

Parents supporting children who do not live with them

Find out about the support parents give their children aged under 18 years who don't live with them.

The New Zealand General Social Survey 2010 asked people whether they, or their partner, support children who do not live with them. This includes children they may spend time with or have to stay overnight. By including data on someone's partner's children we are closer to understanding the full economic impact of support across households and the reality of family life today.

The results help us understand the characteristics of people who give support and the types of support they give. We have focused on children aged under 18 years because they are of particular interest to policy makers, due to their dependency, and potential for positive outcomes with the right policies in place.

How many parents don't live with their children?

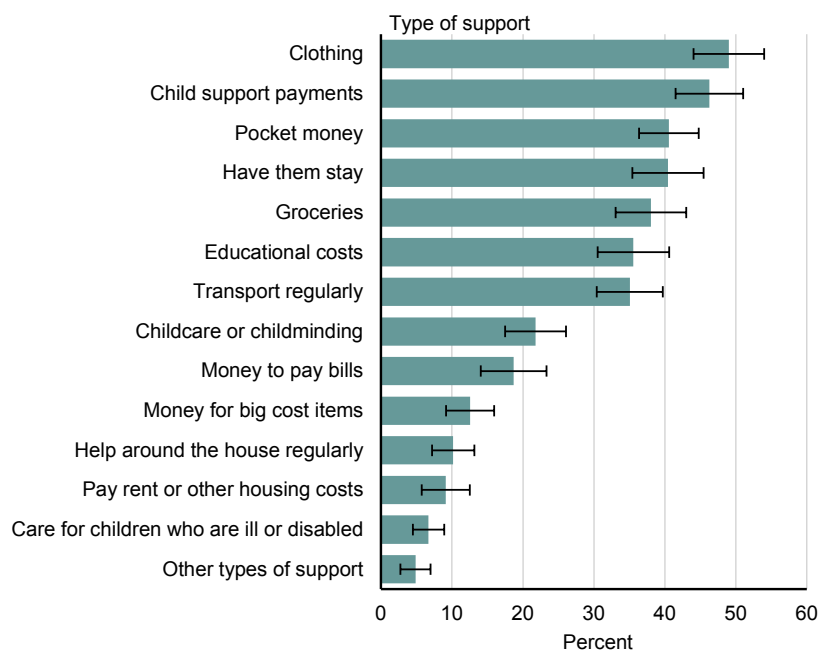
In 2010/11, 1.50 million adults or their partner (44 percent of the population aged 15 years and over) had children aged under 18 years. Of these 1.50 million parents, 1.28 million (85 percent) lived with all their children and 225,000 (15 percent) had either some or none of their children living with them.

How do parents support children who don't live with them?

Of the 225,000 parents who had at least one child who did not live with them, 196,000 (87 percent) said they gave some form of support. The most common type of support was providing clothing (49 percent), followed by child support payments (46 percent).

Support given to children aged under 18 years who live outside the household⁽¹⁾

By support type
April 2010 – March 2011



1. Of those who gave support.

Note: Error bars represent the 95% confidence interval for the proportion. If the error bars for two proportions do not overlap, we are 95% confident that there was a difference in the proportions.

Source: Statistics New Zealand

Of those 196,000 who provided support, 61 percent provided support to one child. A quarter (26 percent) supported two children, nine percent supported three children, and the remaining four percent supported four or more children.

Of this same 196,000, 22 percent reported providing one type of support. Eleven percent provided eight or more different types of support. Roughly equal numbers of the remaining 67 percent provided between two and seven types of support to their children.

These figures do not take into account how many children in a family may be living outside the household. For example, someone may support two children under 18, but they may have three children under 18 not living with them. The figures also do not identify whether this support is given when the child is living outside the household, or when he or she visits or stays with the support provider.

See the table on following page, or download it as an Excel file from www.stats.govt.nz, for more results.

See the [New Zealand General Social Survey](#) for details about the 2008 and 2010 surveys, and other reports and releases, available at www.stats.govt.nz/nzgss.

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Data at a glance

Parents supporting children who do not live with them By selected New Zealand General Social Survey measures April 2010–March 2011

Measure	Percent
Adults and/or their partners	
Have children aged under 18 years	44.2
Don't have children aged under 18 years	55.8
Parents with children aged under 18 years	
Live with all their children	85.0
Live with some of their children	6.9
Live with none of their children	8.1
Proportion of children under 18 years who live in another household that received support	
Children aged under 18 years	87.1
Number of children under 18 years who live in another household who were given support	
One	60.8
Two	26.4
Three	8.7
Four or more	4.0
Number of types of support provided	
One type of support provided	21.8
Two	9.1
Three	12.3
Four	11.8
Five	12.1
Six	11.2
Seven	10.5
Eight or more	11.2
Type of support given (percentage is of those who gave support)	
Provide or pay for needed clothing	49.0
Child support payments	46.3
Give them pocket money or an allowance	40.6
Have them stay in this house/flat for some of the time	40.4
Provide or pay for groceries	38.0
Give them money for educational costs or textbooks	35.6
Give them transport on a regular basis	35.1
Provide childcare or child minding	21.8
Give them money to pay bills or debt	18.7
Give them money for big cost items	12.5
Give them help around the house on a regular basis	10.2
Give them money to pay rent or other housing costs	9.1
Provide care for children who are ill or disabled	6.7
Other type of support	4.9

Source: Statistics New Zealand, New Zealand General Social Survey 2010