



THE SOCIAL
RESEARCH CENTRE



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

Institute for Social Science Research

Office for Women
Department of Families, Housing, Community
Services and Indigenous Affairs

Men's Engagement in Shared Care and
Domestic Work in Australia

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1 Executive Summary

1.1 Background and methodology

The Social Research Centre (SRC) has partnered with the Institute for Social Science and Research (ISSR) at the University of Queensland to undertake this programme of research for the Office for Women, part of the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA). The overarching aim of this research is to improve the evidence base in areas that government can influence to support men to engage in unpaid domestic work and parenting. The focus was on examining the factors that encourage and impede men's engagement in unpaid domestic labour and parenting.

More specifically, this research examined and identified:

- Characteristics of intact couples in Australia who do and do not share care and unpaid domestic work.
- Enablers and barriers that impact on men in their decision to share care and unpaid work with their female partners.
- Men's and women's attitudes and aspirations regarding shared care and unpaid domestic work, including their expectations and aspirations for shared care and unpaid domestic work.

The study has both quantitative and qualitative components. Using mixed methods provides a more comprehensive examination of the issues than using one method alone. The quantitative data for this project comes from a national telephone survey of 300 men who share parenting and unpaid domestic tasks with their partner conducted between 15th October and 7th November 2010. The sample was limited to heterosexual couples, who were both engaged in the workforce, had a child aged 0 – 12 living in the household and where men reported contributing at least 30% or more to housework and childcare. The qualitative research was undertaken from 8th-22nd November 2010. This sample comprised a total of 34 couples who reported a dual earner / dual carer lifestyle and who have children aged 0 – 12 years. The sampling criteria required fathers to self report that they undertook at least 40% of the care and unpaid domestic work. The qualitative component of this research combined in-depth interviews, paired interviews, and group discussions.

1.2 Summary of key findings

Gendered divisions of labour

A clear gendered division of labour was apparent in both the quantitative and qualitative results. Overall, the survey results show that men and women have very similar workloads with both spending about 77 to 79 hours per week in paid and unpaid work. The key difference between men and women is that men undertake the bulk of paid work while women undertake the bulk of unpaid work. According to the survey results men reported that their partners spend an average of 17 hours per week on housework tasks compared to only 13 hours per week for men, indicating a gender gap of 4 hours of housework time each week. The qualitative results support this, finding that most fathers worked full time (usually a minimum of 40 hours a week during the day) and most mothers worked part time. In general the female partners were doing a greater proportion

of the housework tasks than men. Many of the women exhibited a strong sense of pride about the upkeep of their homes, and held the belief that the state of the home was a reflection of them. There was a clear gender split across the housework tasks. The survey results indicate that men report that they spend more time than their partners doing the dishes and taking out the rubbish. For all other tasks, men's partners spend more time each week, with women spending much more time doing the laundry, cleaning the house, cleaning the bathroom and toilet, and food shopping. The qualitative component was broader in scope, including outdoor as well as indoor tasks, and clearly indicated that an analysis of time spent on housework tasks is incomplete without reference to those outdoor tasks. Nevertheless, the findings were consistent with the survey where outdoor tasks such as mowing the lawn, tending to swimming pools, car maintenance and taking out the rubbish were much more likely to be done by the men. On the other hand, dusting, mopping the floors, sorting out the washing and cleaning the bathroom were much more likely to be done by the women.

In relation to childcare, the men in the survey report that they and their partners spend much more time on parenting tasks (23 and 32 hours respectively). Of note the gender gap in time spent on childcare (9 hours) is more than twice the size of the gender gap for housework time (4 hours). This latter finding contrasted with the qualitative results which found that childcare was much more evenly divided amongst those couples. Whilst those employed were limited by how much time they could spend with their children during the week, they typically reported that the split was 50 / 50 on the weekends. Overall however, the survey results indicate that men and their partners shared more equally across all childcare tasks. The men spend most time each week supervising or monitoring children, but in relation to their partner they contribute the greatest proportion of time to bathing and dressing, and reading or playing with children.

Coming to an Arrangement of Shared Care

The couples generally indicated that their arrangement for sharing the care of their children and household tasks had gradually evolved over the years. None indicated that it had ever been a consciously planned process. Preference for particular tasks, being better at certain tasks and the practicality of being available to undertake tasks at particular times all helped to determine how the couples came to their arrangements for shared care.

It was apparent during the qualitative component of the study that couples did not really consider time spent in the areas of paid work, domestic work and child minding as entities to be compared separately. Rather, they thought about these issues from the perspective of total time. This appeared to be especially the case in terms of the balance between paid and unpaid work hours, while childcare time was considered somewhat separately.

This meant that in couples where each partner spent a similar amount of time in paid work, there was a tendency for unpaid domestic work to be fairly evenly split. By contrast, those couples where one partner worked full time (most commonly the male) and the other part time (most commonly the female), the part time worker tended to do more of the unpaid domestic work. Couples felt that this was fair, and explained it as simply a practical necessity.

Time spent with children was regarded somewhat separately, although it was still determined according to the overall balance of time available and time spent in paid and unpaid work. Again, couples who spent similar amount of time in paid work tended to report that they fairly evenly divided the childcare time.

Couples where one partner worked full time and the other part time, noted that this arrangement meant that the part-time worker tended to have more time available to spend with the children during normal working hours, whether this was while they were doing unpaid domestic work or in dedicated child caring time. Consequently, the couples had typically come to an arrangement where, when the full time working partner was home, they spent more time with their children in an attempt to make up for the time they were unable to be with the children during their working hours. In the most common situations, this meant that the male partner would spend time with the children when he came home from work in preference to domestic work. The couples we spoke with generally felt that this arrangement was both acceptable and desirable, with the female partners, who spent a greater proportion of the day time hours at home, commonly reporting that they welcomed the opportunity to, for example, have a break from the children while they prepared the evening meal. From this perspective, couples reported that they aspired to having as close to equal as possible arrangement with childcare, but that the degree to which this could be achieved tended to be dependent on the equality of hours spent away from home in paid work.

Enablers and Barriers to Men Sharing Housework and Childcare

The quantitative and qualitative research identified a number of factors that influenced men's ability to share housework tasks and the care of their children, many of which were work related, including: the need to earn an income; the capacity of the men to negotiate flexible working arrangements; and how the couples managed their time in and out of work with each other and their children's school hours.

The survey results suggest that the more money that men brought into the household the less time that they spent doing housework and childcare. This is also reflected in the findings of the qualitative interviews. A common theme that emerged in the interviews was the need to earn a sufficient household income which created the need to work outside the home. Because the male partners commonly, although not in all cases, had greater earning potential, there was a tendency for the income earning needs to be placed more on the men. As noted above, the totality of work, including both income earning and household duties, tended to be split between the couple, and therefore, the extra time the women had at home was typically used to do the household tasks.

Arguably the most interesting findings of the survey results were the influence of flexible, or non-standard, work hours on men's time on housework. The results suggest that working night shifts or being able to take work home, was associated with increased time for men on housework. At the same time, if their partners spent long hours in paid work, worked weekends or had to travel away overnight for work, men reported increased housework time. These are important findings that suggest that time availability must be measured not just in terms of average hours per week, but also in terms of the characteristics of work hours. This finding was supported by observations from the qualitative component of the study.

Another theme to emerge from the interviews and group discussions was that a major factor affecting the decisions that couples made in relation to their (paid) working hours was the limited flexibility in their children's school hours. Couples tended to negotiate their working hours, as much as possible, to ensure that one of them was available to look after the children outside of school hours. This was of particular relevance during the hours of 3-6pm when school had finished but normal working hours had not. It was also relevant for weekends and school holidays. Men with flexible working hours (achieved through working for themselves, having the ability to work from home, working shifts, working part time, earlier start and finishing

times) found it much easier to participate in the shared care arrangements. The survey results strongly support this, indicating that if men work night shifts, or their partners work night shifts, men report more time spent on parenting tasks. It may be that in these households men are required to take on more parenting tasks by virtue of the absence of their partner.

The qualitative interviews also identified a range of other factors that acted as barriers and enablers to men being involved in the shared care arrangements which included:

- **Perceptions of responsibility and competency:** A common practice amongst the couples in this research was that women held ultimate responsibility for the household tasks. This combined with the common perception that women were better at and had higher standards for these household tasks, acted as a barrier to men being more active in the household.
- **Personal preferences:** Across the research were specific examples where an individual had preference for a specific task. Specific examples were men who happened to like ironing or cooking the dinner.
- **Circumstances:** Changes in individual circumstances affected the breakdown of roles and tasks within each couple. As an example, redundancy had led to the opportunity for a few of the men to become stay at home dads and to subsequently take on the greater share of the household tasks and childcare arrangements.

Satisfaction with Sharing Arrangements

Overall, the survey results indicate that men experience very high levels of satisfaction with their current housework and childcare arrangements. In relation to housework 33% of men report they are very satisfied and 60% satisfied with their current sharing arrangements. Only a minority (5%) felt dissatisfied. The results are similar for childcare, where 45% of men were very satisfied and 48% were satisfied. Only a small proportion of men (5%) expressed dissatisfaction with their current parenting arrangements.

The qualitative data provided support for these results, in that the couples who participated in the qualitative research were generally happy with the current arrangements they had in place for the sharing of parental care and household tasks. Couples who talked about being happy in their current arrangement shared some or all of the following characteristics: they communicated with each other regularly about parenting and household tasks; they organised tasks with 'to-do' lists and calendars; there was an element of consideration and appreciation of the tasks that each person undertook; responsibility for different tasks was clearly defined; and they shared similar attitudes towards the bringing up of their children and the upkeep of their house.

The interviews and group discussions also found that not all couples were satisfied and we were able to get an insight into the reasons underpinning lower levels of satisfaction. Amongst those who indicated a level of discontent with their current arrangements, there was often an element of resentment from the women who felt they were responsible for an unfair share of the housework tasks. Most often, the female partner believed that the male partner did not take any initiative or responsibility for the household tasks and by default the burden of responsibility was left with her. Some female partners were also resentful because they felt the male partner was unable or unwilling to do the tasks to a high standard, and therefore the task was left to her to complete.

Aspirations

In the survey men were asked what their preferred arrangements were in relation to divisions of housework and childcare. For housework, the majority of men (57%) indicated that they would prefer to keep the arrangements the same. Interestingly, one-quarter (26%) indicated that they would like to do more and ask their partner to do less, while a minority (9%) wanted their partner to do more. A similar proportion (7%) reported that they would prefer to reduce the amount of time both parents spent on housework tasks. The results were similar for childcare. Approximately two-thirds of fathers (65%) preferred to 'keep things the same', however almost one third (30%) would like to 'do more and ask their partner to do less.' A small proportion (3%) of men reported that they would like their partner to do more, while one percent wanted to find ways to reduce the total amount of parenting done.

The interviews and group discussions were consistent with this, where most couples expressed aspirations for some form of shared arrangement. They generally felt that they were doing as well as they could in terms of overall sharing, especially in comparison with the more traditional roles of their parents and previous generations. One interesting insight from the interviews is that preferences were based on a holistic household view, not just in relation to gender equity in relation to domestic tasks. Most couples took into account the need to work and earn money to maintain the financial stability of the household, in this context, the majority of couples believed there were limited opportunities to change their current sharing arrangements. While they could foresee minor changes in the distribution of tasks within the family, they could not perceive any shift in the overall balance of their sharing arrangements other than those that would inevitably come from changes to the family, such as having more children or children growing older.

In relation to the overall balance of household tasks and care for children, the latter tended to take priority. Couples were keen to ensure as close as possible an equal split of the care for their children compared with the household tasks and paid work. Hence, the partner who worked full time tended to spend more of their 'at home time' caring for their children, while the partner who worked fewer hours tended to take on a greater proportion of the household tasks.

Aspirations were also affected by wanting the best for their children. The couples held high aspirations for the level of care and education that they could provide for their children. This affected their income aspirations and consequently their choices about how many hours they worked in paid employment. It also affected their decisions about hiring outside help. For example in this research, couples were reluctant to use childcare, except as a last resort, which in turn often led to the decision for mothers to work part time hours that fitted with children's school hours.

2 Background and Research Objectives

The majority of research on gendered divisions of labour within households examines women's experiences. While there is some research specifically on men, it is limited both internationally and in Australia. In particular there is little research into the barriers to more equal participation by men in housework and parenting, and by extension, the role of government in helping to overcome these barriers.

The overarching goal of this research is to examine the factors that encourage and impede men's engagement in unpaid domestic labour and parenting work. It is hoped that this will improve the evidence base in areas that government can influence to support men's increased involvement in these areas.

More specifically, this research will examine and identify:

- Characteristics of intact couples in Australia who share care and unpaid domestic work.
- Enablers and barriers that impact on men in their decision to share care and unpaid work with their female partners.
- Men's and women's attitudes and aspirations regarding shared care and unpaid domestic work, including whether greater sharing is a desired situation.

The findings from this research will inform government regarding gender equality in the household and the extent to which, if at all, inequality needs to be addressed.

Throughout the report we use the term "childcare". Unless otherwise stated, in using this term we are referring to informal care of children by parents.

3 Literature Review

3.1 Introduction

Women undertake the bulk of unpaid domestic and care work in all Western societies (Treas and Drobnič 2010). The continuation of this division of tasks and time in the domestic sphere is surprising for a number of reasons. First, women have entered paid employment in increasing numbers in recent decades leading to a rise in women's economic contribution to the household, as well as less time available for women to spend on domestic and care work (ABS 2010). Second, there have been substantial changes in the patterning of household and family formation and dissolution over recent decades leading to considerable variations in pathways through the life course, and arguably, greater flexibility and diversity in family living arrangements (de Vaus 2004, Evans and Baxter forthcoming). Some of the major changes have been the rise in cohabitation prior to marriage, delays in the age at first marriage, a rise in divorce and separation rates, and increasing numbers of births outside marriage. These new patterns of family demography suggest greater flexibility to form non-traditional households, and longer periods of time living outside of traditional family households, both of which might have been expected to provide the conditions for the development of new patterns of labour within households. Third, there is evidence of changing cultural and social values about gender roles and increased support for gender equality in paid and unpaid work, although there is some evidence that these trends have stabilised in recent years (Van Egmond, Baxter, Buchler and Western, forthcoming). Despite these broader social trends however, research suggests only minimal changes in the gender division of time and labour within households (Chesters, Baxter and Western 2009).

Nevertheless, some couples do share unpaid household and care work more equally than others. However, the numbers of couples who achieve equality is small, are relatively invisible, and little is known about their characteristics, or the process they have followed to achieve equality. Is it a conscious choice to share equally, or is it the result of other circumstances, perhaps beyond their control, that have led to these atypical patterns?

In this review we summarise what is known about the factors associated with shared care work and address the following key questions:

1. What are the characteristics of intact couples in Australia who do and do not share care and unpaid domestic work?
2. What are the enablers and barriers that impact on men in their decision to share care and unpaid work with their female partners?
3. What are men's and women's attitudes and aspirations regarding shared care and unpaid domestic work, including whether this is a desired situation?

The focus here is on individual and household level characteristics that promote shared care rather than policy or program related issues. While there is considerable research that identifies differences in gender divisions of household labour across countries and institutional contexts which suggests that social policies can encourage and support variations in arrangements within households (see Dex 2010; Pfau-Effinger

2010; Hook 2006; Geist 2005; Cooke and Baxter 2010), our concern here is with characteristics of individuals and households.

We begin with a brief overview of trends over time in men's and women's time in care and domestic work and trends in the gender division of tasks. We then turn to some of the broad theories that have been identified as most useful in understanding the gender division of labour in the home. In the final sections we review the findings of specific empirical studies on men's involvement in domestic and caring work. Throughout the review we distinguish, where possible, between childcare and unpaid domestic work. As will become apparent in later sections, the patterns of men's involvement in childcare are different to those associated with their involvement in other kinds of unpaid work, and it is likely that the determinants and barriers to men's involvement in childcare are also different to those associated with men's involvement in unpaid household tasks. Childcare is a qualitatively different kind of work than housework. Like other forms of care work, it is more closely associated with feelings of love, emotion and identity than housework tasks such as cleaning and laundry. Additionally, it is not work that can easily be put on hold, or re-scheduled, in the way routine housework tasks can be allocated to particular times of the day or week.

We focus specifically on childcare and domestic labour and do not consider other kinds of unpaid care work, such as care of elderly parents, or unpaid volunteer work, such as community work or involvement in local organisations. We primarily review research that has been published in the last ten years in order to focus on the most up-to-date results. However, we do not enforce this time frame rigidly as invariably there are useful insights from earlier research. Our focus is primarily on research that has been published in peer reviewed outlets such as journals and books.

3.2 Trends over Time in Men's Involvement in Housework and Childcare

3.2.1 Housework

Research that considers longitudinal trends in men's and women's time on housework shows a convergence in their housework hours. Bianchi, Robinson and Milkie (2006) using data from various large-scale American time diary surveys collected between 1965 and 2000 find that married fathers are spending an extra 3.2 hours per week on core housework tasks (e.g. cooking meals, meal cleanup, housecleaning, laundry and ironing) and an extra 2.1 hours per week on other housework tasks (e.g. outdoor chores, repairs, garden and animal care, bills and other financials) in 2000 compared to 1965. Married mothers decreased their time on core tasks by 15.7 hours over this same period, but increased their time on other housework by 0.6 hours. Overall, men's housework time increased by 5.3 hours per week over this period, while women's declined by 15.1 hours. Nevertheless, US men in 2000 still spend only about half the amount of time on housework each week (about 10 hours per week) compared to women (about 19 hours per week). In another US study using time diary data Sayer (2005) also finds changes in the gendered division of labour over time. She reports that overall women spend more time than men in unpaid work activities, but between 1965 and 1998 the ratio of women's to men's time in unpaid work activities declined in most activities, and particularly in cooking and cleaning. Men's time spent cooking and cleaning increased from 17 minutes per day in 1965 to 46 minutes per day in 1998. On the other hand, women's time spent cooking and cleaning declined by two hours per day. Interestingly, she reports that most of the changes for women occurred between 1965 and 1975, while for men, the biggest changes are observed between 1975 and 1998.

These patterns are not confined to the United States. Sullivan (2000) reports very similar trends in the United Kingdom after examining nationally representative time-use diary data collected in 1975, 1987 and 1997. Although household tasks remain highly gendered, the time men spend cooking and cleaning has risen over this period, while the time women spend on these tasks has declined. Interestingly, she reports the biggest increases for men were observed among those in lower socio-economic groups (manual and clerical groups) so that by 1997 there is very little difference between men in this group and men from higher socio-economic groups (i.e. professional and technical groups). Also, her results show that the proportion of families in which men do at least 50% of the unpaid work has risen most among dual fulltime earner families, from 15% in 1975, to 32% in 1997. In contrast, only 15% of new traditional households (men employed fulltime and women employed part time) and 4% of male breadwinner households (men employed fulltime and women not employed) can be defined as egalitarian with men doing at least 50% of the unpaid work. This suggests that, to the extent that men share the care, they are most likely to do so when partners are in fulltime employment.

In Australia, Baxter (2002) found no change in men's time on housework between 1986 and 1997, but did find that women reduced their time over this period by about six hours per week. These reductions were observed in all core areas of housework including preparing and cleaning up after meals, cleaning the house and laundry. She concludes that the gender gap in domestic labour involvement is getting smaller, but mainly because women are doing much less, rather than men doing much more. Baxter's work is based on analyses of data collected in several nationally representative Australian surveys in 1986, 1993 and 1997. These surveys include measures of how much time individuals spend on selected tasks in an average week. Unlike the US and UK studies discussed above, these surveys did not include time diaries where respondents are asked to record their activities at regular intervals during a 24 hour period (the time diary method). Rather, respondents were asked to estimate the amount of time spent on selected activities in an average week, typically referred to as summary measures of time use.

More recent work using summary measures of time use, which examines change in men's and women's housework hours between 1986 and 2005, shows that the gender gap in housework hours is getting smaller as a result of changes in both men's and women's housework hours (Chesters, Baxter and Western 2009). In 1986, men in dual fulltime earner families spent an average of fourteen hours per week doing housework, twelve hours less than their female counterparts. By 1993, the average housework hours for men in these family types had increased to just over seventeen hours per week and remained at this level in 2005. Over the same period, women's housework hours in dual fulltime earner families declined from 26 hours per week to 23 hours per week. For new traditional families (men employed fulltime and women employed part time) the patterns are similar. Men in these families did thirteen hours of housework per week in 1986 and sixteen hours per week in 2005, an increase of three hours per week. Women in new traditional families did 37 hours of housework per week in 1986 and 32 hours in 2005, a decline of five hours per week.

Overall, we can conclude that the results indicate similar patterns across countries. Women have reduced their time on housework activities since the 1970s while men have increased their hours. However, there are variations across countries in the extent to which time on housework has changed for men and women, and also in the timing of the changes. Some of these variations may be due to differences in data collection techniques (see Geist 2010 for a discussion of variations in results from alternative modes of measuring time use).

Another possible reason for the differences in findings may be that the pace of change is different across countries. For example, institutional differences across countries in labour market and family policies may encourage men to increase their involvement in domestic work to a greater extent, and at different times, than in other countries. The high rate of women's participation in part time employment in Australia, compared to other countries, may mean that gender divisions of labour in Australia have been slower to change than in countries where women have primarily moved into fulltime employment. Australia ranks second only to the Netherlands in the percentage of employees in part time employment at 24 percent of all Australian employees, and well above the OECD average of 15 percent (OECD, 2009). But like other countries, there are marked gender disparities in the gender distribution of part time employment with the rate for women at 39 percent compared to 12 percent for men (OECD, 2009). Australian mothers of young children are also less likely to be in paid employment compared to some other OECD countries with only 49 percent of mothers with a child under the age of three in the labour market, compared to approximately 57 percent of mothers in the United Kingdom, the United States and Germany (OECD, 2006). Compared to some other countries then, the "new traditional" family model, where men are in fulltime employment and women are in part time employment, has become the dominant family type in Australia in households where both partners are in employment. In 2004, 34% of Australian families were "new traditional" families compared to 22% who were dual fulltime earners (De Vaus 2004).

3.2.2 Childcare

The body of research on longitudinal trends in men's and women's time in childcare is smaller than for housework. From this work there are strong indications that the gender gap remains in childcare, but that both men and women are spending increasing amounts of time on caring for children. Bianchi, Robinson and Milkie (2006), using US time use diary data, report that mothers' time on childcare increased from ten hours per week in 1965 to thirteen hours per week in 2000. Over the same period, fathers' time on childcare increased from three hours to seven hours per week. Disaggregation of the kinds of childcare tasks that men and women do also shows interesting trends. Fathers increased their time on both routine activities (e.g. feeding, dressing) as well as interactive activities (e.g. helping or teaching children, talking or reading to them, playing with them). On the other hand, Bianchi and colleagues find no evidence that mothers increased their time on routine childcare activities over this period, but do report large increases in mothers' time on interactive activities. In other words, fathers increased their time on routine activities, but both mothers and fathers doubled their interactive care time over this period. These trends are mirrored by findings in other industrialised countries (Gauthier, Smeeding and Furstenberg 2004). Further, the research shows that men and women with higher levels of education spend more time on childcare than less educated parents (Bianchi, Robinson and Milkie 2006); possibly due to differences in styles and patterns of parenting (Lareau 2003).

3.3 Explanations for Men's and Women's Involvement in Domestic Labour

Contemporary research into the domestic division of labour is dominated by three theoretical perspectives: 1) economic resources and bargaining; 2) time availability; and 3) ideology and gender display. Other approaches to explaining the allocation of work within households, such as socialisation theory and theories of women's natural aptitude for domestic and caring work, have received little support in recent research.

The following discussion highlights the strengths and weaknesses of current theories and identifies their recent modifications and extensions.

3.3.1 Economic resources and bargaining

The most dominant explanations of the domestic division of labour are fundamentally economic and concerned with who contributes the most resources to the household¹. The results from a number of studies have found support for these approaches indicating that an increase in women's relative earnings is associated with a decline in women's time on household tasks (Baxter 1992; Bittman et al. 2003; Brines 1994; Greenstein 2000; Presser 1994; Ross 1987).

Two main theoretical explanations have been proposed for this finding; human capital, and exchange bargaining or dependency. Under a human capital, or new home economics approach, it is argued that women and men make differential investments in human capital specialising in either home or market production according to their levels of productivity, skills and expected returns in each area (Becker 1991). This role specialisation explains men's higher wages, and consequently, their greater time in paid work compared to women who spend more time in domestic work. In the case of human capital theory, this is due to the rational allocation of men's and women's labour in a way that maximises rewards to the household. Women are better suited to household production and therefore invest less time in education and the labour market compared to men. Therefore, women acquire less human capital, receive fewer rewards in the labour market, tend to earn less and as a result, spend more time on housework (Becker 1991).

