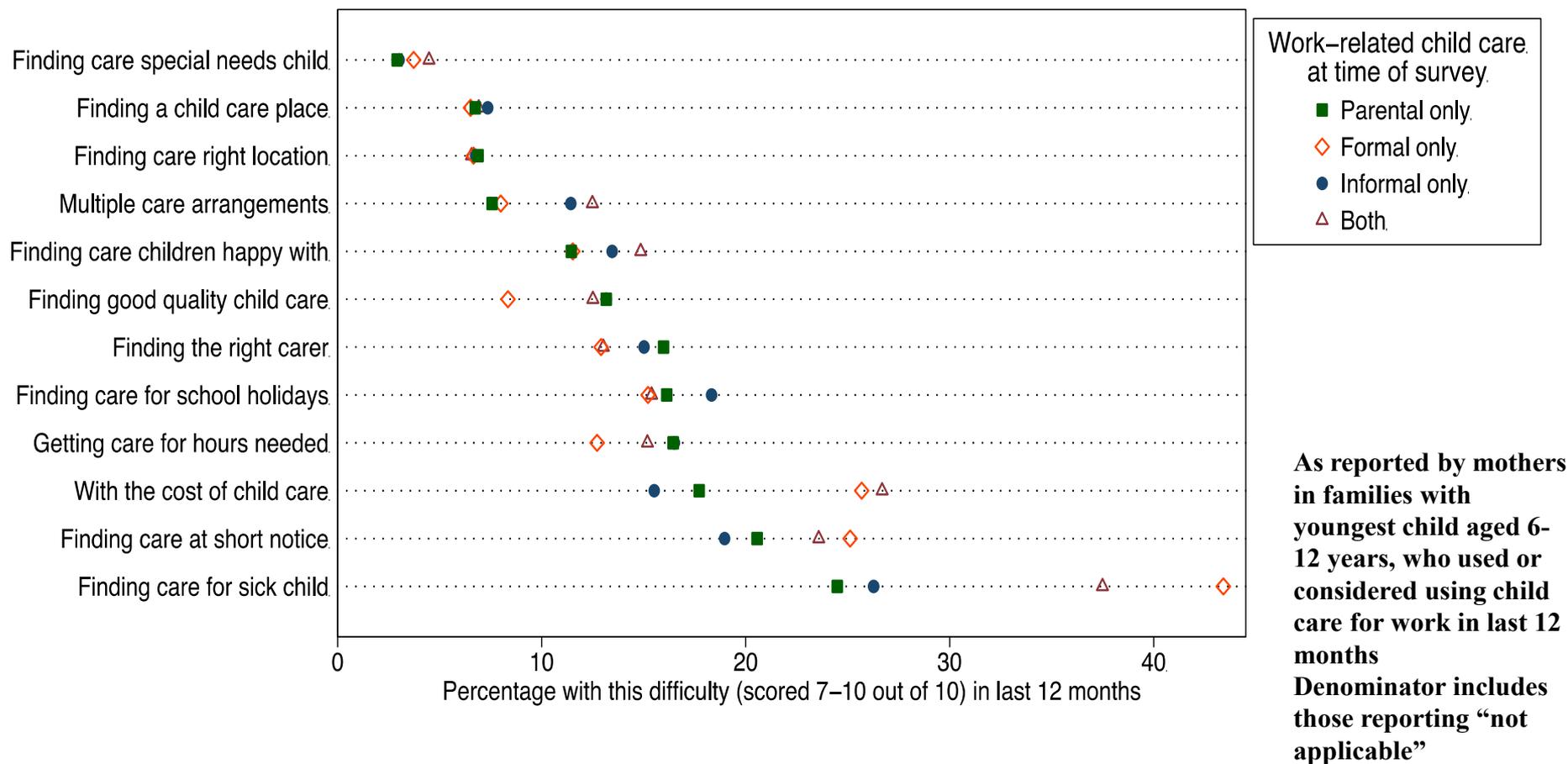
Summary of key findings

- One on three school-aged children attend outside school hours care
  - "Informal" care is more likely than "formal" care, but children are often in a mix of care arrangements
- Care use varies by child and family characteristics
  - Especially by child age, mothers' work hours and by whether fathers are employed
- Selection of OSHC service
  - Parents consider location, staff friendliness, physical attributes of centre and reputation of quality of the service
- Difficulties experienced
  - Difficulties included with cost of care, finding care for sick child, finding care children are happy with and finding care in school holidays.
  - Many parents did not report experiencing difficulties but difficulties were most likely for those using formal care, or using both formal and informal care.

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