Exchange bargaining approaches, sometimes referred to as dependency models, argue that men and women negotiate, or bargain, over household labour. Since household work is usually viewed as unpleasant or menial, those with the most resources, usually men, will bargain their way out of this work, while those with the least resources, usually women, have less power and hence will spend more time on domestic work (Brines 1994). In the case of exchange bargaining, or dependency theories, the argument is that women perform more housework because they typically have fewer resources to bargain their way out of this undesirable work (Brines 1994). The assumption here is that as women's earnings increase, relative to their partner, the division of household labour will become more equal. Further, in the unlikely event that women's earnings exceed those of their partner, then the gender division of labour will be reversed and men will spend more time on housework than women.

¹ Resources are usually measured in terms of earnings.

3.3.2 Time availability

According to the time availability approach, couples rationally assign tasks to the partner who has more “time”, or alternatively, because one spouse does not have the time to do certain tasks the other responds by doing more of the domestic work. Men's hours of paid work have been found to affect men's time on housework with longer hours of paid work leading to less time on housework (Brines 1993; Ishii-Kuntz and Coltrane 1992; Waite and Goldscheider 1992).

Interestingly however, most research finds that the amount of hours men spend in paid work is not closely related to their time, or their partner's time, on housework or childcare. Rather, the time availability argument holds much more strongly for women's time on domestic work with women who spend longer hours in paid employment spending less time on housework tasks (Baxter 2002). However, even in households where men are unemployed or employed part time, women still tend to spend more time on domestic work (Baxter, Hewitt and Western 2005). Further, Craig (2007) finds that employed mothers spend almost as much time on childcare as mothers who are not employed, clearly at considerable cost to their time on leisure and personal activities. Thus the argument that time on domestic work is rationally allocated according to who has the most time is clearly an inadequate approach for explaining the ways in which men and women negotiate their paid and unpaid work commitments.

3.3.3 Gender display

In contrast to these inherently economic approaches to explaining the household division of labour, feminist sociologists have argued that gender is an integral component of housework. West and Zimmerman (1987) developed the idea of the performance or display of gender wherein men and women establish and affirm their gender identity by the display of gender appropriate behaviour. Berk (1985) extended this idea to housework arguing that the performance or non-performance of housework is fundamental to the production of gender. She argued that the marital household is a “gender factory” where, in addition to accomplishing tasks, housework produces gender as men and women carry out routine household tasks. This approach has been enormously influential in studies of the domestic division of labour with many finding support for a process of gender display (Brines 1994; Bittman et al. 2003; Gupta 1999; South and Spitze 1994).

Studies of the domestic division of labour have shown varying support for the economic and gender display models (see Coltrane 2000 for a review). Brines (1994) raised the possibility that both economic dependence and gender display operate within a single household with women's housework time better explained by an economic dependence model and men's better explained by gender display. The implication is that the forces governing women's investment in housework are different to those governing men's level of involvement in housework. In other words, not only is housework gendered, but the processes leading to variations in time spent on housework may also be gendered. Using data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics in the US, Brines showed that as women's relative share of income increased, men increased their share of housework, but only up to a certain point. Once women's earnings reached parity or increased beyond the point of equality, men's housework hours began to decline. Brines argued that in these households, men adopt more traditional behaviour in order to negate the gender abnormal behaviour of not being the main breadwinner.

More recent studies have extended and refined her work. Greenstein (2000) finds similar results to Brines with an absolute measure of housework hours, but not with a proportional measure of who does what percent of housework. His analyses of the US National Survey of Families and Households finds that breadwinner wives do more housework than would be predicted using a model of economic dependence while dependent husbands did less. His results are consistent with a gender display, or what Greenstein calls a “deviance neutralization” model. Bittman et al. (2003) examine time use data from Australia and find that economic exchange explains women's housework time up to the point where men's and women's earnings are the same. Once women's earnings exceed men's, “gender trumps money” and women increase their housework time consistent with a model of gender display. This is similar to the findings of Brines and Greenstein. But for men the results differ. Bittman et al. find no relationship between relative earnings and men's housework hours. They suggest that there are real national differences between the US and Australia. In particular, they argue that the male breadwinner role is more entrenched in Australia making it even more deviant for a woman to be the main source of household income in Australia, compared to the United States. More recent research focusing on Australia supports Bittman et al.'s findings (Baxter and Hewitt, 2009).

The most recent development in this field is the work of Gupta (2005, 2007) who challenges the view that husbands and wives divide housework on the basis of relative earnings. Rather, he argues that women's housework time is dependent on their absolute earnings not their earnings relative to their husband. Using data from the US National Survey of Families and Households he shows that women's housework time is related to their own earnings with higher earning women spending less time on housework than lower earning women (2006, 2007). He also finds the same relationship amongst single women indicating that the mechanism underlying the relationship between earnings and women's housework time is not linked to economic bargaining or gender display. Gupta's work challenges both economic dependence and gender display theories and suggests that differences among women in levels of earnings explains variations in women's housework time, rather than differences in earnings between women and their partners.

He argues that part of the reason for previous findings of an association between economic dependence and time spent on housework is that women who earn a large share of household earnings are more likely to be in low income households and thus more likely to be in non-traditional couples where the husband is not employed or employed part time. This suggests that the reason why women are doing less housework relates to the circumstances of the household rather than women's economic power (Gupta 2007: 403).

Further, he finds no association between men's earnings and women's housework time, or men's housework time, suggesting that the relationship between men's earnings and housework is not the same as the relationship between women's earnings and housework. One of the possible implications of Gupta's work is that women act as autonomous economic agents in their households and may use their own earnings in different ways to men. Research on the organisation of family finances has shown evidence of a division of financial labour within households, in addition to evidence that women prioritise different spending areas to men (Brandon 1999; Treas 1993). It may be that women's sense of responsibility for housework and other family-related matters, such as childcare, is so great that they feel a sense of obligation to use their earnings, rather than their partner's, to pay for this work to be done if they are unable or unwilling to do it themselves. Gupta notes a number of studies that support the claim that women are more likely to spend their earnings on family-related expenses than men (see for example Brandon 1999; Lundberg et al. 1997).

3.4 Factors influencing father's time in childcare

Over the last two decades, research into fathering and father's participation in childcare has burgeoned in comparison to research into men's participation in housework (Marsiglio et al. 2000). Therefore, while most of the theories discussed above have been developed to explain men's and women's involvement in routine domestic labour, such as housework activities. It is important to distinguish housework from childcare as the latter is a qualitatively different kind of work. While men's participation in housework and childcare are interrelated activities, they are also conceptually distinct (for reviews see Aldous et al. 1999; Ishii-Kuntz and Coltrane 1992). Moreover, the rewards and implications of participation differ between childcare and housework tasks. Most would agree that caring for one's children is an intrinsically more rewarding activity than cleaning the house or shopping for groceries (Aldous et al. 1998). Further, the implications of living in a dirty house are less dire than neglecting to care for children. Therefore, it is possible to argue that caring for children is preferable to routine housework, and this is reflected in studies that show fathers, on average, contribute proportionally more time each week to childcare than to housework (Craig 2006a; Ishii-Kuntz and Coltrane 1992).

The arrival of a child, particularly the first child, is an important life course stage in all households and often leads to changing dynamics in domestic labour responsibilities more broadly. For instance, when a child is born and comes into the household, this increases the demand for overall household labour in relation to childcare, but also routine housework such as laundry, meal preparation, and cleaning. Baxter, Hewitt and Haynes (2008), using longitudinal data from the Negotiating the Life Course survey, a national panel study of approximately 2,300 men and women in Australia, show that entry to parenthood is a key stage in the life course when women's time on housework increases sharply. In fact, the arrival of the first child, according to this study, increased women's time on housework by six hours per week. Men's time on housework however, did not change with the arrival of the first child. Longitudinal research shows that women's housework time varies considerably over the life course, increasing particularly as women move into relationships and parenthood. However, men's housework remains relatively stable, increasing only when they move out of relationships (Baxter, Haynes and Hewitt 2010). Conversely, parenthood increases men's time in paid work with new fathers increasing their employment hours by about three hours per week according to analyses of data from the Negotiating the Life Course survey (Gray forthcoming).

Studies consistently show that men who do more housework also tend to participate more in routine childcare (Aldous et al. 1998; Ishii-Kuntz and Coltrane 1992; Mannino and Deutsch 2007). Research has found that similar, but also distinct, factors predict men's time on housework relative to time in childcare. In comparison to housework, employment status and time spent in paid employment are important for the amount of time fathers spend in childcare. Research consistently shows that fathers who are unemployed perform more routine childcare tasks than employed men (Baxter 2009; Flouri and Buchanan 2003). Similarly, the more hours fathers work in paid employment the less total time they spend with their children (Aldous et al. 1998; Baxter 2009). So overall, the less time fathers spend in paid employment the more time they spend in childcare.

The relationship between a father's level of education and time in childcare is more mixed. Using US data Aldous et al. (1998) find that more educated father's spend less time in childcare than lower educated fathers. More recent studies of the US (Wang and Bianchi 2009), the UK (Flouri and Buchanan 2003) and

Australia (Craig 2006b) find the opposite; that more educated fathers spend more time with their children, especially developmental care, such as reading. The mixed findings of studies may, however, have something to do with how childcare is defined and what activities are included in the definition. For example, some studies define childcare in relation to tasks for young children only, such as bathing and dressing, feeding or changing nappies, while other studies take a broader definition including activities for older children such as helping with homework, taking children to activities or appointments, or playing with them. Additionally variation in findings may be due to the different methods used to examine time on childcare. Time use studies using time diary techniques have been found to produce different estimates to retrospective summary questions asking respondents to estimate the amount of time spent on childcare in a typical week (Lee and Waite 2005).

Other, non-economic social characteristics have also been found to be important. Men's gender role attitudes are important for their share of childcare, where men who have more favourable attitudes in relation to women working are more likely to be involved in childcare (Ishii-Kuntz and Coltrane 1992). Also, father's age at birth of their child has also been found to be important, with older fathers tending to share more care (Coltrane & Ishii-Kuntz 1992).

Similar to housework time, mother's characteristics are important for father's time in childcare. The more hours that mother's work in paid employment the more engaged father's are with childcare (Aldous et al. 1998; Baxter 2009). However, one counterintuitive finding in the literature is that often mother's employment is not associated with father's overall time with children (Coltrane and Ishii-Kuntz 1992; Wang and Bianchi 2009). For example, Wang and Bianchi (2009), using US data, found there was no difference in overall time with children between fathers in single earner households compared to fathers in dual earner households. In further analysis however, they found that fathers whose wives are employed spend more time in taking care of children alone and spend more time minding and being responsible for their children than fathers whose partner was not in paid employment (Wang and Bianchi 2009). This suggests that while the overall amount of time is similar, the types of childcare and level of responsibility may differ. In addition to this, there is some evidence that fathers do contribute more to childcare when mothers have higher levels of education (Flouri and Buchanan 2003), although some studies find little or no association between mothers education and fathers childcare time (Baxter 2009). Findings are also inconsistent for an association between mother's gender role ideology and father's involvement in childcare, but when an association is found in households where wives are less traditional in their gender ideology, fathers perform a larger share of childcare (Ishii-Kuntz and Coltrane 1992; Mannino and Deutsch 2007). Finally, mother's behaviour in relation to childcare is also important. Studies show that the more time mothers spend in childcare, the more time fathers spend in childcare (Aldous et al. 1998; Flouri and Buchanan 2003).

Characteristics of children are also important. Father's spend more time with male children than female children (Aldous et al. 1998; Flouri and Buchanan 2003; Ishii-Kuntz and Coltrane 1992). Research also suggests that fathers spend more time with older children. In the US, Aldous et al (1998) found that the gender gap in time with children diminished when children were aged 5 to 9, compared to younger children aged under 5. Other US research indicates that fathers spend more time in passive care as children reach school age and older (Wong and Bianchi 2009). Furthermore, family size is important in that, as the number of children in the household increases, father's time with children decreases (Flouri and Buchanan 2003). This may be due to more traditional gender roles in larger families, or that older children take some of the

burden of childcare for younger siblings. Interestingly, Flouri and Buchanan (2003) also find that if children have emotional and behavioural problems that fathers spend less time in childcare. This underscores the conditional nature of some father's involvement, that they are likely to spend more time caring for children if it is enjoyable.

Australian research suggests that the type of childcare being performed is also important for father's participation. Fathers tend to involve themselves more in the fun and rewarding forms of care rather than the routine physical care of children (Craig 2006a). Craig also finds that women are much more likely than men to do childcare on their own suggesting that when women do childcare, they take full responsibility for the child, often performing several activities at once. Men, on the other hand, are much less likely to be alone with children and less likely to be performing secondary activities, such as housework tasks, at the same time as childcare. Craig concludes that men and women not only do childcare differently, they do different kinds of childcare and have different levels of responsibility. Men can have more discretion to come and go, can do more of the fun tasks and refrain from doing housework at the same time as looking after children precisely because the women are present, do the more arduous childcare, and perform the more routine mundane activities.

3.5 The importance of agency

Our review has identified that very few studies specifically examine couples who share equally in domestic labour. Most of the literature focuses on explaining gender inequality in the home using large scale surveys, or understanding the causes and consequences of women's "double shift" using small scale qualitative studies, as in Arlie Hochschild's (1989) classic, although now somewhat outdated, study of the domestic labour arrangements of 50 US couples. One scholar who has attempted to identify and interview couples who share domestic labour equally is an American social psychologist, Francine Deutsch. In *Halving it All* (1999) Deutsch interviewed approximately 30 equal sharing couples in the US in the late 1990s, defining equal as couples who shared childcare on a 50-50 basis. Interestingly, Deutsch did not include housework tasks in her definition of equal sharers. She found that about three quarters of her equally sharing childcare couples also equally shared housework tasks, while the other quarter paid for domestic help with housework.

In explaining how couples become equal sharers, Deutsch argues that there is no magic bullet, or single causal factor. Rather she argues that couples "create equality by the accumulation of large and small decisions and acts that make up their everyday lives as parents" (1999: 230). Equal sharers are not an elite group in terms of education, income or resources, nor are they particularly radical or self-consciously feminist. Couples come to equality along different pathways and many do not consciously set out to achieve equality. Some factors facilitate equal sharing, such as comparable careers or jobs, and like-minded "liberal" friends. But in the end one of the key factors, according to Deutsch, is the individual choices that men and women make as parents. These include resisting gendered decisions about careers, rejecting beliefs about maternal instincts, and resisting conventional definitions of motherhood and fatherhood. This requires both partners to make "symmetrical adjustments" in order to avoid the "spiral" toward gender inequality that engulfs many couples after parenthood (1999: 233). This means de-gendering parenthood as well as careers. Therefore, while not discounting the importance of broader social conditions, such as family-friendly workplaces and government policies that encourage and support equality, Deutsch emphasises individual agency and small decisions about everyday actions and arrangements that enables some couples to

achieve equality. Overall her analyses suggest that couples will shift toward equality if broader structural constraints enable these shifts. The implication for policy is to ensure that these constraints, such as those imposed by inflexible paid work hours, or lack of gender equality in earnings, are removed.

3.6 Summary

Our review of the relevant literature on men's involvement in domestic work has highlighted several limitations of existing knowledge in the area. First, there is very little research that concentrates on men's involvement in domestic work. The majority of research focusing on the role of men within domestic labour operates from a deficit model of what men are not doing in relation to women, with many studies relying on women's reports of men's contributions to domestic work.

Second, the literature is limited to studies that predominantly examine general populations, so only a relatively small proportion of men who share domestic work equally with their partners are captured. What is absent from the literature to date is an understanding of the processes and motivations for higher levels of shared housework and shared care in households, particularly from men's perspectives. Therefore, we know what men do, or do not do, but not why they do it.

Finally, the literature review underscores the importance of differentiating between housework and childcare, and further, the need to differentiate tasks within the broader definitions of "housework" and "childcare." It is obvious that men's involvement in domestic work varies depending on the type of domestic work and the specific task that is being performed. Research has found that men are more likely to participate in certain types of housework activities than others. For example, using Australian data, Baxter (2002) found that the main contribution of men to housework was in preparing meals and cleaning up after meals, while other forms of housework, such as cleaning and vacuuming, were less likely to be undertaken by men.

In this study we investigate the experiences of fathers who share equally in domestic tasks with their partners. The study has both quantitative and qualitative components. Using mixed methods provides a more comprehensive examination of the issues than using one method alone (Bryman 1992). The quantitative component of the project will allow us to establish what social and demographic characteristics define men who share domestic work. However, these analyses may not provide sufficient information about the 'how' and 'why' they share, or the everyday negotiations and processes that lead to equal sharing. Qualitative interviews can be used to help us better explain the associations observed in the quantitative analyses and explain the motivations and pathways that facilitate men's participation in domestic work.

4 Survey Results

4.1 Methodology

4.1.1 Data and analytic sample

The data for this research comes from a national telephone survey with a random sample of 300 men who share parenting and unpaid domestic tasks with their partner or wife. The survey was conducted between 15 October and 7 November 2010. Criteria for inclusion in the survey were:

- Men who were part of an intact heterosexual couple.
- Men who report doing at least 30% of parenting and unpaid domestic work.
- Men whose partners are engaged in the paid workforce in some capacity.
- Men with a child aged 0 to 12 living in the household at least 50% of the time.

The questionnaire was designed in close consultation with the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. The questionnaire covered the following areas:

- Labour force participation now and before the birth of the youngest child.
- Feelings about current/ideal arrangements for housework.
- Division of labour and time spent on housework.
- Feelings about current/ideal arrangements for parenting.
- Division of labour and time spent on parenting.
- Demographics.

Three stages of questionnaire pre-testing were undertaken including 10 face-to-face cognitive interviews, followed by 19 telephone cognitive interviews and 30 computer-assisted telephone pilot interviews.

The final questionnaire was 23.8 minutes in length and is included in Appendix 1.

4.1.2 Measures

The dependent variables measure the hours spent by men, in a typical week, in housework and childcare respectively. A range of measures, including income, employment conditions and gender role attitudes are utilised to investigate theories that explain the participation levels of fathers in unpaid domestic labour.

4.1.2.1 Dependent Variables

For the purpose of this report, four dependent variables were constructed. The first dependent variable is a measure of the total number of housework hours undertaken by respondents in a typical week, while the other is a measure of the total number of childcare hours. In addition to this, a measure of overall satisfaction with divisions of labour and preferences for divisions of labour were also generated. These variables were constructed as follows:

4.1.2.1.1 *Time spent in housework*

The measure for time spent in housework in a typical week was derived from a series of questions about how much time per week is spent on a range of household tasks (i.e. doing the dishes, preparing the evening meal, cleaning the bathroom and toilet). To create an overall measure for housework, the values of each task were summed and, as they were recorded in minute increments, divided by sixty (60) to provide a final figure in hours per week. The mean score of the relevant task was substituted for observations where the respondent was unable to provide a time value because they did not know or refused to answer. This ensured that the final analytic sample comprised the maximum number of 300 observations.

4.1.2.1.2 *Time spent in childcare*

Similar to time spent in housework, the measure of time spent in childcare in a typical week was derived from a series of questions about time spent on childcare tasks (i.e. helping with homework, listening to problems, reading or playing). The overall measure for childcare was created by summing the values for each childcare task and dividing by sixty to provide an hourly figure. However, it is important to note that some childcare tasks were not applicable to all respondents. For example, respondents with children under school age were not asked about time spent helping children with homework. To avoid dropping these cases from the analyses, respondents were allocated a score of 0 on inapplicable items indicating zero hours on this task. This enables the case to be included in the analyses but does not bias the results. Additionally, fathers in the top 99th percentile for time spent in childcare were excluded. These extreme responses had a large influence on the final analysis, but were not statistically significant. Finally, as for the housework measure, observations where the respondent did not know, or refused to provide a time value, were replaced with the mean score of the relevant task.

4.1.2.1.3 *Satisfaction with divisions of labour*

Our measure for men's levels of satisfaction with their current division of domestic work was derived from the questions: "Overall, how satisfied would you say you are with your current arrangements regarding the sharing of housework?" (G1); and "Overall, how satisfied would you say you are with your current arrangements regarding the sharing of childcare?" (J1). Response options ranged from 1 = "very satisfied" to 5 = "very dissatisfied". The majority of men (93% for both housework and parenting tasks) were either "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with their current arrangements. There were not enough cases where men were dissatisfied to undertake statistical analysis with that group. We therefore created two dichotomous measures, one for housework and one for childcare, indicating whether men's level of satisfaction was 1 = "satisfied", with a referent of 0 = "very satisfied". This measure indicates men who have slightly lower levels of satisfaction with their arrangements compared to those who are very satisfied.

4.1.2.1.4 *Preferences for divisions of labour*

Our measure for men's preferences for changes to their division of labour was derived from the questions: "If you could change your current arrangements regarding the sharing of housework, how would you change them?" (G2); and "If you could change your current arrangements regarding the sharing of childcare how would you change them?" (J2). The responses to these questions were open coded, with an additional option of "No change". The final variable was coded 1 = "Keep things the same" 2 = "Do more/ask partner to

do less” 3 = “Do less/ask partner to do more” and 4 = “Find ways to reduce total housework/childcare”. Only 15% of men's responses were coded 3 or 4 and there were not enough cases to do statistical analyses on these cases. Therefore, we create two dichotomous measures, one for housework and one for childcare, indicating whether men's preferences were 1 = “do more/ask partner to do less”, with a referent of 0 = “keep the same”. This measure indicates men who want to do more, compared to men who want to keep things the same.

4.1.2.2 Independent variables

In the review of the literature we identified three key theories that offer explanations for the division of unpaid domestic labour. They are negotiating and bargaining; time availability; and gender display. These theories are examined by operationalising a range of relevant measures to test which approach most accurately explains the division of labour in the home and the time spent by men in housework and childcare. The operationalisation of these measures was as follows:

4.1.2.2.1 Measures of Negotiation and bargaining

To investigate the negotiating and bargaining theory three measures are used to test the influence of income on time spent by fathers in housework and childcare: Respondent's income; partner's income; and relative contribution to total household income. For this report, income is an approximate measure of annual personal income before tax, which is represented by seven, non-discrete groups, as follows: <\$20,000; \$20,000 - \$40,000; \$40,000 - \$60,000; \$60,000 - \$80,000; \$80,000 - \$100,000; \$100,000 - \$150,000; and >\$150,000. Two personal income measures were created, one for respondents and another for their partners. In addition to this, a third measure, relative contribution to total household income, was generated by measuring the approximate personal income of men compared to their partners. This measure represents the proportion of men that contribute more, the same, or less than their partner to the total annual household income.

4.1.2.2.2 Measures of Time availability

To examine the theory of time availability and its influence on the time spent by men in housework and childcare, four measures relating to paid labour were developed as follows: Men's paid work hours; partner's paid work hours; men's employment conditions; and partner's employment conditions. The variables for paid work hours were derived from a continuous scale measuring total hours in paid employment each week. Two measures for paid work hours were generated for men and their partners respectively. Also, to examine if non-standard employment conditions, such as working night shifts, influenced the time spent by men in housework and childcare, a range of additional measures were constructed. The measures for non-standard employment conditions were derived from a series of questions that ask how often a respondent's job requires them to work under certain employment conditions (i.e. irregular shifts, weekends, night shifts). For the purpose of analysis, the exposure of respondents to these conditions is coded as follows: Always or often = 1; sometimes, rarely or never = 2. Measures for the non-standard employment conditions of partners use the same coding scheme.

4.1.2.2.3 Measures of Gender display

The final theory examined as part of this report considers the influence of gender role attitudes on the time spent by men in housework and childcare. The measure for gender role attitudes is derived from two questions that consider the role of fathers and mothers within families. The first question asks for a response to the statement: "It is much better for everyone involved if the man earns the money and the woman takes care of the home and children." The second question, asks for a response to: "A working mother can establish just as good a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work for pay." Responses ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). For the current analyses, the response codes for were reversed so that a high score (i.e. 7) reflected a more positive attitude towards shared responsibility of housework and childcare. The responses for these questions were combined to create a single variable measuring the gender role attitudes of respondents. The variable ranged from 1 to 14.

4.1.2.2.4 Control variables

Based on the theory and literature review a number of social and demographic control variables were identified as significant in understanding the time spent by men in housework and childcare. The first control variable is a continuous measure for men's age. Men's occupation is measured by four categories: Management administration = 1; Professional = 2; Trades & Labour = 3; and Service & Sales = 4. Highest level of education is similarly measured by four categories: Some High School = 1; Completed High School = 2; Trade/Diploma = 3; and Bachelor Degree or Higher = 4. Finally, measures relating to the number of children aged under twelve (12), the age of the youngest child, sex of youngest child, and whether a child aged under five (5) resides in the household, were also included as control variables.

The descriptive statistics for all model covariates are presented in Table 1.

4.1.3 Analytic approach

The purpose of this analysis was to identify factors that impact on men's time in domestic work (including housework and parenting tasks), and men's attitudes and aspirations regarding their sharing arrangements for domestic work. To address these questions, the analysis of the quantitative survey data was organised as follows:

- 1) Examination of the amount of time men spend in housework and parenting tasks.
- 2) Examination of men's level of satisfaction with their current household divisions of labour for housework and parenting tasks.
- 3) Men's preferences for change to current divisions of labour for housework and parenting tasks.

For each of these issues we examined overall summary statistics and then estimated a series of models investigating each of the main theoretical approaches for explaining men's levels of involvements in domestic labour and parenting tasks. In the first model (Model 1) we examined the bargaining explanations identified in the literature review. We included the measures for income, partner's income and income relative to partner. In the second model (Model 2) we examined time availability explanations. In this model we included the measures for men's and partner's hours of paid employment, non-standard work conditions, and partner's hours of domestic work. In the final model (Model 3) we included all measures from Model 1

and Model 2, as well as gender role attitudes. The control variables for age, occupation, education, number of children, age and sex of youngest child were included in all models.

The models addressing the first question were estimated using ordinary least squares regressions, because the dependent variables for that analysis, hours per week in housework and parenting tasks, are continuous. We estimated two sets of models, one for time spent in housework and the other for time spent in parenting tasks. The dependent variables measuring men's satisfaction and preferences for domestic and parenting divisions were dichotomous measures indicating 1 = satisfied (with a referent of 0 = very satisfied) and 1 = do more, and ask partner to do less (with a referent of 0 = keep things the same). Therefore, these models were estimated with a logistic regression. For each of these outcomes we also estimated two sets of models, one for satisfaction with housework and parenting tasks and another for preferences for housework and parenting tasks.

These models are presented in Tables 2 to 6 of this report.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics of model covariates

Variable	Mean %	SD
Income:		
<\$20,000	3.0	
\$20,000 - \$40,000	9.7	
\$40,000 - \$60,000	20.7	
\$60,000 - \$80,000 (ref)	23.0	
\$80,000 - \$100,000	12.0	
\$100,000 - \$150,000	17.0	
>\$150,000	6.3	
Missing	8.3	
Partner's income:		
<\$20,000	17.0	
\$20,000 - \$40,000	31.3	
\$40,000 - \$60,000	19.0	
\$60,000 - \$80,000 (ref)	10.7	
\$80,000 - \$100,000	6.0	
\$100,000 - \$150,000	3.3	
>\$150,000	1.7	
Missing	11.0	
Relative contribution to household income:		
Man earns more	60.0	
Same income bracket as partner	27.3	
Partner earns more	9.3	
Missing	3.3	
Paid work hours (week)	44.2	13.0
Partner's paid work hours (week)	28.9	12.4
Non-standard employment:		
Irregular hours		
Always/often	36.0	
Missing	2.0	
Long hours		
Always/often	36.7	
Sometimes/ Rarely/never	62.7	
Missing	0.6	
Work Weekends		
Always/often	33.0	
Sometimes/ Rarely/never	67.0	
Night shifts		
Always/often	15.0	
Sometimes/ Rarely/never	84.3	
Missing	0.7	
Take work home		
Always/often	30.0	
Sometimes/ Rarely/never	68.0	
Missing	2.0	
Overnight travel		
Always/often	12.7	
Sometimes/ Rarely/never	87.3	
On call		
Always/often	33.3	
Sometimes/ Rarely/never	66.3	
Missing	0.4	
Partner non-standard employment		
Irregular hours		
Always/often	22.7	
Sometimes/ Rarely/never	77.3	
Long hours		
Always/often	12.0	
Sometimes/ Rarely/never	87.3	
Missing	0.7	
Work Weekends		
Always/often	22.0	
Sometimes/ Rarely/never	78.0	
Night shifts		
Always/often	8.3	

Sometimes/ Rarely/never	91.0	
Missing	0.7	
Take work home		
Always/often	25.0	
Sometimes/ Rarely/never	74.3	
Missing	0.7	
Overnight travel		
Always/often	3.7	
Sometimes/ Rarely/never	96.3	
On call		
Always/often	12.3	
Sometimes/ Rarely/never	87.3	
Missing	0.3	
Partner's hours of housework	16.9	8.1
Gender attitudes	10.2	3.0
Controls (all models):		
Age	41.6	8.5
Occupation:		
Management administration (ref)		17.7
Professionals	31.0	
Trades and Labour	34.0	
Service and sales	11.0	
Missing	6.3	
Education:		
Bachelor degree or higher (ref)	41.0	
Trade/Diploma	26.7	
Completed high school	17.3	
Some high school	14.7	
Missing	0.3	
Number of children <12		
One (ref)	33.0	
Two	50.3	
Three or more	16.7	
Missing	-	
Age of youngest child	5.5	3.5
Youngest child female (1 = yes)	52.7	
Youngest child <5 (1 = yes)	48.0	
Number of observations	300	

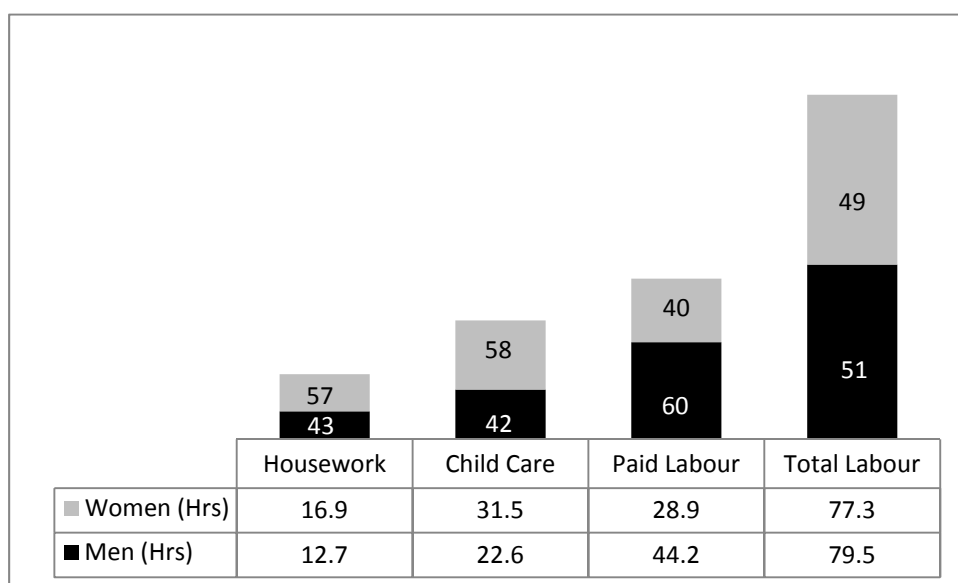
4.2 Results

4.2.1 The division of labour in households where men share domestic work

4.2.1.1 Total time spent in domestic and paid work

In Figure 1 we present the average total time (in hours per week) that men spend on housework, caring for children, and in paid employment. We also provide their reports of the time spent by their partner in each of those domains. Even in these households, with less traditional divisions of labour, women undertake the bulk of housework and childcare tasks (57% and 58% respectively) and spend more time on these activities than men, while men spend more time in paid employment (44 hours compared to 29 hours for women). Consistent with recent research (Sayer, England, Bittman and Bianchi 2009) the overall time that men and their partners spend each week in paid and unpaid labour combined is relatively equal at approximately 79.5 hours for men and 77.3 hours for women.

Figure 1 Mean hours per week and percentage distribution of labour by gender

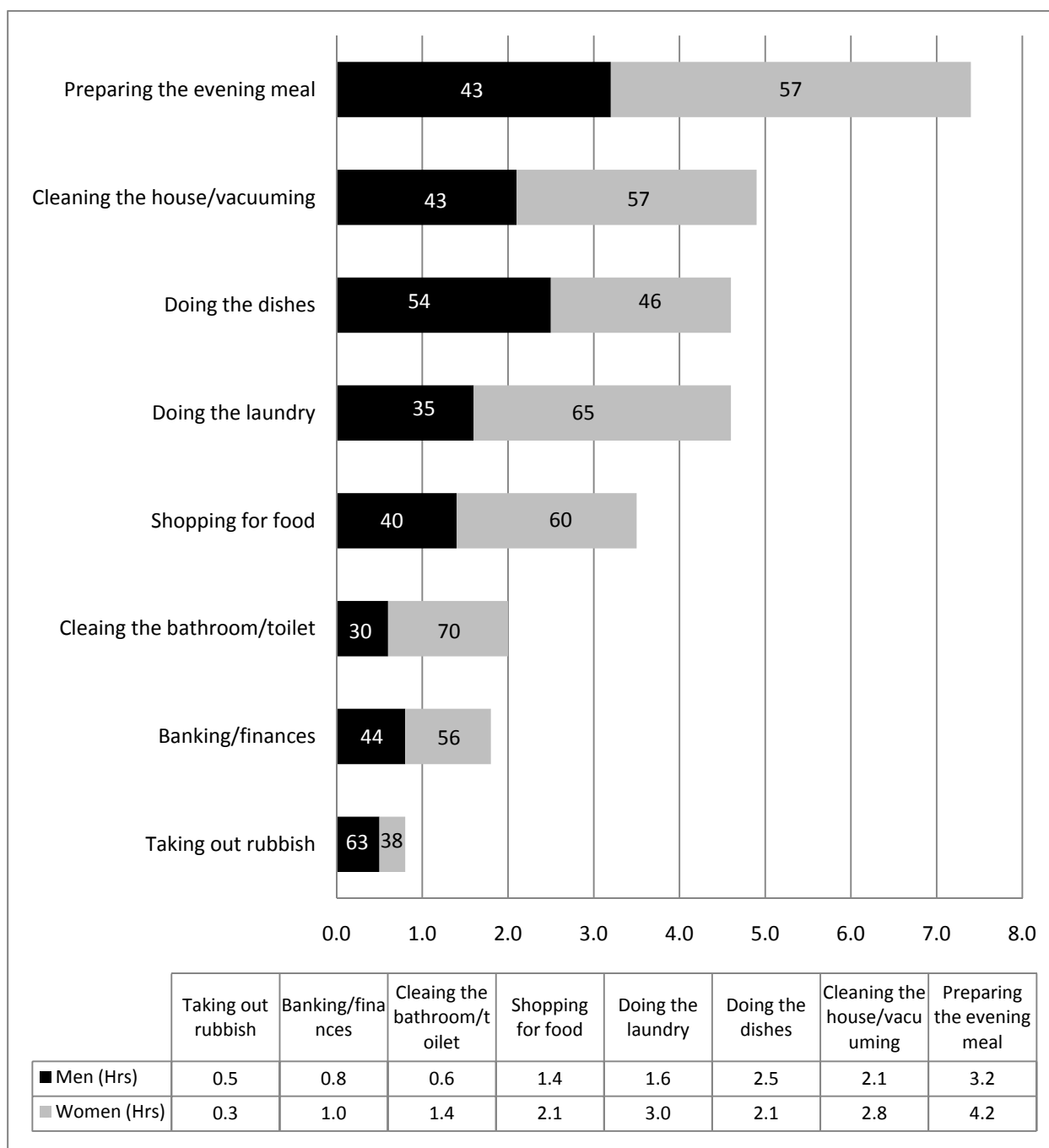


Source: Men Engaged in Shared Care Survey 2010; derived from questions B4, C4, E1, E2, H1, H2.

4.2.1.2 Time spent in housework and housework tasks

In the next section we examine time spent on specific housework tasks. Although women tend to do the bulk of housework, previous research indicates that the extent of men's participation varies according to task. In Figure 2 we show the average time spent by men and their partners in a range of routine household tasks. The only tasks where men report that they do more than their partners is doing the dishes and taking out the rubbish. For all other tasks, men's partners spend more time each week, with women spending much more time than men doing the laundry, cleaning the house, cleaning the bathroom and toilet, and food shopping.

Figure 2 Mean hours and percentage distribution of housework tasks per week by gender

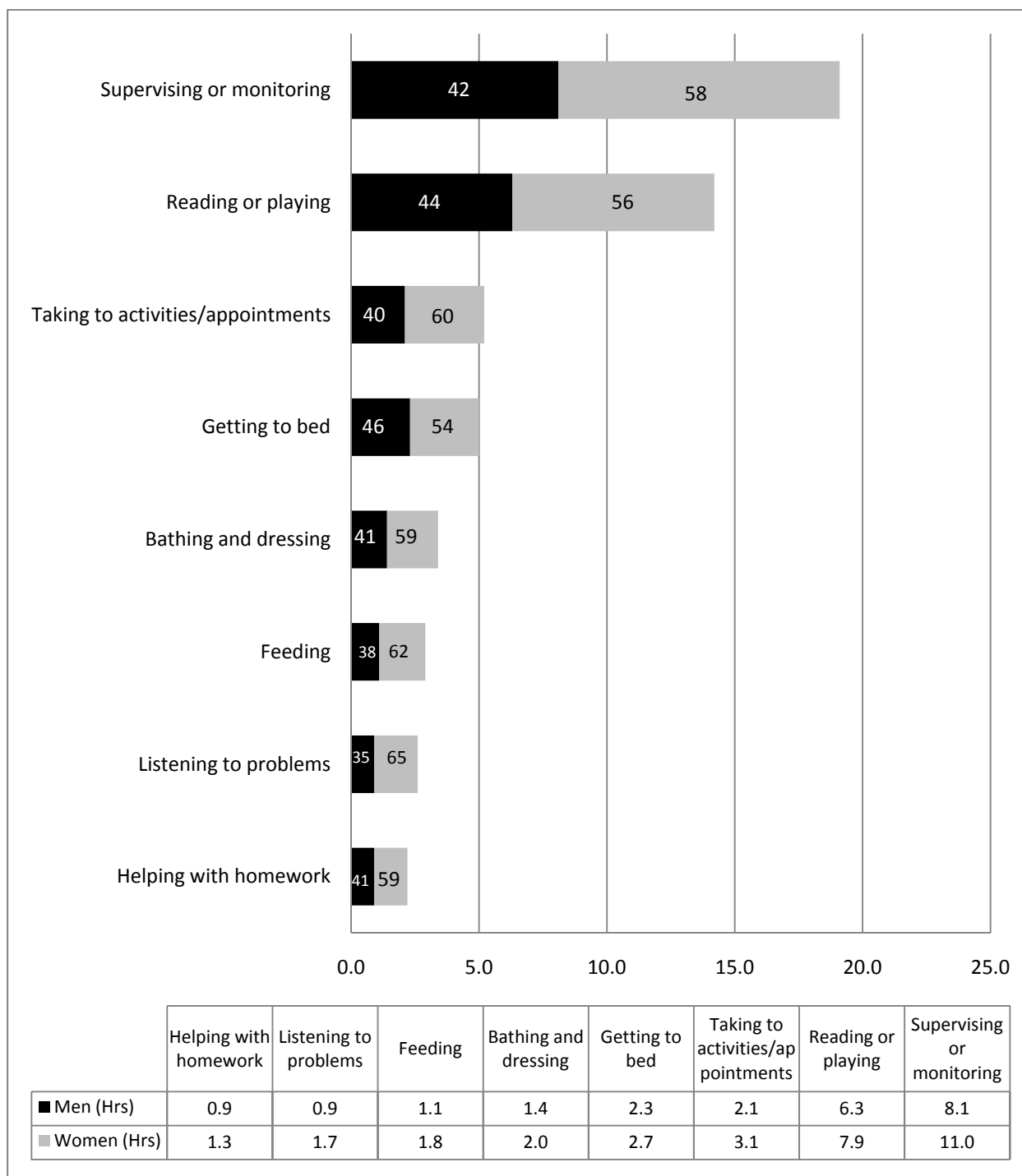


Source: Men Engaged in Shared Care Survey 2010; derived from questions E1 and E2.

4.2.1.3 Time spent caring for children

In Figure 3, we show the hours men and their partners spend in a range of childcare tasks each week. The results show that men spend less time than their partners on each childcare task. The division of parenting labour is, however, much more evenly distributed than is the case for domestic tasks with men contributing around 35% to 40% of most parenting tasks. The men in this study spend most time each week supervising or monitoring children, but in relation to their partner they contribute the greatest proportion of time to bathing and dressing, and reading or playing with children.

Figure 3 Mean hours and percentage distribution of parenting tasks per week by gender



Source: Men Engaged in Shared Care Survey 2010; derived from questions H1 and H2.

4.2.2 Factors associated with the amount of time men spend in domestic work

Next we investigate the factors associated with men's time on housework and parenting tasks. In Table 2 we present the results of an ordinary least squares regression of time spent each week in housework tasks by selected social and demographic characteristics. As discussed above, the dependent variable here is the average of all housework tasks. Childcare is considered separately below. The first point to note in Table 2 is that all of the models explain a large amount of the variance in men's time on housework, as indicated by the R² figure. As expected, the amount of variance explained increases as additional variables are added to the model, with the final model accounting for almost 35% of the variance in men's time on housework. This is an excellent result and indicates that we have identified many of the key factors explaining men's housework time.

In the first model we test a bargaining explanation for men's time in housework by investigating the association between earnings, partner's earnings and relative earnings on men's time in housework. We find mixed support for the argument that the partner who earns most has greater bargaining power and therefore spends less time in unpaid domestic labour. In relation to men's earnings the results are somewhat inconsistent, but generally men who earn more do less housework than men with lower earnings. We find that men who have very low incomes, less than \$20,000 per year, spend significantly more time (an average of over 5 hours per week) on housework tasks than men who earn \$60,000 - \$80,000 a year. In contrast, the more partners earn the more time men spend doing housework.

On the other hand, the results also show that contrary to bargaining theory, men whose partners are on low incomes (below \$60,000 per year) spend significantly less time on housework than men with partners who earn \$60,000 - \$80,000 a year, although once their partners start earning over \$80,000 a year, men's time in housework begins to increase. Interestingly, the results for relative income show that in households where men and women earn about the same income, men do less housework than in households where men earn more. This is a finding that is consistent with previous Australian research. Bittman et al (2003) find that once a couple's earnings reach parity, or if the female partner earns more, men reduce their time in housework and women increase theirs. Their explanation for this finding was that men compensate for their gender deviant behaviour in terms of earnings by doing less housework. These households are, relatively uncommon in the current sample with women in a higher income bracket in 9% of the households. In about 27% of the sample both partners are in the same income bracket, but the income brackets are quite broad and within those households men could still be earning more.

Table 2 OLS regression of men's housework hours per week, by social and demographic characteristics

Variable	Model 1: Bargaining		Model 2: Time Availability		Model 3: Full Model	
	Coeff β	se	Coeff β	se	Coeff β	se
Income:						
<\$20,000	5.57*	2.7			2.99	2.7
\$20,000 - \$40,000	2.84	1.8			0.85	1.8
\$40,000 - \$60,000	3.08*	1.2			1.70	1.2
\$60,000 - \$80,000 (ref)	-				-	
\$80,000 - \$100,000	-1.25	1.4			-2.54	1.4
\$100,000 - \$150,000	-1.56	1.3			-2.32†	1.3
>\$150,000	-3.10	2.0			-4.23*	2.0
Partner's income:						
<\$20,000	-6.47**	1.9			-5.20*	2.1
\$20,000 - \$40,000	-5.22**	1.7			-3.75*	1.8
\$40,000 - \$60,000	-3.84*	1.6			-3.17*	1.5
\$60,000 - \$80,000 (ref)	-				-	
\$80,000 - \$100,000	1.78	2.0			1.98	1.9
\$100,000 - \$150,000	1.00	2.5			0.30	2.5
>\$150,000	4.37	3.5			-0.03	3.5
Relative contribution to household income:						
Man earns more	-				-	
Same income bracket as partner	-2.56†	1.4			-2.63†	1.4
Partner earns more	-3.28	2.3			-4.07†	2.2
Paid work hours (week)						
			-0.11**	0.0	-0.09*	0.0
Partner's paid work hours (week)						
			0.08*	0.0	0.02	0.0
Non-standard employment:						
Irregular hours (1 = always/often)			2.05*	1.0	2.08*	1.0
long hours (1 = always/often)			-1.68†	0.9	-1.55	1.0
Work Weekends (1 = always/often)			0.36	1.0	-0.11	1.0
Night shifts (1 = always/often)			3.73**	1.2	3.78**	1.3
take work home (1 = always/often)			1.47	1.0	1.67†	1.0
overnight travel (1 = always/often)			0.91	1.1	1.44	1.2
On call (1 = always/often)			-0.46	0.9	0.02	0.9
Partner non-standard employment						
Irregular hours (1 = always/often)			-1.37	1.1	-1.29	1.1
Long hours (1 = always/often)			3.03*	1.4	3.27*	1.5
Work Weekends (1 = always/often)			1.73	1.1	1.82†	1.1
Night shifts (1 = always/often)			-0.19	1.5	-0.82	1.5
Take work home (1 = always/often)			0.93	0.9	1.35	0.9
Overnight travel (1 = always/often)			4.78*	2.1	4.98*	2.2
On call (1 = always/often)			-0.33	1.2	0.07	1.2
Partner's Hours of housework						
			0.007***	<0.00	0.007***	<0.00
Gender attitudes						
					0.24†	0.10
Controls (all models):						
Age						
	0.08	0.1	0.15**	0.05	0.13**	0.05
Occupation:						
Management administration (ref)	-		-		-	
Professionals	1.50	1.3	0.43	1.2	0.45	1.3
Trades and Labour	0.09	1.2	-0.79	1.2	-0.24	1.2
Service and sales	1.37	1.5	-1.19	1.5	-0.76	1.5
Education:						
Bachelor degree or higher (ref)	-		-		-	
Trade/Diploma	1.98†	1.1	1.30	1.1	1.11	1.1
Completed high school	1.01	1.2	1.21	1.2	0.86	1.2
Some high school	-1.03	1.3	-0.77	1.3	-1.54	1.3
Number of children <12						
One (ref)	-		-		-	
Two	0.03	0.9	0.01	0.9	-0.10	0.9
Three or more	2.96*	1.3	1.92	1.2	2.50*	1.2
Age of youngest child						
	-0.32	0.2	-0.39†	0.2	-0.31	0.2

Youngest child female (1 = yes)	1.00	0.8	1.10	0.73	1.05	0.73
Youngest child <5 (1 = yes)	2.46	1.6	1.30	1.5	1.58	1.6
Constant	5.19		0.78		3.20	
Adjusted R2	0.24		0.34		0.35	
Number of observations	300		300		300	

Source: SRC Men Caring Data, 2010

Note: All models are adjusted for missing data on covariates and dependent variables.

†p<0.10; *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

In the second model we examine whether or not time availability and characteristic of paid work hours influence men's time spent in unpaid labour. The results indicate that the more time men spend in paid work the less housework hours they do. The association is quite strong, where men who work a 30 hour week in paid employment do over 1 hour additional housework per week than men who work a 40 hour week. Conversely, the more hours men's partners spend in the paid workforce the more hours of housework men do each week. The association is not as strong as men's paid work hours, but men whose partners work a 40 hour week in paid employment do approximately 1 hour more housework each week than men whose partner works 30 hours per week.

Characteristics of work hours are also important. The results suggest that men who work irregular hours and men who work night shifts spend significantly more time doing housework than men who do not. On the other hand, working long hours reduces the amount of time that men spend in housework. Partner's non-standard employment conditions are also important. If their partner works long hours, or regularly travels overnight for their paid job then men do more housework hours. These findings suggest that some types of non-standard employment may offer opportunities for time shifting whereby paid work is done outside of regular hours providing more time and opportunity to undertake household chores. Finally, consistent with previous literature, men whose partner spends more time in housework also tend to spend more time in housework (Aldous et al. 1998, Flouri and Buchanan 2003).

In Model 3 of Table 2 we include all variables and gender role attitudes. The results indicate that men with less traditional gender role attitudes do more hours of housework each week than men with more traditional attitudes. This is consistent with a great deal of previous literature (Ishii-Kuntz and Coltrane 1992). In this final model the previous results remain consistent, with a few changes. Once earnings are taken account of we find that men who take work home tend to do more housework, and men whose partners work weekends tend to do more housework. The controls indicate that age is an important factor, where men who are older tend to do more housework, and in households where there are 3 or more children men do more housework.

In Table 3 we present the results for the models examining men's time on parenting tasks. We run the same models as presented above for housework enabling examination of each of the main theories predicting men's time in childcare. As for Table 2, the R2 figure indicates the amount of variance in men's time on parenting tasks explained by the variables in the model. In the final model we are able to explain around 60% of the variance. This indicates that we have identified most of the key variables accounting for men's time on parenting.

In Model 1, we find that men who earn more spend less time on parenting tasks than men who earn less. Men with incomes of \$20,000 or less per year, spend an average of 9 hours more per week on parenting tasks than men who earn \$60,000 to \$80,000 per year. In contrast men who earn above \$80,000 spend significantly less time in parenting. Partner's income is not important for the time men spend in parenting, with one exception; men whose partners have very low income (below \$20,000 a year) spend significantly less time in parenting than men whose partners earn \$60,000 to \$80,000 per year. There is no evidence that relative earnings affects men's time on parenting tasks.

In Model 2 we find that the more time men spend in paid employment the less time they spend caring for children. This association is much stronger than for housework, where men who work 40 hours per week spend nearly 2 hours a week less on childcare tasks than men who work 30 hours per week. Conversely,

men whose partners spend more time in paid employment do more parenting. Some forms of non-standard employment are also important for men's time spent caring for children. Men who work irregular hours spend less time caring for children than men who work regular hours. Note that this finding is different to that reported above for housework hours where irregular work hours were associated with more time in housework for men. Men who work night shifts spend more time caring for their children than men who do not work nights. Interestingly, men whose partners work long hours spend less time in childcare than men whose partners do not. One possible explanation for this is that children are spending more time in formal childcare while both parents work. Men whose partners take work home spend less time caring for children, but if their partner's work night shifts then they spend more time on childcare tasks. The results also indicate that men whose partners spend more time in parenting, also spend more time in parenting.

In the final model (Model 3) of Table 3 we include gender attitudes and as for housework time, find that men who have less traditional gender role attitudes spend more time caring for children. The other model results remain consistent. In terms of the other control variables we find that men who have a trade qualification spend more time in parenting tasks than men with a bachelor degree or higher qualification.

Table 3 OLS regression of men's hours per week spent caring for children, by social and demographic characteristics.

Variable	Model 1: Bargaining		Model 2: Time Availability		Model 3: Full Model	
	Coeff β	Se	Coeff β	se	Coeff β	se
Income:						
<\$20,000	9.21*	4.5			5.91	4.6
\$20,000 - \$40,000	1.07	3.0			-0.21	3.0
\$40,000 - \$60,000	-0.40	2.0			-3.08	2.0
\$60,000 - \$80,000 (ref)						
\$80,000 - \$100,000	-5.47*	2.4			-3.83	2.4
\$100,000 - \$150,000	-1.79	2.2			-1.40	2.2
>\$150,000	-6.72*	3.3			-2.03	3.3
Partner's income:						
<\$20,000	-6.31*	3.2			-2.45	3.5
\$20,000 - \$40,000	-4.11	2.9			-0.55	2.9
\$40,000 - \$60,000	-3.87	2.6			-1.84	2.5
\$60,000 - \$80,000 (ref)						
\$80,000 - \$100,000	-1.13	3.4			-2.15	3.3
\$100,000 - \$150,000	0.66	4.4			-0.17	4.3
>\$150,000	-3.88	6.2			-4.48	6.3
Relative contribution to household income:						
Man earns more (ref)	-				-	
Same income bracket as partner	-0.70	2.4			0.48	2.3
Partner earns more	1.16	3.8			1.13	3.6
Paid employment (hours/week)						
Partner's paid employment (hours/week)			-0.19**	0.1	-0.16*	0.1
Non-standard employment:			0.19***	0.1	0.16*	0.1
Irregular hours (1 = always/often)			-4.42**	1.7	-4.67**	1.7
long hours (1 = always/often)			-0.28	1.6	-0.23	4.9
Works Weekends (1 = always/often)			2.52	1.7	2.02	1.7
Night shifts (1 = always/often)			6.18**	2.0	7.64***	2.1
take work home (1 = always/often)			2.41	1.6	2.69	1.7
overnight travel (1 = always/often)			1.15	1.9	1.92	1.9
On call (1 = always/often)			-0.51	1.4	-0.55	1.5
Partner non-standard employment						
Irregular hours (1 = always/often)			1.02	1.7	0.07	1.8
long hours (1 = always/often)			-4.71*	2.4	-4.23†	2.5
Works Weekends (1 = always/often)			0.36	1.7	1.22	1.8
Night shifts (1 = always/often)			4.44†	2.4	4.66†	2.5
take work home (1 = always/often)			-2.77†	1.5	-2.82†	1.5
overnight travel (1 = always/often)			4.05	3.3	3.66	3.6
On call (1 = always/often)			-2.65	2.0	-2.48	2.1
Partner's Hours of childcare						
			0.008***	<0.00	0.008***	<.001
Gender attitudes						
					0.46*	0.2
Controls (all models):						
Age	-0.02	0.1	-0.001	0.1	0.02	0.1
Occupation:						
Management administration (ref)	-		-		-	
Professionals	2.43	2.1	2.29	2.0	1.92	2.1
Trades and Labour	2.76	1.9	1.25	1.9	1.17	2.0
Service and sales	-0.19	2.5	-1.17	2.4	-1.59	2.6
Education:						
Bachelor degree or higher (ref)	-		-		-	
Trade/Diploma	3.05	1.9	3.48	1.8	3.53†	1.9
Completed high school	1.23	2.1	0.71	2.0	0.90	2.0
Some high school	-0.04	2.3	2.90	2.1	1.70	2.2
Number of children <12						
One (ref)						
Two	-0.11	1.5	0.70	1.4	0.01	1.4
Three or more	3.36	2.1	3.08	2.0	2.26	2.1
Age of youngest child						
	-0.42	0.4	-0.59	0.4	-0.54	0.4
Youngest child female (1 = yes)						
	0.44	1.3	0.56	1.2	0.64	1.2

Youngest child <5 (1 = yes)	3.60	2.7	3.36	2.5	-0.54	0.4
Constant	10.69		7.90		5.69	
Adjusted R2	0.54		0.61		0.60	
Number of observations ^a	278		278		278	

Source: SRC Men Caring Data, 2010

^a The numbers for this table do not equal 300 because we had to exclude 22 men who had extreme values for the amount of time they spent doing some parenting tasks.

Note: All models are adjusted for missing data on covariates and dependent variables.

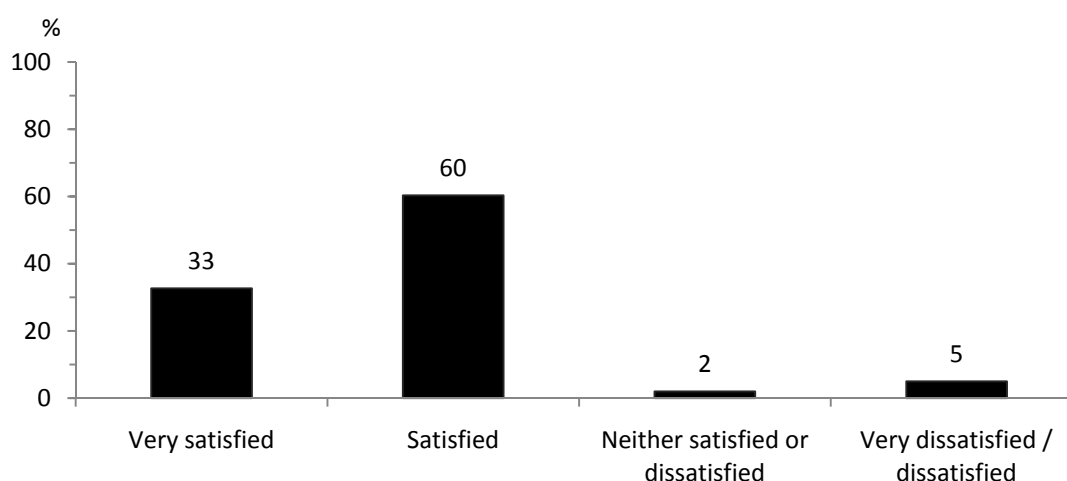
†p<0.10; *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

4.2.3 Satisfaction with current arrangements

4.2.3.1 Housework

All men were asked how satisfied they were with their current arrangements regarding the sharing of household tasks with their partner (see Figure 4). Overall, the results indicate that men experience very high levels of satisfaction with their current housework arrangements with one-third (33%) very satisfied and 60% satisfied. Only a minority (5%) felt dissatisfied with their current arrangements for sharing the housework.

Figure 4 Satisfaction with current housework arrangements



Base: Total respondents (n=300). 'Don't know' not shown due to low response (n=1).

We further investigated whether men's level of satisfaction with current housework arrangements was influenced by the various social and demographic characteristics identified in the review of the literature. Given that the majority of men were either "very satisfied" or "satisfied" we restrict our analysis to investigating if there are any differences between these two groups; the numbers of neutral or dissatisfied men were too small to perform any statistical analysis. Studies of subjective measures of satisfaction including marital satisfaction, life satisfaction and work satisfaction, routinely find that responses are clustered at one end of the distribution with the majority of people reporting high levels of satisfaction with most aspects of their lives (Diener, Helliwell and Kahneman 2010). Although it might be argued that there is no meaningful difference between being "very satisfied" versus "satisfied" researchers have argued that any deviation from the highest levels of satisfaction suggest important differences in subjective responses. In support of this view, our results below indicate important differences in the factors predicting these two responses.

In Table 4 we present the results of a logistic regression testing if any of the characteristics predict the likelihood of being "satisfied" relative to "very satisfied" with current housework arrangements. The tables report odds ratios, which show the multiplicative effects on the probability of a one-unit change in the independent variable. Therefore, an odds ratio greater than one means the probability goes up, while an odds ratio less than one means that the probability decreases. We follow the same grouping of variables as

in the previous models with Model 1 including variables relating to a bargaining approach, Model 2 including variables relating to time spent in paid work and Model 3 including gender attitudes. Note that we are able to explain much less of the variance in men's levels of satisfaction with housework than their time on housework as shown earlier. This may be due the fact that there is much less variability in men's levels of satisfaction.

In Model 1, we find that men who are in the top income bracket were more likely to be satisfied than very satisfied with current housework arrangements. On the other hand, men whose partner's have a high income are significantly more likely to be very satisfied than satisfied compared to men with partners in a lower income bracket. In Model 2, the results indicate that men who are able to take work home are less likely to be satisfied with their housework arrangements and more likely to be very satisfied. Men who are on call, in contrast are more likely to have lower levels of satisfaction with their arrangements than men who do not work on call. Partner's paid work arrangements are not associated with men's satisfaction with housework. Of the control variables the only significant association is for men in sales and service occupations who are less satisfied with their housework arrangements.

Table 4 Logistic regression of men's satisfaction (satisfied, relative to very satisfied) with current housework arrangements, by social and demographic characteristics

Variable	Model 1: Bargaining		Model 2: Time Availability		Model 3: Full Model	
	OR	se	OR	se	OR	se
Income:						
<\$20,000	0.40	0.39	-	-	0.73	0.89
\$20,000 - \$40,000	0.49	0.32	-	-	0.80	0.62
\$40,000 - \$60,000	0.71	0.33	-	-	0.94	0.48
\$60,000 - \$80,000 (ref)	-	-	-	-	-	-
\$80,000 - \$100,000	1.45	0.76	-	-	1.82	1.16
\$100,000 - \$150,000	1.00	0.49	-	-	1.10	0.64
>\$150,000	3.79†	3.06	-	-	3.29	3.03
Partner's income:						
<\$20,000	1.66	1.24	-	-	1.71	1.60
\$20,000 - \$40,000	1.07	0.68	-	-	1.14	0.89
\$40,000 - \$60,000	1.45	0.88	-	-	1.18	0.81
\$60,000 - \$80,000 (ref)	-	-	-	-	-	-
\$80,000 - \$100,000	1.96	1.49	-	-	3.08	2.96
\$100,000 - \$150,000	0.12*	0.12	-	-	0.10†	0.12
>\$150,000	0.13	0.19	-	-	-	-
Relative contribution to household income:						
Man earns more (ref)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Same income bracket as partner	1.43	0.76	-	-	0.90	0.53
Partner earns more	1.62	1.37	-	-	1.07	1.05
Paid employment (hours/week)						
Partner's paid employment (hours/week)	-	-	1.01	0.02	1.02	0.02
Non-standard employment:						
Irregular hours (1 = always/often)	-	-	0.98	0.41	1.00	0.46
long hours (1 = always/often)	-	-	1.55	0.62	1.27	0.54
Works Weekends (1 = always/often)	-	-	0.83	0.34	0.81	0.36
Night shifts (1 = always/often)	-	-	1.20	0.63	0.97	0.55
take work home (1 = always/often)	-	-	0.48†	0.19	0.53	0.23
overnight travel (1 = always/often)	-	-	1.24	0.61	1.08	0.56
On call (1 = always/often)	-	-	1.86†	0.69	1.97†	0.79
Partner non-standard employment						
Irregular hours (1 = always/often)	-	-	1.97	0.88	1.76	0.88
long hours (1 = always/often)	-	-	0.79	0.49	0.63	0.42
Works Weekends (1 = always/often)	-	-	0.50	0.22	0.47	0.22
Night shifts (1 = always/often)	-	-	0.76	0.46	0.86	0.56
take work home (1 = always/often)	-	-	1.64	0.62	1.53	0.63
overnight travel (1 = always/often)	-	-	0.39	0.33	1.03	1.06
On call (1 = always/often)	-	-	0.49	0.26	0.56	0.32
Partner's Hours of housework						
Partner's Hours of housework	1.00	<0.001	1.00	<0.001	1.00	<0.001
Gender attitudes						
Gender attitudes	-	-	-	-	1.03	0.06
Controls (all models):						
Age						
Age	1.00	0.02	1.00	0.02	1.00	0.02
Occupation:						
Management administration (ref)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Professionals	0.71	0.33	0.82	0.41	0.86	0.48
Trades and Labour	1.09	0.45	0.91	0.41	1.03	0.50
Service and sales	2.95†	1.82	3.54†	2.50	5.46*	4.25
Education:						
Bachelor degree or higher (ref)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trade/Diploma	1.53	0.65	1.37	0.63	1.45	0.71
Completed high school	0.66	0.29	0.80	0.41	0.76	0.42
Some high school	0.85	0.42	0.46	0.25	0.52	0.31
Number of children <12						
One (ref)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Two	1.43	0.47	1.83†	0.63	1.66	0.63
Three or more	1.73	0.81	1.92	0.97	2.04	1.13
Age of youngest child						
Age of youngest child	1.04	0.09	1.04	0.10	1.05	0.10
Youngest child female (1 = yes)						
Youngest child female (1 = yes)	0.94	0.26	0.57	0.35	1.12	0.36

Youngest child <5 (1 = yes)	0.51	0.29	1.12	0.33	0.38	0.25
R2	0.10		0.12		0.16	
Number of observations ^a	278		252		249	

Source: SRC Men Caring Data, 2010

^a The numbers for this table vary due to small cell sizes on some covariates which resulted in some observations being excluded from the model estimates.

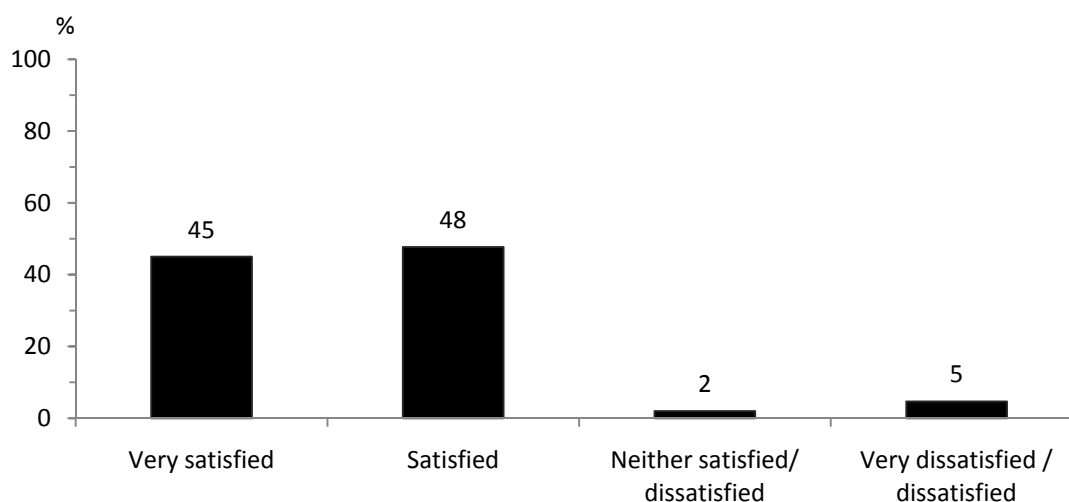
Note: All models are adjusted for missing data on covariates and dependent variables.

†p<0.10; *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

4.2.3.2 Parenting arrangements

All respondents were asked how satisfied they were with current arrangements for sharing parental responsibilities in their household. The majority of men (92%) reported being satisfied with their current share of parenting responsibilities as shown in Figure 5. The results show that 45% were very satisfied and 48% were satisfied. Only a small proportion of men (5%) expressed dissatisfaction with their current parenting arrangements.

Figure 5 Satisfaction with current parenting arrangements



Base: Total sample (n=300). 'Very dissatisfied' less than 1% (data not shown)

In Table 5 we present the results of analysis investigating whether men's level of satisfaction with current parenting arrangements was influenced by the various social and demographic characteristics identified in the review of the literature. As for the previous analyses these models are restricted to examining the characteristics of those who are satisfied relative to those who are very satisfied.

In Model 1 none of the income measures were significantly associated with satisfaction with current parenting arrangements. In Model 2 the results indicate that men who are on call with their paid employment are more likely to be satisfied rather than very satisfied with childcare arrangements. Interestingly we also find that men whose partner's paid work requires them to be on call are somewhat less satisfied with current parenting arrangements. In terms of the other variables in the models, men with 2 children are less satisfied with parenting arrangements. In contrast, as the age of the youngest child increases men's satisfaction with current parenting arrangements increases.

Table 5 Logistic regression of men's satisfaction (satisfied, relative to very satisfied) with current parenting arrangements, by social and demographic characteristics

Variable	Model 1: Bargaining		Model 2: Time Availability		Model 3: Full Model	
	OR	se	OR	se	OR	se
Income:						
<\$20,000	1.28	1.22	-	-	0.84	0.97
\$20,000 - \$40,000	1.85	1.18	-	-	1.25	0.94
\$40,000 - \$60,000	0.75	0.32	-	-	0.62	0.31
\$60,000 - \$80,000 (ref)	-	-	-	-	-	-
\$80,000 - \$100,000	1.60	0.85	-	-	1.50	0.90
\$100,000 - \$150,000	0.73	0.35	-	-	0.56	0.31
>\$150,000	0.58	0.42	-	-	0.35	0.30
Partner's income:						
<\$20,000	0.70	0.48	-	-	0.98	0.85
\$20,000 - \$40,000	0.87	0.52	-	-	1.34	0.97
\$40,000 - \$60,000	1.28	0.70	-	-	1.47	0.91
\$60,000 - \$80,000 (ref)	-	-	-	-	-	-
\$80,000 - \$100,000	1.57	1.14	-	-	2.01	1.64
\$100,000 - \$150,000	1.77	1.72	-	-	1.64	1.89
>\$150,000	0.44	0.61	-	-	0.16	0.28
Relative contribution to household income:						
Man earns more (ref)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Same income bracket as partner	0.61	0.31	-	-	0.60	0.34
Partner earns more	0.46	0.37	-	-	0.35	0.32
Paid employment (hours/week)						
Partner's paid employment (hours/week)	-	-	0.99	0.02	0.99	0.02
Non-standard employment:						
Irregular hours (1 = always/often)	-	-	1.20	0.48	1.26	0.55
long hours (1 = always/often)	-	-	1.76	0.68	1.70	0.73
Works Weekends (1 = always/often)	-	-	1.25	0.51	1.28	0.55
Night shifts (1 = always/often)	-	-	0.58	0.29	0.44	0.25
take work home (1 = always/often)	-	-	0.66	0.26	0.83	0.36
overnight travel (1 = always/often)	-	-	0.75	0.37	0.71	0.36
On call (1 = always/often)	-	-	2.18*	0.76	2.23*	0.86
Partner non-standard employment						
Irregular hours (1 = always/often)	-	-	0.53	0.23	0.43†	0.20
long hours (1 = always/often)	-	-	0.40	0.24	0.41	0.27
Works Weekends (1 = always/often)	-	-	1.19	0.53	1.04	0.48
Night shifts (1 = always/often)	-	-	1.24	0.74	1.63	1.07
take work home (1 = always/often)	-	-	1.50	0.54	1.68	0.66
overnight travel (1 = always/often)	-	-	1.62	1.24	2.94	2.67
On call (1 = always/often)	-	-	2.46†	1.34	2.85†	1.75
Partner's Hours of childcare						
	1.00	<0.001	1.00	<0.001	1.00	<0.001
Gender attitudes						
	-	-	-	-	0.92	0.05
Controls (all models):						
Age						
	0.98	0.02	0.98	0.02	0.98	0.02
Occupation:						
Management administration (ref)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Professionals	0.71	0.32	0.73	0.35	0.65	0.35
Trades and Labour	0.64	0.27	0.76	0.35	0.62	0.31
Service and sales	1.04	0.58	1.52	0.90	1.41	0.96
Education:						
Bachelor degree or higher (ref)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trade/Diploma	1.12	0.46	0.96	0.41	0.89	0.42
Completed high school	0.96	0.42	0.99	0.46	0.79	0.40
Some high school	1.08	0.54	0.77	0.41	0.76	0.44
Number of children <12						
One (ref)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Two	1.71†	0.55	2.01*	0.68	1.86†	0.67
Three or more	1.11	0.51	1.14	0.55	1.25	0.66
Age of youngest child						
	0.90	0.08	0.86	0.08	0.84†	0.08
Youngest child female (1 = yes)						
	0.81	0.22	0.86	0.25	0.92	0.28

Youngest child <5 (1 = yes)	1.09	0.63	1.66	1.01	1.48	0.97
R2	0.07		0.12		0.17	
Number of observations ^a	256		249		249	

Source: SRC Men Caring Data, 2010

^a The numbers for this table vary due to small cell sizes on some covariates which resulted in some observations being excluded from the model estimates.

Note: All models are adjusted for missing data on covariates and dependent variables.

†p<0.10; *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

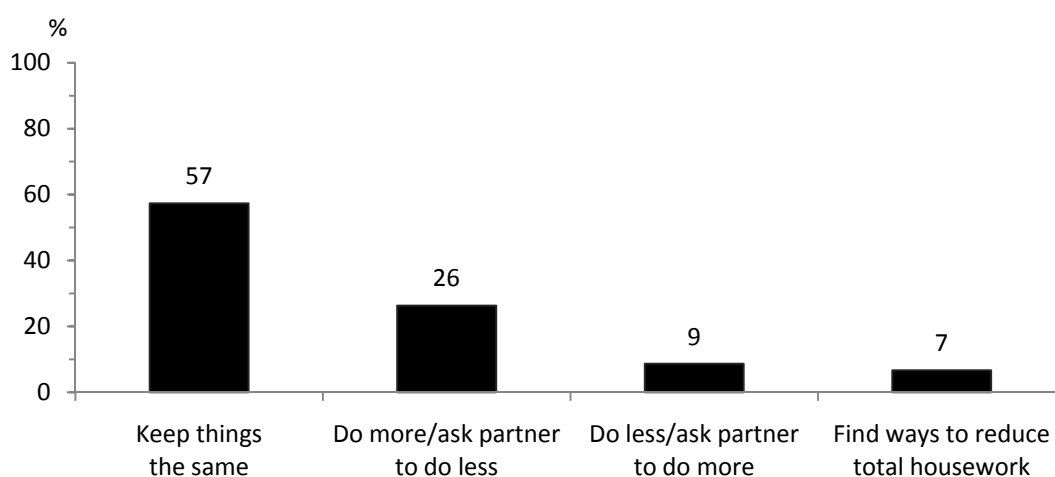
4.2.4 Preferred arrangements for domestic labour

4.2.4.1 Housework

All men surveyed were asked what their preference would be if they could change their current arrangements in regards to the overall sharing of housework tasks with their partner (see Figure 6).

Given the high levels of satisfaction with their current arrangements, it is not surprising that a majority of men (57%) indicated that they would prefer to keep the arrangements the same. Interestingly, one-quarter (26%) indicated that they would like to do more and ask their partner to do less, while a minority (9%) wanted their partner to do more. A similar proportion (7%) reported that they would prefer to reduce the amount of time both parents spent on household tasks.

Figure 6 Preferred housework arrangements



Base: Total respondents (n=300). "Other" and "Don't know" not shown due to low response (n=3).

Even though the majority of men wanted to keep their housework arrangements the same, we were particularly interested in the group of men who replied they wanted to "do more and ask their partner to do less". We investigated whether there were any particular social or demographic characteristics that differentiated these men from those who want to keep things the same. In Table 5 we present the results of logistic regression models examining the association between a range of social and demographic characteristics and whether or not men wanted to do more housework relative to men who wanted to keep things the same. We use a similar procedure to the models presented above.

In Model 1 we find that men who earned between \$100,000 and \$150,000 a year have a significantly greater likelihood of wanting to do more housework and wanting their partner to do less. Partners' earnings and their earnings relative to their partner were not statistically significant. In Model 2 we find that men whose partner works night shifts are significantly more likely to respond that they want to change things so that they do more and their partner does less. In all models, the more housework undertaken by their partner, the more likely men are to want to do more. Interestingly, we also find that when men have two or more children

they are less likely to want to do more housework, possibly because they are already doing a higher proportion of housework and childcare.

Table 6 Logistic regression of men's preferred housework arrangements (do more, relative to keep the same) by social and demographic characteristics

Variable	Model 1: Bargaining		Model 2: Time Availability		Model 3: Full Model	
	OR	se	OR	se	OR	se
Income:						
<\$20,000	1.15	1.55	-		1.86	2.80
\$20,000 - \$40,000	1.48	1.14	-		1.84	1.53
\$40,000 - \$60,000	1.70	0.88	-		1.78	1.03
\$60,000 - \$80,000 (ref)	-		-		-	
\$80,000 - \$100,000	1.05	0.65	-		2.44	1.71
\$100,000 - \$150,000	2.86*	1.52	-		3.91*	2.33
>\$150,000	1.60	1.31	-		3.68	3.46
Partner's income:						
<\$20,000	0.98	0.82	-		2.23	2.27
\$20,000 - \$40,000	0.86	0.64	-		1.56	1.29
\$40,000 - \$60,000	1.93	1.27	-		2.25	1.60
\$60,000 - \$80,000 (ref)	-		-		-	
\$80,000 - \$100,000	0.50	0.44	-		0.50	0.46
\$100,000 - \$150,000	0.88	0.84	-		1.03	1.20
Relative contribution to household income:						
Man earns more (ref)	-		-		-	
Same income bracket as partner	0.60	0.36	-		0.65	0.42
Partner earns more	0.65	0.63	-		0.80	0.88
Paid employment (hours/week)						
Partner's paid employment (hours/week)	-		1.01	0.01	1.00	0.02
Non-standard employment:						
Irregular hours (1 = always/often)	-		0.83	0.37	0.79	0.40
long hours (1 = always/often)	-		1.31	0.55	1.50	0.69
Works Weekends (1 = always/often)	-		1.24	0.53	1.47	0.67
Night shifts (1 = always/often)	-		0.46	0.28	0.44	0.29
take work home (1 = always/often)	-		0.77	0.31	0.69	0.31
overnight travel (1 = always/often)	-		0.63	0.33	0.45	0.26
On call (1 = always/often)	-		1.29	0.48	1.02	0.41
Partner non-standard employment						
Irregular hours (1 = always/often)	-		0.65	0.31	0.76	0.41
long hours (1 = always/often)	-		0.79	0.49	0.64	0.44
Works Weekends (1 = always/often)	-		1.24	0.58	1.31	0.67
Night shifts (1 = always/often)	-		3.19†	2.08	3.27	2.48
take work home (1 = always/often)	-		1.87	0.72	1.49	0.64
overnight travel (1 = always/often)	-		0.36	0.33	0.51	0.58
On call (1 = always/often)	-		0.40	0.24	0.40	0.27
Partner's Hours of housework	1.00*	<0.001	1.00*	<0.001	1.00*	<0.001
Gender attitudes	-		-		1.08	0.07
Controls (all models):						
Age	0.96	0.03	0.98	0.02	0.97	0.03
Occupation:						
Management administration (ref)	-		-		-	
Professionals	1.56	0.82	1.17	0.62	1.56	0.94
Trades and Labour	0.78	0.37	0.60	0.32	0.69	0.40
Service and sales	1.03	0.68	0.89	0.59	1.20	0.92
Education:						
Bachelor degree or higher (ref)	-		-		-	
Trade/Diploma	0.85	0.38	0.95	0.43	0.93	0.46
Completed high school	1.53	0.74	1.80	0.90	2.18	1.21
Some high school	1.13	0.64	0.96	0.54	1.17	0.74
Number of children <12						

One (ref)	-		-		-	
Two	0.47*	0.18	0.58	0.21	0.47†	0.20
Three or more	0.37†	0.20	0.57	0.30	0.35†	0.21
Age of youngest child	1.00	0.10	0.96	0.09	0.96	0.10
Youngest child female (1 = yes)	0.55†	0.17	0.69	0.22	0.62	0.21
Youngest child <5 (1 = yes)	0.39	0.25	0.56	0.37	0.38	0.27
R2	0.12		0.13		0.17	
Number of observations ^a	246		241		237	

Source: SRC Men Caring Data, 2010

^a The numbers for this table vary due to small cell sizes on some covariates which resulted in some observations being excluded from the model estimates.

Note: All models are adjusted for missing data on covariates and dependent variables.

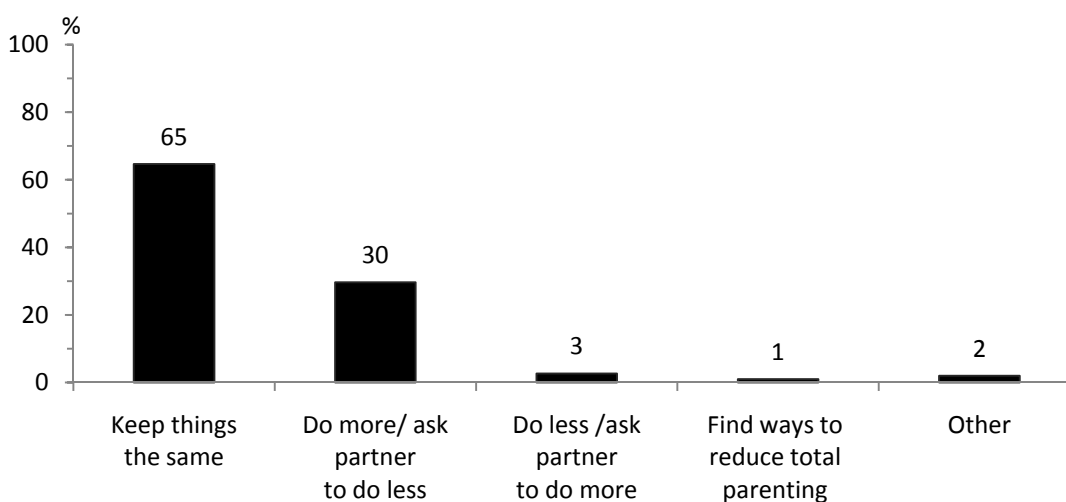
†p<0.10; *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

4.2.4.2 Parenting arrangements

All men were asked what their preference would be if they could change their current arrangements in regards to sharing parental responsibilities with their partner (see Figure 7).

Approximately two-thirds of fathers (65%) preferred to 'keep things the same', however almost one third (30%) would like to 'do more and ask their partner to do less.' The former result is not surprising given the high levels of satisfaction with their current parenting arrangements evident amongst these men. A small proportion (3%) of men reported that they would like their partner do more, while one percent wanted to find ways to reduce the total amount of parenting done.

Figure 7 Preferred parenting arrangements



Base: Total sample (n=300)

In our next analysis we focus on the men who wanted to do more parenting relative to those men who wanted to keep things the same. In Model 1 of Table 6, the results indicate that men who have low earnings (<\$20,000) are more likely to report that they would like to do more parenting, in contrast men who earn more than \$150,000 a year are less likely to say they would like to do more parenting tasks. Partner's earnings are not associated with men's preferences, but when their partner earns the same or more, men are significantly less likely to want to do more parenting and prefer to keep things the same. In Model 2, men whose partners that are on call are significantly more likely to say they want to do more rather than keep things the same. In all models, the more time their partner spends caring for children the more likely men are to say that they want to do more. In the final model we find that men with lower levels of education are less likely to want to do more childcare and more likely to want to keep things the same. The age of the youngest child is also important; as the age of the youngest child increases the likelihood of men wanting to do more parenting also increases.

Overall, the majority of men in the study would prefer to keep their current arrangements the same in relation to participation in both housework and parenting tasks. The results presented in our models indicate that very little distinguishes men who want to keep things the same compared to those who want to do more.

Table 7 Logistic regression of men's preferred parenting arrangements (do more, relative to keep the same) by social and demographic characteristics

Variable	Model 1: Bargaining		Model 2: Time Availability		Model 3: Full Model	
	OR	se	OR	se	OR	se
Income:						
<\$20,000	9.87†	11.62	-	-	10.80†	15.18
\$20,000 - \$40,000	3.40	2.54	-	-	3.55	2.99
\$40,000 - \$60,000	1.70	0.85	-	-	2.20	1.24
\$60,000 - \$80,000 (ref)	-	-	-	-	-	-
\$80,000 - \$100,000	1.34	0.76	-	-	1.45	0.89
\$100,000 - \$150,000	1.45	0.75	-	-	1.29	0.74
>\$150,000	0.11*	0.10	-	-	0.09*	0.10
Partner's income:						
<\$20,000	0.53	0.41	-	-	0.71	0.68
\$20,000 - \$40,000	0.42	0.29	-	-	0.52	0.41
\$40,000 - \$60,000	1.21	0.78	-	-	1.07	0.75
\$60,000 - \$80,000 (ref)	-	-	-	-	-	-
\$80,000 - \$100,000	0.84	0.81	-	-	0.83	0.87
\$100,000 - \$150,000	2.91	2.93	-	-	2.48	2.68
Relative contribution to household income:						
Man earns more (ref)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Same income bracket as partner	0.27*	0.15	-	-	0.24*	0.15
Partner earns more	0.07*	0.08	-	-	0.08*	0.10
Paid employment (hours/week)						
Partner's paid employment (hours/week)	-	-	1.02	0.02	1.02	0.02
Non-standard employment:						
Irregular hours (1 = always/often)	-	-	1.60	0.70	1.89	0.92
long hours (1 = always/often)	-	-	1.16	0.48	1.46	0.66
Works Weekends (1 = always/often)	-	-	1.08	0.46	0.96	0.44
Night shifts (1 = always/often)	-	-	0.89	0.48	0.85	0.50
take work home (1 = always/often)	-	-	0.86	0.35	0.69	0.32
overnight travel (1 = always/often)	-	-	0.50	0.26	0.66	0.37
On call (1 = always/often)	-	-	1.45	0.55	1.52	0.66
Partner non-standard employment						
Irregular hours (1 = always/often)	-	-	0.69	0.33	0.88	0.47
long hours (1 = always/often)	-	-	0.66	0.45	0.52	0.39
Works Weekends (1 = always/often)	-	-	0.51	0.24	0.43	0.23
Night shifts (1 = always/often)	-	-	0.82	0.58	0.69	0.52
take work home (1 = always/often)	-	-	0.86	0.33	0.93	0.39
overnight travel (1 = always/often)	-	-	1.26	1.24	1.07	1.22
On call (1 = always/often)	-	-	2.81†	1.54	2.14	1.28
Partner's Hours of childcare	1.00*	<0.001	1.00*	<0.001	1.00*	<0.001
Gender attitudes	-	-	-	-	1.07	0.07
Controls (all models):						
Age	0.99	0.02	0.99	0.02	0.99	0.02
Occupation:						
Management administration (ref)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Professionals	0.66	0.34	0.77	0.38	1.02	0.26
Trades and Labour	0.94	0.44	1.19	0.58	1.28	0.69
Service and sales	0.72	0.47	0.90	0.57	1.04	0.75
Education:						
Bachelor degree or higher (ref)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trade/Diploma	0.28**	0.13	0.33*	0.15	0.24**	0.13
Completed high school	0.44†	0.22	0.47	0.24	0.45	0.24
Some high school	0.31*	0.18	0.35†	0.19	0.25*	0.16
Number of children <12						
One (ref)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Two	0.81	0.30	0.81	0.29	0.81	0.33
Three or more	0.80	0.42	1.09	0.56	0.93	0.54
Age of youngest child	0.79*	0.08	0.83†	0.08	0.81*	0.09
Youngest child female (1 = yes)	1.00	0.31	0.97	0.30	0.90	0.30
Youngest child <5 (1 = yes)	3.51*	2.24	2.65	1.68	3.12	2.17

R2	0.16	0.14	0.21
Number of observations ^a	259	255	253

Source: SRC Men Caring Data, 2010

^a The numbers for this table vary due to small cell sizes on some covariates which resulted in some observations being excluded from the model estimates.

Note: All models are adjusted for missing data on covariates and dependent variables.

†p<0.10; *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

4.3 Summary of quantitative results

Both men and their partners spend about twice as much time each week caring for children as they spend doing housework. This pattern may change as different stages of the life course, but at least for this sample parenting tasks were more time intensive than housework tasks. Overall, however, men's proportionate share of housework and parenting was similar; around 43% for housework and 42% for parenting tasks. The division of labour varied somewhat depending on the task, with men doing a greater proportion of the work associated with dishes and taking the rubbish out. For all other housework and parenting tasks men's partners contributed a greater proportionate share.

In relation to the time men spend in domestic work the results indicate that negotiation or bargaining over domestic work may occur. Men spend less time in both housework and childcare if they earn more money and if their partner has low earnings. Men's earnings relative to their partners is less important for time in childcare than in housework. However, overall we find much more support for a time availability explanation. Consistent with more recent perspectives on how couples allocate time to paid and unpaid work, we find that factors to do with time and time availability of both men and their partners are much more influential in men's participation in domestic labour than earnings. Men who work more paid hours do less parenting and housework. Conversely men do more parenting and housework if their partner works more hours in paid work.

Arguably the most interesting findings here concern the effect of the characteristics of paid work hours on men's time on domestic labour and parenting. These results suggest that the flexibility of being able to work at home or at nights enables men to be available at critical times, such as when children get home from school or when dinner preparation is taking place and thus facilitates more time on housework and parenting. In addition, men's time in domestic work or parenting is also influenced by their partners employment conditions, such as irregular work hours, travelling away from home or working night shifts. This suggests that their partner's inability to be in the household at certain times encourages men to take more responsibility for housework and parenting. Men's attitudes are also important, where men with less traditional attitudes are more likely to undertake domestic work. Together these findings suggest that the time men spend in domestic work is dependent on both the constraints imposed by employment hours and employment characteristics of both partners, as well as their attitudes to gender divisions. Most importantly, we find evidence that some types of work conditions of men and their partners provide the space and opportunities for men to take a more proactive role in domestic labour of the household.

Overall, the men in the study report high levels of satisfaction with both housework and parenting arrangements. The models were much less successful in identifying factors that influence men's satisfaction and preferences in relation to domestic work. In terms of satisfaction, the main findings were that men who are "on call" at work and whose partners are "on call" are somewhat less satisfied with current arrangements than their counterparts. Unfortunately, the number of men who were dissatisfied was too small a number to perform a statistical analysis of this group of men. These results may be partly attributable to the select nature of the sample, where we have purposively sampled men who viewed themselves as having high levels of participation in domestic work.

In terms of preferences the most consistent finding is that as partners' time on housework and childcare increases, men express a strong preference to do more of these tasks. This may be because both partners

have strong preferences in relation to performing housework and childcare, or it may be that men feel guilty or uneasy about inequitable domestic and parenting arrangements and would prefer greater equity in the household. Overall, our models were less successful in predicting what factors may influence men's satisfaction and preferences with housework and time spent caring for children. These issues may be better captured with qualitative data that enable closer investigation of preferences and processes leading to current arrangements.

5 Qualitative Results

5.1 Methodology

5.1.1 Research Approach

The qualitative component of this research used a range of methods including in-depth interviews, paired interviews, and group discussions. The research took place from November 8 to 22 2010, and involved a total of 34 couples.

More specifically, the qualitative component of the project consisted of the following:

- Six in-depth interviews with each partner of a couple separately;
- Six paired interviews with both members of the couple together; and
- Two group discussions with women, two group discussions with men and two group discussions with couples (6 group discussions). All participants recruited for these groups were couples, and the separate gender groups were conducted simultaneously for the male and the female partner of the couple. Eight participants were recruited to each group discussion (however there were 2 couples who did not attend the focus groups; this meant that a total of 22 couples took part in the focus groups, compared with the intended 24 couples).

5.1.2 Sample and Segmentation

The sample for the qualitative research included men and women who were part of an intact relationship which reported a dual earner / dual carer lifestyle, and had children aged 0 – 12 years. The men had to self report that they undertook at least 40% of the caring and unpaid domestic work. The interviews and group discussions were segmented as follows:

- Age of youngest child, (0-5 and 6-12): as it was believed that factors affecting dual earner / dual carer couples differ between those with pre-school aged children and those with children in primary school; and
- Location: the interviews and group discussions were conducted in the three geographic areas of Melbourne, Brisbane and Bendigo.

Exclusion criteria applied as follows:

- Anyone who works in the market research or advertising industry; and
- Anyone who had taken part in any previous interviews as part of this project.

This sample and segmentation approach is summarised in the table below.

Table 8 Final in-scope population for the qualitative research

	Paired interviews	Separate interviews	Group Discussions		
			Men	Women	Couples
Child age 0-5	3 couples interviewed as a pair <i>1 couple per location</i>	3 couples interviewed separately <i>1 couple per location</i>	1 group <i>Melbourne</i>	1 group <i>Melbourne</i>	1 group <i>Bendigo</i>
Child age 6-12	3 couples interviewed as a pair <i>1 couple per location</i>	3 couples interviewed separately <i>1 couple per location</i>	1 group <i>Brisbane</i>	1 group <i>Brisbane</i>	1 group <i>Melbourne</i>

5.1.3 Recruitment

Recruitment was conducted through two professional research recruitment agencies (Lynette Griffiths for all Victorian based research and Q and A Market Research for the Brisbane based research), who were accredited under Interviewer Quality Control Australia (IQCA), using advertising and databases. A screening questionnaire was developed and used in the recruitment process.

Participants were paid incentives according to market rates. The focus group participants were offered incentives of \$100 per person and in-depth interview participants were offered incentives of \$75 per person.

5.1.4 Group facilities

The Melbourne focus groups were conducted at the SRC focus group facilities in North Melbourne. The Bendigo group took place at a function room in the Julie-Anna Comfort Inn. The Brisbane groups took place at the Q and A Market Research group facilities in Milton. All focus groups were recorded and transcribed for the purpose of analyses.

5.1.5 In-Depth interviews

The in-depth interviews took place in the homes of the couples being interviewed. In the case of the separate interviews, each partner was interviewed by one of the researchers in different rooms of their home. All interviews were recorded and transcribed for the purpose of analyses.

5.1.6 Qualitative discussions, analysis and reporting

The qualitative research primarily focused on the enablers and barriers that influence the engagement of men in shared care and unpaid work with their female partners. In addition to this, it also explored attitudes and aspirations of parents in relation to shared care and unpaid domestic work.

The in-depth and group interviews were guided by a list of parenting and domestic tasks that were developed at the outset of each discussion. This list acted as a prompt to facilitate further discussions throughout the course of each group interview.

With the permission of participants, all research sessions were recorded and transcribed. These transcriptions have been thematically analysed, and a selection of quotes has been included for illustrative

purposes. Quotes that repeat dialogue verbatim from each partner have been presupposed with M (for male) and F (for female) to indicate which partner is speaking. The number after each quote refers to the research session. A breakdown of which research session the quotes refer to can be found in Appendix 2. It should be noted that due to a recording error, we were unable to provide a transcription for the couples' focus group in Melbourne and as such no quotes have been included.

It is also important to indicate that the nature of qualitative research, in relation to sample selection, interviewing methods and sample size, mean that the results of this research are unable to be generalised to the entire population. However, the research findings are relatively consistent across the groups and in-depth interviews (regardless of whether couples were interviewed together or separately, in groups or within in-depth interviews), suggesting that they are likely to reflect common experiences and attitudes.

5.2 Men's Engagement in Care

This section will 'set the scene' and provide context to the subsequent sections by looking at how couples engage in the shared care of their children and domestic tasks and how they have come to their current shared care arrangement. The first part of this section will also consider the working lives of the couples who took part in the research. As noted, the interviews and group discussions clearly demonstrated the role of the couples working lives as an over-riding influence on how and when the couples engaged in the parental care and domestic tasks within their households.

Overall, the most common working scenario for the couples in this research involved the male partner working full time and the female partner part time. When reaching a shared care arrangement, couples tended to think about time spent in the areas of paid work and domestic work as a totality, rather than separating these times for comparison. Time spent with children was regarded somewhat separately, although it was still determined according to the overall balance of time available and time spent in paid and unpaid work. In turn, this impacted on how the couples split their time between household tasks and caring for their children. The person who worked part time generally absorbed a greater proportion of the household tasks, which in most cases was the female partner. Due to differences (see Section 5.3.4) in attitude towards caring for children, couples reported a more even split in how they shared childcare tasks. In the couples where one parent worked full time (most commonly the male partner), the full time worker would return from work and spend time with their children, prioritising this over doing household tasks.

5.2.1 Working lives of parents

Ranges of working scenarios were experienced amongst the couples. The most common scenario, expressed by 25 of the 34 couples, involved the male partner working full time hours (commonly 40 hours a week minimum) and the female partner working part time hours. Part time hours generally ranged between 2-3 full days at work or were spread out across the full 5 day week, but remained within school hours. Alternatively, there were some part time workers who worked shifts that generally took place outside of their partners' working hours. In all of these 25 cases, the male partners were the main income earners. In three of these cases the female partners worked part time but worked four full working days during the week.

*M "I'm an account manager at a transport company. So obviously full time. And just yeah basically manage a portfolio of accounts that I'm probably responsible for fifteen, fifteen million dollars worth of revenue for the year. And that's basically my job and from eight til six."
F "Yeah I work I work part time now that I've had the kids... So we do obviously antenna*

installations and I used to run the call centre but now I'm doing project work so two days a week.” (Couple, 1)

“I'm the manager of a company called XXX, we are a division of XXX, and I'm the manager of the disability employment services, which is finding work for people with disabilities, physical disabilities specifically, so that's what I do. I probably work from seven till four, but then I've got flexi time so I'll go home maybe earlier on a Friday and never work Saturdays and Sundays. She <wife> works for XXX as a merchandiser. It's a part time role, probably three days a week on average.” (Male, 17)

F “... I do casual hairdressing from a salon... one night and a Saturday and it could be more, it varies.”

M “I work at the XXX Bank, so I work between eight thirty till five thirty, Monday to Friday.” (Couple Female, 23)

However, there were alternative scenarios to the arrangement described above including the following: Both partners working full time (five couples);

- Both partners working part time (two couples); and
- The female partner working full time and the male partner part time (one couple). Each one of these scenarios was unique and, within the limits of qualitative analysis, no commonality could be drawn between them in relation to age of children, SES or location.

5.2.2 Part Time Workers

For those who worked part time hours, it was common for their working hours to only take place within school hours, or alternatively to take place at a different time to their partners working hours. Generally, those who worked part time hours worked in non-professional roles as administrative assistants, classroom and childcare assistants, retail and hospitality assistants, and hair and beauty therapists.

Of the participants who worked part time, that is 2-3 days a week, and in a professional role, they primarily worked in the educational and health industries. Two teachers, two school nurses, one educational psychologist and one health worker for autistic children were part of the sample. Other part time workers included three participants who worked four days a week. Their roles were psychologist, accountant and merchandiser.

The men who worked part time had distinctive circumstances as follows:

- One father, who had a nine month old baby, had recently resigned from his permanent role as a manager, in a container yard, to work casual shifts, from Friday to Sunday at a hardware company in order to spend more time with his daughter. His intention was to go back to a more professional role in a few years time. His wife worked three days a week as a computer programmer (Monday to Wednesday) and they depended on her salary as their main source of income.

“I'm a computer programmer, my husband works for XXX, he started there two weeks ago, he used to work nine till five, Monday to Friday but I needed help caring for the little one, so he quit that job and took on a more casual role. So he works Thursday to Sunday, depending on the hours he gets, so he might get one day or he might get three days, and I work Monday to Wednesday, Monday's at home and Tuesday and Wednesdays in the office.” (Female, 20)

- One father, a health worker with autistic children, worked up to 25 hours a week with his clients, usually during school hours or out of school hours, when his wife was not working. His wife worked 2-3 days a week as a school nurse. They had two children aged 5 and 3.

“I work twenty to twenty-five hours a week with autistic children, and my partner works twenty hours a week as a high school nurse. Ah, well, so two and three days a week they're <work hours> during school hours and then it's kind of the two or three days they're different, outside

school hours... she works two and three eight-hour days, one week and the next. If that makes sense.” (Male, 19)

- o One father had taken voluntary redundancy from his role with a telecommunications provider following the birth of his youngest daughter (now 2 years old) and worked on a casual basis for his wife's business. In addition to this, he also did some casual work for a security company. His initial intention was to have a year out of the labour force following his redundancy, but this had not occurred. Following a revision of his circumstances, he intends to return to a permanent position in the labour force when his youngest daughter commences school, but would prefer a position that functions within school hours. His wife owns and manages her own business. Both parents worked full time with their previous three children, all of whom attended childcare when they were both working. They had four children aged 12, 10, 9 and 2.

“[Partner] used to work full-time with XXX but since [Daughter] came along he took voluntary redundancy so our whole way of doing things has changed since then, so that's been in the past 2½ years... So now that [Partner] stays at home then I can, I work quite long hours myself. So I work five days a week would be a minimum for me. Sometimes I would have to go in on a Saturday or a Sunday as well, so now, really [Partner] kind of runs the house.” (Female, 13)

5.2.3 Full Time Workers

For those who worked full time hours, it was common for their working days to take place Monday to Friday, although dependent on the role, working on the weekends was sometimes required. The men who worked full time tended to work within a trade based role (such as electrician or plumber) or, worked within a managerial, analytical or sales based role for the government, a retail organisation or financial institution. There were also some business owners, a truck driver and a full-time student training to be a teacher.

Among the couples who participated in this research, it was more common for the men to be employed in full time positions and committed to pursuing their profession or career. Within the participating couples, there were six women who worked full time, of whom five were focussed on progressing their careers.

In addition to this, there were five couples where both the father and his partner worked full time. The employment arrangements of these couples are classified as follows:

- o One couple was self employed and ran their own accounting practice. Their office was open on weekdays and Saturday mornings. They were able to work from their office, and from home as required. They managed their working lives around their children's school hours and after school activities and tended to work alternate times. They had three children aged 14, 10 and 6.
- o One woman worked as a compliance manager and her husband worked as an IT manager. They both worked 40 hours a week for different companies in different locations in the Melbourne CBD. They had a three year old daughter who attended childcare while they were at work. This couple appeared to rely more on paid childcare than any others in this research.

“I'm an IT manager and [partner] a compliance manager... Both probably just work the standard forty-hour week each. Yeah, Monday to Friday, yeah.” (Male, 3)

- o One woman had only recently started working, after her youngest son had commenced school. She had spent the past ten years as a stay at home parent. She now worked as a retail assistant for a department store on a full time basis, taking shifts both during the week and on the weekends. Her

husband worked as an operations manager in the same department store branch. They had four children aged 14, 12, 10 and 5. The elder children took on the responsibility of looking after the youngest son after school when their parents were both at work. The couple noted that the wife working full time was a relatively new arrangement, and that if it did not allow them to manage the rest of their family and household arrangements, she would prefer to go back to part time work.

*M "Okay so I'm the Operations Manager I've been with XXX for almost 15 years..."
F "...when I got pregnant with the third child I decided to not work at all so therefore I have been home for ten years. And then our youngest has just started school this year. I never thought I'd go and work at XXX with [Partner] or his store but, erm, his boss had said to him that they were after casuals and they knew that I was available during the day so they said that was fine to work there and yeah I'm having an absolute ball - it's great. Well I've been doing 9 - 5:30 <Monday to Friday> this week and then yeah and sometimes weekends - last week I worked seven days straight it was really hard erm which yeah has then started to get a bit different for us..." (Female, 7)*

- o One woman worked as a buyer for a major retailer and had returned to work after minimal maternity leave for both of her children. Her husband, who had taken on the role of stay at home parent, had started to work again within the past two years as a building contractor, working for a friend, after their youngest child had commenced school. They had two children aged 10 and 8. Each parent worked a long week, followed by a short week on alternative weeks to each other. The shorter working week allowed the parents to manage the care of their children before and after school. The arrangement had arisen as a consequence of them having been separated for a period of time. However, they had maintained their employment and caring arrangement after they had got back together as it worked well for them.

"Yeah ok, well I'm a building contractor and my hours at work probably, seven thirty till six thirty ahm, for one week, and then for the next week I do nine till three, of which I pick up the kids, so we alternate, fortunately I have a job where my hours are very flexible, so I do the kids run to school, then get them ready for school, do dinners for one week and [partner] does the other. [Partner] is a buyer for XXX. And her hours would be similar alternately... we were separated for three years and so did alternate weeks and now that we are sort of having a go at getting back together again, ahm, we've struck with this arrangement, because it works both ways." (Male, 5)

- o One woman was beginning to build her career as an executive assistant within the local government. She had returned to work after her youngest child had commenced school. Her husband worked as a director within a federal government agency. The husband was 16 years older than his wife and commented that he was starting to reduce his working hours as a step towards retirement, and as a result was able to take on a more hands on role at home. They had three children aged 15, 12 and 8.

"Ah I'm the manager in the Federal Government. I've negotiated my hours so that I generally work a five day week in four days. And just nine to five basically, I work at home, I don't go to work on a Tuesday, and I work at home on a Friday. So I've got a remote log in so I can work from anywhere basically. Ahm I run a, a whole branch that looks after aged care. My wife is a full time employee at the [state] Government, or, or ah council it is now, it's just changed. She works much longer hours than me she's gone first thing in the morning and doesn't get home til about seven thirty every night so I do the cooking, washing, ironing, cleaning, take the kids to school and do their homework with them. I've become the wife!" (Male, 21)

5.3 Sharing of parental care and domestic work

Participants were asked when commencing the research to consider and list the various tasks that they undertook firstly, to keep the household running and secondly, in terms of bringing up their children. One list was developed to reflect the domestic work and another to reflect the parental care. Lists provided in all of the research sessions were very similar and a summary of the lists from across the research can be found in Appendix 3. As well as being asked to consider the tasks undertaken, the couples were also asked to consider what proportion of the list was undertaken by each partner.

5.3.1 Sharing of domestic work

In general, of the couples who participated in the research, the women undertook the greater proportion of household tasks. Around half of the couples split the domestic work so that the women were completing between 60%-70% of household labour. While some women were doing 75%-80% of household tasks, other couples split the domestic work more equally. There were also four couples where the man took on a larger proportion of the domestic work, three of whom undertook approximately 60% and one who did 90%.

Generally, the larger proportion of household tasks was undertaken by the partner who worked less hours in a paid role. This naturally came about as a result of being at home more. Those who worked full time hours tended to do essential tasks during the week, while keeping larger projects for the weekend, when they were less bound by time constraints. The couples who had an equal split of household tasks all worked similar hours to each other (both partners worked full time or both worked part time).

"I feel it's my responsibility because I work less, I work less hours than he does... Oh I probably do about seventy to eighty percent... It's only because, you know, naturally I've, I'm, I've got those few hours before [partner] does actually come home." (Female, 8)

"I think it's a case of it needs to be done and I'm home at that time to do it and so between that four and six when I'm home that's when a lot of it gets done and he's not home..." (Female, 22)

F "I would probably say overall, if you averaged it out, over everything probably 50/50, because it depends too on what's going on."

M "Yeah, workwise and studywise." (Female, 14)

Throughout the research it became apparent that the couples often considered the use of time spent at work in a similar way to the use of time spent doing household tasks. Conversely, time spent with children was regarded as a separate entity. This helps to explain why the partner who was employed part time hours in a paid job was prepared to take on a larger proportion of the household tasks.

"... the more housework side of things is pretty much my role given that he's full time and I only work two days a week so yeah." (Female, 1)

"Oh yeah I did <say 40%> because well my, I'm full time and my wife is part time so yeah... we can say that she should do more." (Male, 21)

It is interesting to note that participants were recruited based on the male saying that he participated in at least 40% of the shared care arrangements. However, throughout discussions with some of the couples it was commonly observed that the male would overstate what he did, emphasising a task that he had done recently, but that was usually completed by his partner on a regular basis. Linked to this, some of the men felt that their partners did not fully comprehend or appreciate the time they put into some of the tasks that they undertook, more commonly those that took place outside the home, such as garden or house maintenance.

"I just think, I don't know he, I think because he does the ironing he contributes in every way. And thank goodness he's got that I think." (Female, 16)

M "I cooked last week"

F "Yeah 'cos we had take away. Every time we get take away he says that he cooks." (Couple, 7)

"Only, I think, I always find it interesting that ahm, women will forget what you have done, they will remember what you haven't done, but they will forget the things that you've done, [partner] has that kind of tendency so every once in a while she'll, you don't do these things around the house, and you have to start reiterating, well yes I do, oh, she'll talk about how she does all the laundry, and I go, hang on a second, you moved it from the basket which is twelve inches away from the machine, tell me how you did the washing, because I did the rest of it, carrying it out there and hanging it out on the line and bringing it back in, therefore the amount of time required for the job, I significantly outweighed you as far as doing the actual laundry so, you are taking the credit for the laundry when I actually did the laundry, myself and the machine did the laundry, you transported it to the, and so we'll do those sort of things." (Male, 11)

5.3.2 Gender split of domestic work

There was a clear gender split observed across the groups, and interestingly, the allocation of specific 'male' and 'female' based tasks did not vary based on whether the female partner was working similar or greater hours than her partner. The outdoor tasks such as mowing the lawn, gardening, painting the house, tending to the swimming pool, car maintenance and taking out the rubbish were much more commonly undertaken by the men. Women often commented that they were less interested in getting involved in such tasks.

"Yeah, so I feel that's my responsibility <washing clothes>. [Partner's] responsibility is outside and it's probably more that I don't like...I don't like being dirty, so I don't like being out in the garden. I don't. And I just kind of feel that's the man's role. Even though we have had that role reversal and [partner] does a lot more around the house than he used to, just because he's home all day, I still feel that the man's role to be outside mowing the lawn. I don't think I'd ever mow the lawn." (Female, 13)

"But I mean generally I'm, you know I, I'm the mower and the whipper snipper and just all, general maintenances you know the grass and around the pool and all that sort of stuff you know so. Ahm that's generally me... but she's more internal and I'm the external." (Male 21)

Likewise the inside of the house was more commonly referred to as being under the care of the women. It was common for the female participants to discuss how they had a better idea of what needed to be done and while they were able to ask their partners to help with doing particular tasks, ultimately, they knew and ensured that what needed to be done, got done. Throughout the research, it was observed that there were certain tasks within the home that the women would solely do and the men would claim to avoid or do as little as possible such as dusting, mopping the floors, sorting out the washing and cleaning the bathroom.

"... but as far as housework is concerned, I've always been like that throughout the whole time I think, yeah so that's my domain I suppose." (Female, 12)

"I don't know what else really, I suppose just the general, any sort of maintenance I can do, and [partner] does all the vacuuming, dusting, cleaning, you know, basically does all that... I suppose, if you do try and help her with the vacuuming, you can't do it as well as she does it so, that's why I don't bother doing it, so you know, that's why it's gone that way I suppose." (Male, 15)

In conjunction with the observed gender split, it was also a commonly held attitude across the couples that the housework came under the overall responsibility of the female partner; whereby the men were sometimes referred to as the 'helpers.' As mentioned above, this attitude did not necessarily depend on the female partners work hours in comparison to her partners. In many cases, it came across as an underlying and unquestioned mindset that the female partner was ultimately the overseer of what happened within the home. Essentially, the female partner would ensure that what needed to be done, got done. In some cases the male partners were happy to get involved in whatever tasks needed to be done, but all things considered, they referred to their partner for guidance and instruction about what to do. In other cases, the

female partners were of the opinion that their partner would never be able to do as good a job as them, and they therefore took particular household tasks upon themselves, to ensure that they were completed correctly.

"And I don't notice it, I, I'm not rude I just, I don't see it. I'm a boy if it's not right in front of me then, you know it's what I can't see I can't." (Male, 8)

"I'm still a control freak - this will be done this way - and I think it is a the women run the house that's their domain not that I've necessarily grown up like that..." (Female, 22)

M "Oh you <have ultimate responsibility over the house>."

F "It would still be me. Yeah - which I'm still fine with... Well because I'm still the Mum."

M "I think also that you see our home as a reflection of you - like if we have people coming over or we're selling our house - [partner] sees that as a reflection of her and the image of her." (Couple, 7)

It should be noted that while the above was a typical scenario observed across the research, there were a small number of cases where the male partner did a greater proportion of the internal household tasks. For some couples, this was a result of working similar hours to each other and the female partner taking a slightly higher proportion of parenting tasks (which the male partner balanced out by taking a higher proportion of housework tasks) or, in one case, the male partner was slowing down his involvement at work to support his wife's developing career (which kept her out of home for longer hours than him).

"I'm quite happy to do whatever needs to get done, in fact I enjoy doing some it...I'd much rather be home doing the housework than working." (Male, 3)

"Ah I can tell ya I do it everyday. Washing, ironing, cleaning, vacuuming dusting, mopping." (Male, 21)

5.3.3 Involvement of children in domestic work

Families who had children aged eight years old and above often got their children to assist with certain household chores. These children were usually expected to look after themselves for breakfast; set the table, clear away and wash up the dishes (or fill and clear out the dishwasher) after dinner; fold and put away their clean clothes; make their beds and tidy their rooms. Some had considerably more responsibility; examples included preparing meals, vacuuming, and other cleaning tasks.

"In my house - I've got the three children and they know that both parents are busy so my fifteen year old cooks dinner three times a week sometimes he'll come home and he's mowed the lawn and my daughter might sit down and do homework or something with my eight year old or something like that so - I think that it's not just all about parents doing things - and I think that parents are." (Female, 22)

"Yeah we sort of do that together - like folding and packing away and we get the kids involved." (Male, 7)

5.3.4 Sharing of parental care

The sharing of parental care between partners was more evenly split in comparison to housework. It was typical for couples to discuss having a 50/50 split of the parenting tasks or a 60/40 split, whereby the parent who spent less time at work took on the higher proportion of childcare; which was usually the mother.

"Ahm well only, I would say it's fifty fifty. But ahm, it probably be more percentage on his behalf if he was home more. I think, ahm yeah. It's only because, you know, naturally I've, I'm, I've got those few hours before [partner] does actually come home. I think ahm [partner] would probably be more because he does a little bit more, you know like when it's shower time and bath time [partner] sort of pretty much does it all, so..." (Female, 8)

Across the research, it was observed that couples had a greater level of agreement about the division of parental care compared to housework. Some couples also noted that while a 60/40 split existed during the week days, a 50/50 split was more likely to occur on the weekends.

"I put it 60/40 just because I'm there more, just with all the kinder stuff and running around, I probably do most of that, but when [partner's] there he does heaps too, like it's just very shared and like [male group participant] , he does the baths, and I've hardly bathed the kids their whole life, ahm, and he will get breakfast in the mornings and on the weekends and then I was playing netball on Saturdays and training Thursday nights and so then I'm away all of Saturday, so [partner] has them on Saturday, so yeah it's pretty even, I would probably put 50/50 apart from I'm just there more than him so, I probably do 10% more." (Female, 23)

It was common for the men who worked full-time to discuss returning from work and spending time with their children as soon as they stepped in the door. They were keen to spend as much time as possible with their children, knowing they were likely to have to go to bed within 2-3 hours of their arriving home. Spending time with their children took priority over doing any household tasks for those who had been at work all day. In general, this appeared to be an agreed and desired arrangement.

"But look I think in terms of the kids [partner] is very hands on when he's home. And that's just, that's not even discussed it's just a given." (Female, 1)

"I'd much prefer to play with the kids when I'm home, than do the housework." (Male, 23)

There did not appear to be the same division of parenting tasks based on gender as had been the case with the household tasks. There were a few tasks however, which were more typically undertaken by the female partner such as dressing the children, shopping for their clothes, and shopping for birthday presents for kids birthday parties.

5.4 Coming to an arrangement of shared parental care and domestic work

It was hard for many of the couples to specifically define how they had arrived at their current arrangement of sharing the parental and housework duties. Many couples indicated that it 'just happened' and had gradually evolved over time. Preference for particular tasks, being better at tasks and the practicality of being available to perform tasks all helped to determine how the couples completed what needed to be done.

F "Oh probably in the very, very early days, we may have, when we were first together at the start."

*M "Yeah, but certainly not now. No, it's just the roles, with what you do."
F "I guess there is some sort of unspoken stuff, I haven't mowed the lawn in years, and I don't want to." (Couple, 14)*

"But there's generally not a lot of negotiation or, um, discussion or conversation about it, it's just...we know what needs to get done; we've been doing it for a while now." (Male, 3)

In consideration of the couples where one person worked full-time and the other part time, it appeared that the time taken to administer the household tasks was often considered in a similar way to the time used for working in a paid job. However, time spent with the children was regarded as a separate entity. This, in part, explains why couples reported that there was more of an even split for parental care; because more men worked full-time, they wanted to spend time with their children when they returned from work, prioritising this over doing household tasks.

5.4.1 Establishing the set-up for shared care arrangements

The first few months of living together, before having children, seemed to be a significant period that allowed the couples to explore and work through how they managed domestic tasks together. It was often discussed and recalled, especially among couples within the '0-5 year old children' research sessions, that the domestic work was less intensive prior to having children. Before parenthood, couples who had both worked full time usually managed domestic work together during the weekends, split on a 50/50 basis. It was during this time that the couples were able to establish a preference for undertaking particular tasks and determine which partner performed better at certain tasks.

"But when we moved into together (to her house, of course), we, um, sort of took our strengths with what we did and it kind of evolved but I can't remember too many arguments I think like that. You kind of stuck to your strengths where she might try and cook and be like, I'll look after this from now on, and I might have tried to clean up and she would have said the same." (Male, 19)

Once couples had started their families it was typical for women to take maternity leave and stay at home as a full-time parent. During this period of having more time at home they tended to undertake a much greater proportion of the household tasks as well as care of their children. It was common for the women to discuss making the choice to stay at home and wanting to be a part of the upbringing of their children. This was a key driver for those women who returned to part time employment as opposed to full time, as it enabled them to still have the time to be there for their children.

"I think we had to, at a time, redefine them 'cause when she was home, not working at all, she did take the majority of the work and then slowly but surely we've had to go back and say oh actually I need a hand here, I need a hand doing this." (Male, 21)

5.4.2 Arrangements for stay at home dads

There were four men within the research sample who were either performing the role of a stay at home parent, or who had previously undertaken this role. Two of these cases occurred as a result of being made redundant at a time when they had recently become fathers. The other two cases were the result of a deliberate decision to become a full time parent (for one man, this decision was fuelled from having a very limited role in the upbringing of his children from a previous marriage, while in the other case, the respondent had opted to work on a casual basis in order to be able to spend more time with his family). In all four of these cases, the mothers were working in well paid careers. As was the case with the stay at home mothers, the stay at home fathers had naturally taken on board a much greater proportion of the domestic tasks and childcare during the time they had spent at home.

"Um, I took twelve months off; I wasn't working so I did pretty much all that stuff. So she <daughter>, was about 2 ½ so I spent 12 months at home looking after her... during that period of time I probably did everything, all the housework, all the shopping, I did the lot. And [partner] just went to work." (Male, 3)

5.4.3 Preference for household tasks

With regards to housework the couples tended to do the tasks that they preferred, or alternatively, possessed specific skills which ensured the task would be completed to a higher standard, or were better at. This explains, to some degree, why the gender divide of certain indoor and outdoor tasks existed. Men commonly reported how they enjoyed being outside in the garden, or alternatively, how they did not expect their partners to be able to look after the grounds as well as them. Likewise, some women reported having little interest in mowing the lawn or taking out the rubbish.

*"I don't mind doing the yard work. Yeah I don't, I'm quite happy not having anyone do the yard, I'm quite happy mowing the lawn on a Sunday afternoon or tidying the yard, that doesn't worry me."
(Male, 14)*

Similarly, women who had undertaken the responsibility of 'maintaining the home' played a much greater role in the everyday tasks, such as putting things away, dusting and cleaning surfaces, cleaning the bathrooms and washing the clothes. Women commonly reported performing these jobs better than their partners, and as a result, assumed the responsibility of completing these tasks themselves.

*"So I've always done washing I just prefer to do it just, so things don't get mixed up that shouldn't be."
(Female, 10)*

*"if I'm doing the cooking, he will get [son] ready for bed, he hangs the clothes out because I hate it, and I'll vacuum because he hates that so..."
(Female, 20)*

There were exceptions to this as well. A few men reported that they enjoyed doing the housework, and as such, they had a more active role in what happened indoors.

In line with the idea of the women taking the responsibility for the home, some men discussed how they completed certain tasks around the home because they were told to or were "nagged" by their partners to do so. These men reported that they would not necessarily see that something needed to be done unless they were told to do so. In cases when they were at home without their partner, the men were sometimes left with a list of things to do.

*"Nagging plays a part."
(Male, 21)*

*"Or you get home and there'll be a note left out, yeah the note."
(Male, 19)*

However, there were some couples who were able to manage household tasks by both taking the initiative to do what needed to be done, with neither partner requiring any prompting as such.

*"I'll just get up and think something needs doing and get it done, so we don't sort of discuss, we need to do this in the morning, we might occasionally, but pretty rare."
(Male, 14)*

*"Yeah, no he tries and helps as much as he can so, without being asked, which is good."
(Female, 10)*

5.4.4 Prioritising care of children over household tasks

As reported previously, in situations where one parent worked full-time and the other part time, it was common for the full-time working parent to return home after work and spend time with their children. Based on the couples who participated in this research, in most (but not all) cases, this person was the father. The men often reported that spending time with their children took priority over household chores.

*"I don't get home til five thirty, six o'clock or you know later. Ahm so, there's a bit of that guilty parenting syndrome."
(Male, 8)*

*"... but when she's at work, or if she comes home from work and the house would be messy she'll say, 'Why haven't you cleaned it?' I go, 'Well, I'll do it when they go to bed'. Say, after eight o'clock I'll be out there with a mop and vacuum whatever... I say that's the way I want to do it because I'd rather spend more time with them."
(Male, 19)*

It was also typically reported that when the full-time working parent returned home, their ability to monitor the children enabled the other parent to cook the family dinner, without having to also supervise the children. This was also considered a relief those who spent more time at home supervising the children.

*"Yeah so it's more just the convenience and sort of working together, so it's like alright, as soon as I get home, I'll take the kids, so it frees [partner] up to do something else hopefully."
(Male, 23)*

5.4.5 Practicality of sharing household tasks and care of children

While preference for certain tasks played a role in determining how couples divided the labour, practicality was also a major determinant for what got done and when. As indicated earlier, the parents who worked in a part time capacity, or who worked fewer hours than their partner, had more time available to undertake a greater proportion of the household tasks and childcare. Some of the participants in this scenario discussed how this was appropriate given that their partner was busy at work. However, given the fact that both parents worked, the full time working partners were also aware that they needed to share some of the domestic work and childcare tasks.

"I think it's ahm that access factor again that maybe you've got a strength in that area, and therefore you are naturally biased towards it, or it's just convenient and easier, you tend to be in that spot at that time, yeah." (Male, 23)

"Like it just feels, I'd rather do all the stuff that I do 'cause now I'm not working, even though I've got another job as well. But I'd rather sort of do it 'cause [partner] is starting early and I just, yeah I'd rather get it over and done with so he doesn't feel tired and have to go to work and have an accident in the truck or something like that so yeah." (Female, 10)

Parents who worked shifts, finished work earlier than their partner, worked from home, or worked for themselves, would often have the flexibility and capacity to be more involved with their children during the day and more specifically after school. If they were at home, they were also able to undertake more of the daily household tasks.

"So, yeah, it wasn't all necessarily a conscious thing. Some of it was. But it just happened gradually that we figured out, okay, well, when he's home he can do whatever, when he's got the time." (Female, 2)

If children were being taken to and from school, childcare, grandparents or after school activities, this was undertaken by the parent who was either at home or if both parents were working, the parent whose working hours or working location were in close proximity to when and where their children needed to go. Similarly, the daily and immediate housework that needed to be completed was usually undertaken by the parent who was available at the time.

"Cause [partner] is on the road, he's always taking the kids early in the morning to either sets of parents so yep and picking them up after work and coming, yeah so, yeah that's his role. I don't have to do any of that." (Female, 1)

"You do that as necessity rather than the love of the job, you know. So whoever's home during the afternoon does the cooking or does the pickups and all that sort of stuff. Somebody has to do it." (Male, 13)

5.4.6 Planning and scheduling

Some parents, more commonly those who both worked full time hours, where one partner worked shifts, or if one partner had a degree of flexibility to their working hours, discussed how they would schedule what needed to be done across the coming week or month. This allowed both partners to plan the most feasible way of managing their work commitments, children's activities, school meetings and other education related responsibilities, as well as the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the house.

"I know my roster comes out fortnightly, and it comes out on a Thursday so then we got to sit down and plan what we're going to do when for the entire fortnight. We got to sit down and really nut it out. What can we do? Where? Try and fit all these things in." (Male, 19)

It was observed in one of the homes that the family had a chart listing the tasks that need to be completed in the coming week, and who was responsible. The mother in this couple had a demanding job which required her to travel for work. On average she worked 20 hours a week, but no two weeks were the same. Her

husband, who ran his own service station franchise, had the flexibility to be able to take a more active role in looking after their 3 year old daughter when his wife was at work. Another couple reported that they used an online calendar to 'schedule' any time they were required to be away from home, or had other commitments (both partners worked full time in professional roles in the CBD and had a 3 year old daughter who went into childcare while they were at work).

"We have...we've got an online calendar where we put stuff in...so I've got a late night coming up this week I'll need to put that in the calendar to make sure that [partner] then doesn't go and book something else to happen." (Male, 3)

6 Characteristics of Couples who Share Parental Care and Domestic Work

This section provides analysis of various factors that shaped the characteristics of the couples who share parental care and domestic tasks. In particular, this section will address the characteristics of satisfied and dissatisfied couples; characteristics of part time workers; characteristics of couples with a 50/50 split of the shared care; characteristics of the couples in comparison to their parents; and socio-economic status.

6.1 Characteristics of satisfied and dissatisfied couples

The couples who participated in the research were generally happy with the current arrangements they had in place for the sharing of parental care and household tasks.

6.1.1 Satisfied couples

Couples who talked about being satisfied in their current arrangement shared some or all of the characteristics as follows:

- They communicated with each other regularly about the tasks that needed doing;
- They organised tasks with 'to-do' lists and calendars;
- There was an element of consideration and appreciation of the tasks that each was doing; and
- They shared similar attitudes towards raising children and upkeep of their house.

Throughout the research, these couples noted how they openly talked to each other about various aspects of their families' lives and as such, instead of just moving through the motions of everyday life, were able to address any issues as and when they needed to. Through open discussions with each other, the couples knew what was happening in each other's lives and they were able to arrange the most appropriate way to organise their domestic affairs. In some cases this involved the establishment of work schedules and planning when parents needed to be available. This was particularly important for couples where both partners worked full time hours.

"Like, we've talked about stuff, and obviously in the early days I've said, "Okay", You're working full-time, I only work part time, but, you know, the days that I am working I do like help, that's the one thing I can't stand is coming home and then having to do a whole heap of stuff sort of thing. So I guess that's been a bit of a talked about thing." (Female, 2)

"No, as you are going along, if you hit a bump, if [partner] needed me to do something, she'd just ask me to do it." (Male, 11)

The couples who reported being happy with their current arrangements for sharing parental care also reported that having the same values and attitudes about raising children and maintaining a household helped to ensure contentment in their family life. Both partners within these couples were willing participants in the shared care of their children and households. They felt supported by each other and did as much as they could when they were at home.

"I think it's more of a respect thing for each other and the value for each other's time and identifying what needs to be done and doing it without waiting for the other person to do it." (Male, 7)

"And if I'm home on a weekend, and [partner] is out or something like that and the dishes need to be done, I'll very rarely touch the floors, but if the dishes need to be done or if clothes need to be

washed and folded and put away, and all of that sort of stuff, I'll get in and do that... so if she's done work all week in the house, then I can't expect her to do that of a weekend, so yeah, that's where, when I am home, I do try and pick up as much as I can." (Male, 23)

"[Partner] and I are pretty much on a level, same level as far as the kids are concerned with discipline and all that sort of stuff." (Female, 12)

It was interesting to note that some of these couples discussed how they had learned to accept their partner's methods for housework. While they admitted that housework tasks were not always administered in the way they would like them to be done, it was better to accept that they had at least been done, rather than becoming concerned about the task and re-doing them.

"We are both easy going so if it doesn't get done rather than fight about it I just prefer to leave it." (Male, 15)

"I like things more tidier, I'm more anal as such about having the house in order than [partner] is, but over the years, I've learnt to just accept that it doesn't have to be done the way that I necessarily want it to be done, it's still the same end result basically..." (Female, 6)

6.1.2 Dissatisfied couples

However, there were couples who did not appear to be satisfied with the division of shared care. It was more common for any issues to revolve around how domestic work was administered rather than how care of children was shared. This was more common among families with older children. Some women reported feeling resentful because their partners did not take the initiative to undertake some of the household tasks, or could not perform the household tasks as well as they could. However, these women were also not prepared to relinquish the responsibility for housework or delegate tasks to their partners.

"So ahm I would love him to have that initiative to do more, but he just doesn't. Because he just thinks what needs to be done just ask. But I don't ask." (Female, 8)

"But it's a communication issue. Because she won't tell me that she needs help. And I don't notice it, I, I'm not rude I just, I don't see it I'm a boy if it's not right in front of me then, you know it's what I can't see I can't." (Male, 8)

There were also couples who appeared to be "stuck in a rut." Some participants (typically the women) voiced clear dissatisfaction, while others displayed it more in their body language. It appeared that these couples had accepted the division of labour and they did not question whether an alternative way of approaching parental care and housework was available to them.

"No it's been the same, all the time, you can offer to help but that's the main thing, it's whether she accepts it, but everything seems to go along alright, so that's the main thing so we just do it that way." (Male, 17)

"I think over the years we just take one another for granted and just - yeah. We've been together since we were seventeen so I don't know." (Female, 18)

Overall, regardless of whether the couples were satisfied or dissatisfied, it appeared that any conversations that took place about household tasks and care of children were in regards to dealing with the day to day needs of the family, and not the larger narrative of how both partners would allocate domestic labour.

6.2 Characteristics of part time workers

In general, parents who worked part time maintained this level of employment so that they would be available for their children. They had made a considered decision to accept this situation. They typically reported not having the same drive to pursue a career as their partner. While this was often the case for women, men who worked part time, or took a greater role in domestic labour, were also less career focussed than their partners.

“Um, we’ve already made the commitment that at the moment I won’t go back to full-time work, even when she is at school because I want to be available to be part of the school community.” (Female, 16)

“I would not give up my time with the kids for anything, that’s why I’ve chosen not to work.” (Female, 23)

However, it is worth indicating that four of the men who had made the decision to be stay at home parents, were at home with an infant child. One man who had taken a year out of the labour force, following redundancy, had since returned to full-time employment; one had returned to full-time employment when his youngest child had commenced school; the other two intended to recommence full-time hours when their children had started school, if not before. Women who worked part time were much more likely to express a desire not to go back to full-time employment.

6.3 Characteristics of couples with a 50 / 50 split of the parental care and domestic work

Couples who demonstrated an even split of the overall household and childcare arrangements worked a similar number of hours to each other. This applied to five of the couples who participated in the research. The couples were categorised as follows:

- Both worked full time (two couples);
- Both worked part time (two couples); and
- Wife worked three days a week and husband worked shifts (one couple).

“So, we both share the, um, like on weekends... one of us does the bathrooms while the other one dusts and does the vacuuming or changes the beds, so it’s kind of like it’s very much 50/50 kind of ratio.” (Female, 4)

6.4 Characteristics of couples in comparison to their parents

Throughout the research, the couples were asked how they had been raised by their parents and what influence that had on their current circumstances. It was common for couples to discuss very traditional parental roles. Essentially, it was often reported that their mothers had been stay at home parents, looking after all domestic labour inside the home as well as the care of children. Men in comparison, maintained full-time employment, spent minimal time with their children, and were only likely to deal with domestic tasks outside the house.

While this research identified that a gendered division of domestic labour still existed, there did, at least, appear to be a shift in how families were working compared to the previous generation. In particular, men were more engaged in the parenting of their children, often choosing to spend as much time as possible with their children when not engaged with paid employment. Men were also more involved in the tasks that needed to happen within the house.

“I couldn’t see my father doing any of the things I do. No way. Ah, completely different and I know [partner’s] family, her old man would never have done things that I do. I think things are just changed, yeah. I’m not sure, for me it’s just the right thing to do, and actually there’s a lot of things I enjoy doing...But, yeah, I think just in general society’s changed a lot in that regard as well. That’s what I feel.” (Male, 3)

For the men, this was partially explained by the fact that many had lived independently from their parents prior to cohabiting with their partners. As a result, they had developed a range of skills that enabled them to adequately care for themselves and their household.

"But, I mean, even when we were dating and that, see [partner's] been a very independent person all his life so he's always been able to cook and iron and never needed someone else to do those things for him." (Female, 16)

"...this day and age, most of us are out jobs, living by yourself, before you meet your partner, that is to be your life long partner, and once you get with your life partner, then you've already done the dishes yourself, you've already done the cooking, the cleaning yourself, so you've already got the way you want it done and you, and the way you like it done and when you finally do move in together, it's time that you can share together, and you can always influence the way that you like it done a little bit if you are there, like you can sort of wash the dishes together, sit down together and have a conversation, sit down for a meal together because you've both helped cooked it." (Male, 23)

The couples who had been raised within a family that expressed traditional gender roles were pleased that they had a much more involved role across the complete range of household tasks and parenting arrangements, and valued the relationships they were able to share and build with their children. As both partners had to spend time in paid work, it was generally accepted that both partners would also have to be involved with the care of their children and the household tasks.

There were also some participants within the research who had been brought up in homes where they were expected to assist with the household tasks. This had provided them with a greater appreciation for housework, its function within the household, and the need for an equitable division of domestic tasks.

"I think it's the way you grow up too, like I grew up with nine kids in my house and I was on the bottom. And like, you have to fend for yourself, you know... So when you grow up if you didn't help make the bed, you didn't help to do the dishes or whatever, they just, the parents just couldn't handle it." (Male, 21)

6.5 Socio-Economic Status characteristics

No criteria had been set in this research with regards to the SES of the participating couples, but it appeared that they were all from a middle-class background. It seemed that at least one partner within the couples was tertiary educated and it was also observed from the interviews with the couples at home, that they lived in reasonably affluent suburbs.

Some of the couples referred to the fact that, because of their incomes, they received no government benefits, but had to pay for all child related expenses in full, from their own income. As a result, they were resentful of the government in relation to parental assistance. These couples believed that some people made the decision to withdraw from the paid labour market and raise a family in order to receive tax benefits and parental bonuses from the government. This was considered to be unfair.

"To be honest - I hate these no hoppers and I suppose I'm speaking my mind now - but I hate these no hoppers that get everything and we do all the work and pay all our taxes, erm and we're the ones that we don't get any benefits from them." (Male, 15)

7 Enablers & Barriers to Men's Decision to Share Care and Domestic Work

Various factors impacted on the ability of men to share in the care of their children and the household tasks. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The need to earn an income;
- How couples managed their time in and out of work with each other and their children's school hours;
- How couples managed work in conjunction with their children's after school hours; and
- Flexibility of working arrangements.

Other factors that impacted upon the ability of men to participate in shared care arrangements include: women's attitudes towards their partner, desirability of undertaking tasks and circumstance.

7.1 The need to earn an income

It was common for the couples to discuss the need to accumulate a sufficient household income. While both partners were in employment in all couples, it was common for there to be a full-time and a part time worker. In most instances, the household was dependant on the earnings of the full-time worker.

"Most of my restrictions are financial as such not that I'm in dire straits or anything it's just that my job, I'm in a higher paid job than my normal job, I've had that for a few years now so. I well and truly outstrip my wife, wages wise so, and we want to get the kids through private schools and things so it's just, a necessity." (Male, 21)

"Oh I'm pretty much the same as [other respondent], my salary is higher than my wife's so it just doesn't make sense for me to cut back, change or, whatever." (Male, 21)

Since men were usually engaged in full-time employment and their partners were in part time employment, men had a greater earning potential and generally contributed less to domestic labour. Some couples indicated that since the women had stopped working following child birth, and had only resumed employment in a part time or casual capacity, they would not be able to earn as much as their husband or partner, and as a result, the men would be the main income source for the household.

"It all comes down to finance, my husband is always going to earn, with what he does, he's going to earn a lot more than I would, so ours would come down to finance." (Female, 20)

As previously noted, the totality of work, including paid and unpaid, was divided relatively equally between the couples. As a result, the person who spent more time at home tended to do the majority of household tasks. As the men tended to spend more time at work, this acted as a barrier for the male partners to become more involved in the household tasks.

Generally, the women who worked part time had no intention of increasing their hours in paid employment while they still had children at home. Essentially, they wanted to have the time to be available for their family, and as result, needed to maintain part time hours. However, this created the necessity for their partners to work full-time to ensure a satisfactory household income.

However, in the case of the few women who had greater earning potential than their husbands, the same theme was also evident. In this scenario, the men were able to work fewer hours in paid employment, which enabled them to undertake a greater proportion of the shared care arrangements.

“So when he wasn't working full time, he just really didn't enjoy his job as much as I enjoyed mine and I earned more money and I would have to work less hours to earn the same... and we just decided that someone needed to be at home initially and we could afford to do that.” (Female, 6)

7.2 Managing couples working hours and children's out of school hours

The employment hours of each partner had a significant effect on how and when they were available to care for their children and assist with domestic tasks. When women were working at different times to their partners, men typically had to absorb a greater proportion of household tasks and childcare if they were at home. For example, some men made the evening meal or were involved in its preparation if they returned home from work before their female partners.

7.2.1 Inflexibility of school hours

School hours were a significant factor in negotiating the amount of paid employment hours that each partner undertook in an average week. Couples tended to coordinate their working hours, when possible, to ensure that at least one parent was available to supervise the children outside of school hours. This was of particular significance during the hours of 3-6pm when school had finished but normal working hours had not. This was also significant for weekends and school holidays. This, in part, was a factor in the decision of some women to work part time and in conjunction with school hours.

“I think one of the things that puts a lot of pressure on everyone is the lack of alignment between working hours and school hours to be honest.” (Male, 14)

“And there's no drama with the other kids because there is so much on. You know, it's a full-time job from half past two till six o'clock, running them around and picking them up.” (Male, 13)

7.2.2 Men with flexible working hours

Men with flexible working hours (achieved through working for themselves, having the ability to work from home, working shifts, working part time, or altering start and finishing times) found it much easier to participate in shared care arrangements, especially during the after school hours of 3-6pm, particularly if their partners were at work. Around a third of the participants in the research were in one of the above scenarios. These couples appreciated the flexibility of this arrangement as it ensured their children did not have to attend paid childcare and enabled men to be more involved in the lives of their children. In particular, men often indicated that they were appreciative of having this opportunity.

“I work shift work so I'm a police officer. So I work all sorts of shifts and weird shifts. Um, which actually works out quite well for the kids because I can sometimes be home all day and then just do changeover – the wife takes them at night – so that works out all right.” (Male, 19)

“Absolutely, it's something that keeps me ahm, there, is knowing that the age that the kids are at, I have amazing flexibility and if I need to go to school to do something, I need to leave early, I have to have sick days here and there, they are very understanding of that, and organising school holidays and randomly taking days off here and there, that's fantastic.” (Male, 14)

“I'm flexible. I work when I [can], around the kids sometimes. You know, when they go to bed. Depending on how busy I am so if I take it a bit easy in the day I'll sometimes have to work harder at night. So mine's pretty flexible. I can move the hours around so which helps.” (Male, 2)

During the course of the research, participants were asked to discuss the idea that men should have access to flexible working conditions to enable them to participate in the care of their children. For those who worked

in less flexible job roles, this was strongly regarded as an unrealistic idea. Men who worked at least 40 hours per week within an office setting, or as tradesmen, did not believe that their role could be conducted in a part time capacity. It was indicated that their current position required them to work full-time hours, and be available at key times during the day.

“That’s too hard, you can’t get, unless you work for the Government, you can do that, but you can’t do that in a trade, because you can’t ring up and go hey man, it’s ten o’clock at night, I’m coming to put your air conditioner in, she’s not going to let you in.” (Male, 23)

“Yes but in my line of work, don’t get me wrong I have a very flexible boss but ahm if I went to him and said I need to work four days a week it, it wouldn’t happen... it’s the kind of industry where, how can I put it, it’s very cut throat. Ah in the transport industry in like what we do... But ah getting something structured like that would be like fighting tooth and nail for it.” (Male, 1)

However, this perspective was not shared by all participants. Two men within the sample had made the decision to reduce their hours and down-shift their careers to become stay at home fathers. It is important to indicate that this decision was made, in part, because they had been refused more flexible working hours following the birth of their children.

“My husband did <request flexible working hours>. Yeah he’d been working ten years and he asked to work part time and they said no, so that was why he resigned and moved to XXX hardware store.” (Female, 20)

“But then I think there is some, for females, there’s more, there seems to be more of an option when a female falls pregnant there seems to be more of an option if they want to come back to work. Companies seem to be more flexible to say, ‘Okay, well, yes she can do part time’, but there’s not that, there doesn’t seem to be that same equality for males to allow that to happen.” (Male, 13)

7.3 Women’s attitudes towards their partners

Female attitudes towards the role of father and partner commonly acted as a barrier or enabler to the engagement of men with housework, but not the care of children. When women accepted responsibility for housework, some provided task lists and delegated certain duties to their partners. As a result, these men had a more active role in domestic labour.

“I’ve been doing that lately but I generally always do the cooking and if I want him to do anything I have to organise him he can’t do something off his back - if I want him to start dinner I have to have a long written explanation of what I want him to do.” (Female, 22)

“I take each day as it comes see what needs to be done and basically as long as you are clear or leave a note or send text messages - you know they’ll get done.” (Female, 22)

“I have to have lists, so there’s always a list and things have got to be done.” (Female, 20)

Alternatively, some women also indicated that their partners were incapable of completing housework to a standard that they believed was acceptable. As a result, these women completed the majority of housework tasks as they were more competent and efficient at these tasks. Similarly, some women suggested that when domestic work needed to be completed, they would act immediately, while their partner was prepared to wait until a time that was more convenient. Consequently, women would often be responsible for the majority of domestic labour. As this arrangement had existed for an extended period of time, in some cases several years, men were happy to allow their partners to take responsibility for housework and domestic labour.

*M “It may not necessarily be that you have to be told, it’s just that you get told.”
F “Reminded. Because we want it done then and there, and we’ll do it later, and I’m like, get up and do it now. I want it done now.” (Couple, 23)*

“I didn’t really allow, in saying that, I don’t think I allowed [partner] to do a lot, or give him the time to do it because I’m too impatient. So I would rather, as much as my back might be hurting and I’m

wrecked I'll do it because I can't handle it sitting out whereas if I probably gave it an hour or two, it might happen." (Female, 1)

"I think because, I'm like this in work too, you know like when I've got a lot on, I'm not good at delegating, and because I think well if I do it, then I'm going to do the job right and if I give it to someone else, and they stuff it up, then I'm going to have to do it anyway, you know what I mean so that's, I think I have that mentality here too." (Female, 12)

However, there were some instances where men claimed that they would be prepared to increase their contribution to housework and assist their partners, but that their offers of help had been rejected. Essentially, women would not allow them to assist with housework, or would provide insufficient guidance, which men believed acted as a substantial barrier. In these instances, men expressed frustration with their partners.

"Oh I just, I'd probably like to do more. But, you know, [partner] would have to relinquish some, ahm the way things are done. Allowing me to do it my way." (Male, 8)

7.4 Desirability of undertaking shared care

Men appeared to have a greater willingness to participate in the care of their children over household tasks. In particular, they wanted to be involved in the parenting of their children. It was common for men to discuss their desire, if reducing hours of paid employment was possible, to spend more time with their children, and less time engaged in housework.

"I do the bathing at home. It's fun. You should try it, it's good. I enjoy it. I get away from her for a while. Go into the bathroom or whatever." (Male, 19)

Similarly, men were more likely to undertake housework when they had specific skills or when they considered the tasks to be enjoyable. Some men discussed how they enjoyed working in the garden, mowing the lawn and tending to plants. In addition to this, some men reported that they engaged in tasks such as cooking the evening meal and vacuuming because they enjoyed this work.

"Yeah, I love food shopping. Every single day." (Male, 13)

"I mean, look, I enjoy cooking. If I didn't enjoy cooking and all that and probably I tend to try to do a bit more than that than the general cleaning because I enjoy doing that. But I probably don't enjoy sweeping the floor or cleaning the toilets and I try to avoid that type of thing." (Male, 2)

However, there were two cases where men absorbed a much greater proportion of housework in comparison to their partners. This was, in part, because they wanted to contribute more to housework and enjoyed participating in domestic labour.

7.5 Circumstance

Three men, who had been, or currently were, stay at home parents, had the opportunity to do so through circumstance. In two cases, the men had been offered voluntary redundancies that enabled them to stay at home with their children and make a more significant contribution to shared care arrangements.

"Well, circumstances more than anything. If they hadn't offered me redundancy we'd probably still be, we'd still be, um, be doing what we used to do. Because we had three kids and I didn't stay home for them." (Male, 13)

The other respondent had initially made the decision to become a stay at home parent as he had not been actively engaged as a parent in a previous marriage. His new marriage was viewed as an opportunity to make amends for his previous contribution as a parent and father. However, a subsequent separation from his current wife resulted in a renegotiation with their respective employers that enabled them to work alternative long and short weeks. As this arrangement was convenient, it was maintained when the couple got back together.

"But we were separated for three years and so we did alternate weeks, and now that we are sort of having a go at getting back together again, we've stuck with that arrangement, because it works both ways." (Male, 5)

7.6 Attitudes and aspirations regarding shared care

The couples expressed a desire to have some form of shared care. Generally, they felt that they were performing well in achieving an equitable balance, especially in comparison with the more traditional roles of their parents and previous generations. Constrained by their income aspirations, it was common for the couples to believe there were limited opportunities for them to change the current arrangement. While they could foresee minor changes in the distribution of tasks within the family, they could not perceive any shift in the overall balance of their sharing arrangements with the exception of those tasks that would inevitably come from their children growing older and being capable of contributing more to domestic labour.

As noted throughout this report, in relation to the overall balance of household tasks and care for children, the latter tended to take priority. Unlike housework, couples were keen to ensure, when possible, to have an equal contribution to parenting tasks. As a result, partners who worked full-time tended to spend more of their 'at home time' in the care of children, while those who worked fewer hours absorbed a greater proportion of household tasks.

Aspirations were also affected by wanting the best for their children. Across the research, couples had high expectations for the care and education of their children. This, in turn, affected their income desires and hours of paid employment. It also affected their decisions about having external assistance. For example, in this research, couples were reluctant to use paid childcare, except as a last resort, which often resulted in the decision for parents to pursue paid employment that was compatible with school hours.

7.7 Attitudes and aspirations regarding children

The research indicated that children were an important element in the lives of parents, and in general, both parents expressed a desire to be involved in parenting. Parents who worked standard, full-time hours often talked about their time at home as being exclusively for their children. They wanted to be involved with reading, bathing, playing, and for those with school aged children, assisting with homework.

A common attitude held by fathers across the research was that if they could spend less time working, they would spend more time with their children (rather than doing household tasks). They believed that their children should be their priority when at home. A small number of men even complained that they felt their partners were spending too much time prioritising household tasks over time with their children.

"...sometimes I feel, like, um, you know, there should be more focus on the kids rather than the appearance of the house." (Male, 19)

"...where [partner] is probably more that, he'll drop everything and you know like if [son] was calling him because he's playing a, you know playing or doing something on the computer and he doesn't understand it, if it was me I'd say no I've got to wash the dishes. Where [partner] would leave the dishes and would go." (Female, 8)

Parents who worked part time indicated that they had no desire to increase their hours of paid employment because it would negatively impact on their ability to be available for their children. Some women, who had children under school age, while feeling that they may increase their hours of paid employment when the children commenced school, still suggested that they wanted to be able to confine their work arrangements to school hours. In part, this would assist in the management of time between school finishing and the

evening meal. In addition to this, it would also enable parents to participate in school duties such as the tuck shop and school field trips.

"I would like to be working more hours when the children are less needy of me, so when they are all at school say, I'd like to be working during the day more, when they are at school, but I've only got one at school at the moment, so I don't want to put them in day care, so in the future I would like to be working more hours... but I want those work hours to be within school hours." (Female, 20)

"It's the interaction with the children I just couldn't let that go." (Female, 22)

Interestingly, one woman who had recently returned to work and was working full-time hours (her husband also worked full-time), was struggling to balance the competing commitments of work and family life. Having previously spent her time as a stay at home mum, she felt that if she couldn't find a point of balance, she would sacrifice her paid employment to be available for the family.

"I guess if it came to the crunch and the children started to change I would just quit my job. I mean going back to work was just because the youngest was at school and it was nice for me to get back into socialising - I often have a joke that I'm not there for the money - I'll just clock off and work extra if I had to because I enjoy it and really like it, but I don't want the children to suffer because of that so and I had said to the kids a few times that do they want me to quit?" (Female, 7)

A commonly held attitude by the parents across this research was that they did not want to put their children into childcare; it was important that their children had a constant parental figure. Parents who had made this decision did not like the thought of their children being neglected in childcare or having to put their trust in a person they did not know. As long as one parent worked part time, or one or both parents had flexible employment hours, it would be possible to avoid or minimise the use of outside childcare. When both parents were required to work at the same time (which generally equated to 1-2 days a week on average), it was common for grandparents to supervise their children. In addition to this, family friends and older siblings also assisted with the care of children when required.

*<Interviewer> "And you're obviously working full time and your wife part time, why is that?"
M "We made that decision early on because for [daughter] - purely for [daughter] because we thought it was the best thing for her - we didn't want to put [daughter's] life in the hands of someone we don't know - you often go to kindy and they are all just sitting there or they check nappies every two hours and things like that whereas this gives the best chance for [daughter]." (Male, 15)*

"[Partner's] parents live in Echuca, so they come down once a week and look after our kids, otherwise I wouldn't work. I wouldn't put them into day care, I'm kind of against day care, so it's just that they were looking for an excuse to come down and see the kids anyway, so that's worked out well." (Female, 23)

Only two couples within the research used childcare on a permanent basis, and they can be categorised as follows:

- Both couples had one, pre-school aged child;
- Both partners worked full time in one couple; and
- One partner worked four days a week and the other full-time in one couple.

Three couples, with school aged children, used after-school care (for one couple, they used it when grandparents were not available) or a nanny on a more casual basis (the mother in this couple was a nurse, the nanny was used when her shifts were at a similar time to her husbands working hours).

The parents in this research have aspirations for their children to be the best that they could be. This translated into parents taking the time to read with their children and assist with their homework. In addition to this, some parents also participated as coaches in their children's sports teams. Finally, some couples

placed significant emphasis on education, which for some parents, meant enrolling their children in a private school.

7.8 Attitudes & aspirations toward household tasks

It was common for the care and maintenance of the household to be a female responsibility. Even when the female partner was working full-time, they were still accountable for the domestic sphere. Male responsibility tended to focus on outdoor tasks.

"...as far as housework is concerned, I've always been like that throughout the whole time I think, yeah so that's my domain I suppose." (Female, 12)

"I'm a bit of a clean freak and [partner's] less so. So that causes issues." (Female, 13)

M "[Partner] runs the house."

F "Um, yeah, look, I suppose in a way even though he toes the line and stuff like that. I suppose I've probably over the years made the...not the rules but, you know, like, he knows that I can't stand it if a floor's dirty or if, um, the beds are left unmade." (Couple, 2)

As women assumed more responsibility for the household, they were also more engaged with, and serious about, housework. It was often reported that when men were left alone with the children, less housework was completed. The women were also more likely to take the initiative to do housework, whereas men generally needed to be prompted.

"Like, my wife will, like, we've got two toy boxes and she'll make sure that all our daughter's stuff is in one toy box and all the boys' stuff is in the other, where I'll just...I'll be throwing it outside the room if it gets in the box well and good." (Male, 19)

"But every now and again I leave [partner] all day with the children and so I just give him an understanding of what it's like in my world. And then he rings me and says, oh my God I'm wrecked. And he goes, oh I haven't had time to clean yet, I'm like well yeah that's right because you wouldn't even factor in that you have to clean as well as look after the kids." (Female, 1)

As previously noted, the parent who spent less time in paid work generally absorbed a larger proportion of household tasks. It was commonly accepted that the person who had more time at home would undertake more domestic labour with couples regarding use of time for household tasks and paid work to be similar.

While some couples desired a cleaner to assist with housework, many indicated that this was unrealistic. In most instances, the female partner indicated that it was not necessary to employ a cleaner to complete work they could already do proficiently, or were at least capable of doing themselves.

"I'd have a cleaner. But I don't because I can't afford it. And I'd feel guilty, cause I don't work full time and I think oh I've got time to do it. But mostly it would only be for the bathroom and mopping. Yeah, that only really." (Female, 8)

"But I'd probably be one of those people that would clean up before the cleaner came." (Female, 2)

In terms of shifting any balance of how housework was performed, some of the parents hoped that, as their children got older, they would be able to make a greater contribution to domestic labour. Between the parents themselves, there was less chance of a shift in division of labour.

"I just hope the kids will start doing some." (Male, 21)

7.9 Attitudes & aspirations towards work

The requirement for paid employment was determined primarily by the need for a sufficient household income. In order to afford the lifestyle and possessions that they desired for their families, it was essential that at least one parent work full-time and the other part time. Specifically, some of the participants mentioned having to pay the mortgage, pay for two cars, pay for groceries, clothes, holidays, consumer goods, and fees for children's activities and sports clubs. In line with this, some of the parents aspired for their children to have the best education possible, and as such, wanted them to attend a private school. As a result, a high household income was required to afford private school tuition.

"Financial pressures, yeah. I think if we didn't have financial pressures there's no way [partner] would be working doing what she's doing, she'd probably go off and do something that she really wanted to do, like, some arty thing. Not worry about income. She'd do that for fulfilment, not income." (Male, 19)

"... we've always both had worked full-time and had an income so I guess the income suffered a little bit, yeah, so then it just kind of falls to me to be providing, which sometimes is a bit of pressure." (Female, 13)

Those who worked full-time could not envisage an alternative arrangement that would enable them to maintain (or improve upon) their current financial position and believed that they would have better career opportunities if they maintained their current employment status. While not universal, it was common for women who worked part time to have more limited career aspirations. They enjoyed work because it was a break from home life, however they also valued being able to have the time to spend with their children, something they were not willing to sacrifice.

"I want to be that person. I want them to look back and go mum was home, she was there for me, she read books to me, she, you know I, I want to, yeah I want to be actively involved. So as much as you know the career and all of that but, ultimately my children will always come first for me." (Female, 1)

"But I've never been that way <career> inclined anyway so I guess it's never really, yeah, been an issue for me... It's nice to sort of get out but, really, even if I found another job I wouldn't want any more than three days. Three days is absolute maximum. Um, yeah, I just... I like my time at home and doing whatever I'm doing, I'm never bored. I always find there's stuff to do or, you know, occasionally you go meet someone for coffee or what have you, but, yeah, it's a pretty good lifestyle. I like it." (Female, 2)

Some of the women within the research, who worked at least three days a week, claimed that in an ideal world they would want to work less so that they could have more time with their family. However, they had also made the decision to work so that they could assist in providing a desired lifestyle. In some cases they reported that this was driven by a specific need to pay private school fees.

Some of the women who worked part time felt that it gave them an intellectual outlet that was external to the home. They valued this time as it enabled them to use their brains and have adult conversations.

"Because I want to be able to use my brain and interact." (Female, 1)

"One was financial reasons I need to go work. But secondly it was also just to get my self esteem back up again." (Female, 8)

7.10 Summary of Qualitative Findings

While there were exceptions, the common pattern of paid work amongst the couples who took part in the qualitative research was that the men worked full time (usually a minimum of 40 hours a week during the day) and most of the women worked part time. In general the female partner's were doing a greater proportion of the housework tasks than men.

There was a clear gender split across the housework tasks, with the women tending to take primary responsibility for those tasks performed indoors, while the men tended to take responsibility for outdoor tasks. Time spent in these respective tasks tended to reflect this difference in responsibility.

Overall, couples reported that the split of childcare tasks was more even than those of household tasks, although they acknowledged that the partner who worked less paid hours also tended to spend more time in childcare tasks.

In the process of coming to a shared care arrangement, it was apparent that couples did not really consider time spent in the areas of paid work, domestic work and child minding as entities to be compared separately. Rather, they thought about these issues from the perspective of total time. This appeared to be especially the case in terms of the balance between paid and unpaid work hours, while childcare time was considered somewhat separately. This meant that in couples where each partner spent a similar amount of time in paid work, there was a tendency for unpaid domestic work to be fairly evenly split. By contrast, those couples where one partner worked full time (most commonly the male) and the other part time (most commonly the female), the part time worker tended to do more of the unpaid domestic work. Couples felt that this was fair, and explained it as simply a practical necessity.

Time spent with children was regarded somewhat separately, although it was still determined according to the overall balance of time available and time spent in paid and unpaid work. Again, couples who spent similar amount of time in paid work tended to report that they fairly evenly divided the childcare time. Couples where one partner worked full time and the other part time, noted that this arrangement meant that the part-time worker tended to have more time available to spend with the children during normal working hours, whether this was while they were doing unpaid domestic work or in dedicated child caring time. Consequently, the couples had typically come to an arrangement where, when the full time working partner was home, they spent more time with their children in an attempt to make up for the time they were unable to be with the children during their working hours. In the most common situations, this meant that the male partner would spend time with the children when he came home from work in preference to domestic work. The couples we spoke with generally felt that this arrangement was both acceptable and desirable, with the female partners, who spent a greater proportion of the day time hours at home, commonly reporting that they welcomed the opportunity to, for example, have a break from the children while they prepared the evening meal. From this perspective, couples reported that they aspired to having as close to equal as possible arrangement with childcare, but that the degree to which this could be achieved tended to be dependent on the equality of hours spent away from home in paid work.

In terms of the determinants of sharing arrangements, it was clear from the interviews and group discussions that the availability of and capacity for flexible and non-standard working hours had a substantial influence. In particular, couples with school aged children consistently reported that the time period between 3pm and 6pm, as with school holidays, was a critical time in terms of determining the allocation of tasks and roles.

Given the lack of flexibility in the children's hours, it was considered necessary for one parent to be available for the children in this period after school but during normal working hours. Those who worked shifts, worked for themselves or worked from home could more easily accommodate these needs.

Other factors that acted as barriers and enablers to men being involved in the shared care arrangements included:

- Perceptions of responsibility and competency;
- Personal preferences for different tasks; and
- Circumstances, and especially changes in work status.

Overall, couples were reasonably happy with their existing arrangements, although there was a sense amongst some of the women that they felt they took on an unfair proportion of the responsibility for household tasks.

These couples expressed aspirations for some form of shared arrangement, and generally felt that they were doing as well as they could within the restrictions of the requirements of their paid work, their desire for a certain level of income and its associated lifestyle, and the balance of time available.

8 Discussion and Conclusions

This research was designed to assess the characteristics of Australian couples who share domestic work and parenting tasks, to identify the enablers and barriers that impact on men in their decision to share care and domestic work, and men's and women's attitudes and aspirations regarding shared care and domestic work. The study employed a mixed methods design combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to examine the research questions using a range of different techniques. Such an approach enables comparison of the reliability of results obtained via different methods, as well as the opportunity to examine research questions using different approaches. In the current study the quantitative survey of 300 men who report doing at least 40% of care and domestic work was particularly useful for gaining a detailed view of the way in which domestic work and parenting tasks were organised within households and to assess the value of different theoretical approaches for explaining divisions of labour and time. The qualitative data collected via interviews and focus groups with a further 34 couples was particularly useful for exploring the negotiations and processes that led to particular arrangements, as well as respondents' perceptions and aspirations for shared care and domestic work.

The results showed that even in households where men do at least 40% of domestic and parenting work, a clear gender division of labour persists and in the majority of households, women undertake the bulk of unpaid work. As shown in Section 4, the survey results revealed that women spend about 17 hours per week on housework tasks compared to only 13 hours per week for men, indicating a gender gap of 4 hours of housework time each week. Although both men and women report much more time spent on parenting tasks (23 and 32 hours respectively) the gender gap here (9 hours) is more than twice the size of the gender gap for housework time. Thus despite men and women's concern to privilege time with children over housework tasks, the gender gap in parenting time is much larger than the gender gap in housework time. Overall though, when time spent in paid work is considered, men and women have very similar workloads with both spending about 77 to 79 hours per week in paid and unpaid work. The key difference between men and women is that men undertake the bulk of paid work while women undertake the bulk of unpaid work. These results mirror those found in international studies of time use (see Sayer, England, Bittman and Bianchi 2009).

In terms of the proportionate share of work, the distribution of parenting and domestic work is roughly 60% for women and 40% for men. This pattern is reversed in the case of paid work, but overall the total share of paid and unpaid work combined is approximately 50/50. Interestingly, from the qualitative study there was evidence that men tended to over-report, or women under-report, how much men did within households, suggesting that there is some disagreement about how much work men and women do in households (see Section 5.3.1). There was also evidence that the share of domestic and parenting work varied between weekdays and weekends, with men contributing a larger share on weekends.

The main theories proposed in previous literature for explaining men's levels of involvement in domestic and parenting work are economic resources or bargaining, time availability and gender display. These theories were outlined and discussed in detail in Section 3. The results here show support for each of these approaches but with some key variations. Specifically the survey results show that one of the key factors influencing men's time on parenting and housework tasks is not just the amount of time they spend in paid

work each week, but the characteristics of their paid work time. Moreover there is also evidence that men's partners' time in paid work and whether or not their partner worked non-standard hours was also a key factor in men's levels of involvement in unpaid work.

Specifically, although spending more time in paid work was associated with less time for men on domestic work, irregular paid work hours, working night shifts or being able to take work home, was associated with increased time for men on housework. At the same time, if their partners spent long hours in paid work, worked weekends or had to travel away overnight for work, men reported increased housework time. These are important findings that suggest that time availability must be measured not just in terms of average hours per week, but also in terms of whether or not there is some flexibility around when (i.e. nights, weekends) and where (i.e. home) work can be done. For policy, these findings suggest that greater flexibility and less regularity in work hours for both men and women is a key determinant of men's increased involvement in domestic work. It further suggests that if men are able to adjust their working week schedules to accommodate domestic work, or if they routinely work non-standard hours, they will be able to participate to a greater extent in domestic work. These findings are reinforced by the qualitative results (see Sections 7.2.2 and 7.5) where respondents indicated the importance of flexible work hours in terms of who was available at the time to do domestic and parenting work.

The importance of employment arrangements in shaping domestic patterns is also evident in the analyses of parenting time, but in slightly different ways to housework. Again the overall finding here is that increased hours of paid work are associated with less time on parenting. But in this case, irregular paid work hours for men were also associated with less time on parenting. In contrast to housework tasks, parenting tasks are less flexible and less able to be rescheduled. Thus irregular paid work hours may mean more time for men to fit in more housework time, but less time spent with children. On the other hand, if men work night shifts, or their partners work night shifts, men report more time spent on parenting tasks. It may be that in these households men are required to take on more parenting tasks by virtue of the absence of their partner. If both partners are working alternate shifts, the partner who is at home will be required to do any housework or parenting work that arises while they are home. Again these findings are reinforced by the qualitative results where one couple reported a change in their domestic arrangements as a result of time spent apart (see Section 7.5). In this case, the arrangements they had put in place while separated of alternating work hours, were maintained after they reunited.

Thus for domestic and parenting tasks there is evidence that the employment characteristics of both men and their partners shape men's time in domestic and parenting work. For example, the length of women's paid work hours and the degree of flexibility of their employment (e.g. being able to take work home) was associated with men's levels of involvement in the household. These are new results that have not been widely reported or found in other studies. Most previous research has found a weak, or non-existent relationship, between wives employment characteristics and men's time on domestic or parenting work. Perhaps this is because few previous studies have examined the characteristics of paid work as opposed to the length of the paid work week. Alternatively it may be that our sample of men who already perform at least 40% of activities has identified a group of men who are supportive of a high degree of involvement in domestic and parenting work and who are sensitive to the constraints imposed by their partners employment. This suggests some support for Deutsch's results on agency. Within the constraints imposed by the structure of the paid labour market on men's and women's employment characteristics, men are able

and willing to show a degree of agency in levels of involvement in domestic and parenting work. This agency or willingness to be involved is constrained by the rigidity of many men's paid work hours. These results also underscore the importance of examining the characteristics of households, not just individuals, when explaining domestic labour arrangements. Clearly the decisions made by men about their levels of involvement in domestic and parenting work is influenced by household variables, such as the joint working hours of both partners and the employment characteristics of both partners.

There is also strong support in this research for the importance of gender display and gender attitudes. This is evidenced in the quantitative results where men with liberal or egalitarian gender attitudes spent more time on housework and parenting tasks than their counterparts. The importance of gender attitudes and gender display is also apparent throughout the qualitative results where both men and women assumed a gendered basis to paid and unpaid work (see Section 5.3.2) and the classic finding here, and from much research on this topic, is that women are responsible for the domestic and parenting work while men are involved primarily as "helpers." The unquestioned assumption from the respondents in the qualitative findings is that it is important for mothers to spend most time with young children (see Section 5.4.1). In the rare cases where men did opt to be stay at home dads (4 cases in this study) this was sometimes due to other circumstances forcing a change in traditional arrangements (e.g. men being made redundant at work). Only 2 men in this study chose the pattern typically reserved for women of staying at home to provide fulltime care for their children. Clearly economic factors limit men and women's options here. Most men are able to earn more than women and it is therefore economically rational for men to remain in paid work when children are born. However, even in households where women earn more or at least as much as men, gender still outweighs economic factors in determining how much time men and women spend on domestic and parenting tasks.

The results for the economic bargaining approach have received least support in this research. This may be because the measures of household earnings were quite crude and detailed investigation of this approach requires much more nuanced measures of men and women's earnings. This seems quite likely since many other studies, in Australia and overseas, have found support for this approach (Baxter 1992; Greenstein 2000; Bittman, Sayer, Folbre and Matheson 2003). As noted above, economic factors may shape men's and women's decisions about who will move to part time work when children are born, but there is no evidence in this research that earnings play a role in shaping how much time men spend on parenting tasks after controlling for time spent in paid work, and only weak evidence that earnings shape men's time on housework.

One interesting finding from the quantitative models is that men whose partners spend more time on parenting or housework also spend more time on these activities. This may be because men and women try to match each other in terms of how much time they spend on certain activities. For example, if men see their partners spending long hours on housework then they may feel guilty or compelled to also spend more time on housework. Alternatively, it is well known that men and women tend to marry people with similar characteristics and preferences to themselves (Mare 1991), this suggests that men and women with similar preferences for housework and parenting standards are more likely to marry than those with differing preferences. The current research is unable to clarify this issue further in the absence of longitudinal data that measures housework preferences before and after marriage.

Overall men report high levels of satisfaction with domestic and parenting divisions of labour. Only 5% of men report feeling dissatisfied. These results are similar to those reported in other studies (Baxter and

Western 1998). There was some evidence that men who are on call have somewhat lower levels of satisfaction, but the effects are small. The qualitative evidence tends to support the conclusion that most couples were satisfied with their current arrangements. Although interestingly the interview data suggested that for some, this satisfaction was tempered by the view that little could be done to change existing arrangements (see Section 6.1). In other words, men and women had accepted current patterns as workable rather than ideal.

Perhaps more interestingly and unexpected was the proportion of men who reported a desire to do more domestic and parenting work. Over one quarter of men reported a desire to do more domestic work and almost one third of men reported a desire to do more parenting work. Men's desire to privilege time with children over time on housework was reinforced by the qualitative results with some men scheduling housework activities to take place after children were in bed (see Section 5.4.4). The regression analyses indicated that the factors associated with men's desire to do more were partly related to earnings, but the results here were inconsistent across different tasks. There was some evidence that men whose partners carried out more housework also desired to do more housework. As discussed above, it may be that marital homogamy results in men and women with similar preferences about housework standards marrying (or uniting), compared to those with differing preferences. Or it may be that men who see their partners performing more housework feel compelled to express a desire to do more, or feel guilty about the gap in housework responsibilities and would genuinely prefer to do more.

The results here underscore the need to examine domestic and parenting tasks separately. As noted above, both men and women spend much more time on parenting than domestic tasks, but the gender gap is larger in parenting than domestic tasks. This is an important finding and suggests that although men privilege parenting activities over housework activities, so do women, resulting in a continuing gender divide in these activities. There is also evidence that with the exception of supervising or monitoring children, women still perform a larger proportionate share of childcare tasks. Much research on time use has noted men's increased involvement over time in parenting activities, particularly amongst highly educated men (Bianchi, Robinson and Milkie 2006), but this increase has been matched by women. In other words, both men and women spend more time on childcare than in previous generations. As fertility has declined in western nations, time on parenting has increased, leading to parenting emerging as a very time intensive activity (Craig 2007). On the other hand, time spent on some housework activities has declined over time, partly as a result of changing household technologies, but also due to changing life style patterns, such as a tendency to eat more pre-prepared foods (Baxter 2002).

One of the main policy implications from this research relates to the characteristics of men and women's employment. These couples have developed arrangements to enable them to share domestic and parenting work, but they have done so within clear constraints imposed by the labour market. These constraints concern both men's economic advantage over women in terms of higher earnings as well as the inflexibility of paid work hours. Men's economic advantage restricts their opportunities for part time employment or their ability to be stay at home dads. Additionally, inflexibility of paid work hours mean that men are often not available to undertake domestic and parenting work even if they would like to do more of this work. Flexibility of working hours, in conjunction with men's desire and willingness to share domestic and parenting work is a key factor enabling men to share domestic and parenting work.

This research has identified a number of enablers and barriers to men sharing housework and parenting tasks. As noted by Deutsch (1999) there are a myriad of processes, decisions and pathways that lead to equality, many of which take place at an individual level and on a day-to-day basis. The task for policy is to ensure that the broader structural conditions and features of society do not impede or constrain these decisions and processes. This research has identified at least two areas where policy might intervene to remove barriers to equality. One concerns the characteristics of paid work hours. This research shows that greater flexibility in paid work hours enables the development of alternative work and care arrangements at home. A second concerns men's greater earnings potential which encourages women to withdraw from the labour market when parenting or housework tasks require greater input. If policy can change the way in which the labour market advantages men's employment over women's and increase the degree of flexibility in paid work hours, this will enable individuals to develop more equally shared arrangements at home. There is little in our research to suggest that men and women do not want to share housework and parenting tasks equally. On the contrary, about a third of men would like to do more at home, particularly in parenting activities. Although men and women report high levels of satisfaction with current arrangements, there is evidence that they are satisfied because there are no clear alternatives. When there are alternatives, such as those provided by changing the nature and characteristics of men and women's involvement in the labour market, they adopt alternative arrangements at home. The task for social policy is to make these alternatives available to all men and women.

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Appendix 1 – Questionnaire

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683 Men Engaging in Shared Care
Questionnaire V 2.8

Modules

- A Screening**
- B Labour force now and before youngest child born: Respondent**
- C Labour force now and before youngest child born: Partner**
- D Feelings about current /ideal arrangements: housework**
- E Division of labour and time spent: housework**
- F Feelings about current /ideal arrangements: childcare**
- G Children/people in household**
- H Division of labour and time spent: child care**
- I income: Respondent**
- J Income: Partner**
- K Other demographics**

Call outcome codes (SMS screen)

1. Proceed with interview
2. No answer
3. Answering machine
4. Fax machine / modem
5. Engaged
6. Appointment
7. Stopped interview
8. LOTE – No follow up
9. Named person not known (only applies if calling back to keep an appointment and phone answerer denies knowledge of named person)
10. Telstra message / Disconnected
11. Not a residential number
12. Too old / deaf / disabled/health/family reasons
13. Claims to have done survey
14. Away for duration
15. Other out of scope (SUPRESS)
16. Terminated during screening / midway (HIDDEN CODE)

Module A: Screening Questions

Scr1. Hi, this is (INTERVIEWER NAME) calling on behalf of The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs from the Social Research Centre. We're conducting AN IMPORTANT study with fathers on how they balance work, parenting, and household chores. The results will be used to inform policy decisions by the Department. Do you have a couple minutes to see if anyone qualifies?

(IF SOUND ELDERLY): Could you please tell me if any children aged 0 to 12 years usually live in this household?

IF NECESSARY: WE DO WANT TO TALK WITH FATHERS, BUT THERE ARE A COUPLE OF QUESTIONS I NEED TO ASK FIRST TO SEE IF YOUR HOUSEHOLD QUALIFIES – WOULD IT BE OK IF I ASK YOU THESE FIRST?

IF NECESSARY: (Within FaHCSIA): The Office for Women

IF NECESSARY: BY 'USUALLY' WE MEAN MORE THAN 50% OF THE TIME

1. Yes, continue (CONTINUE)
2. No father in household (GO TO TERM1)
3. No children 0 to 12 in household (GOTO TERM1)

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4. Stop interview, make appointment (RECORD NAME AND GENDER AND ARRANGE CALL BACK)
5. Household refusal (ATTEMPT CONVERSION / RECORD REASON) (GO TO RR1)
6. Queried about how telephone number was obtained (DISPLAY ATELQ)
7. Wants further information about survey (GO TO AINFO)
8. Back to SMS

*(ALL)

TS1. TIMESTAMP1

Scr2 Thanks for that. First, which of the following best describes this household...? (READ OUT)

1. A sole parent household (GOTO TERM2)
2. A two parent household with one parent in paid work; (GOTO TERM2)
3. A two parent household with both parents in paid work, or (CONTINUE)
4. Something else (GO TO TERM2)
5. (Refused) (GOTO RR1)
6. Stop interview, make appointment (RECORD NAME AND GENDER AND ARRANGE CALL BACK)
7. Queried about how telephone number was obtained (DISPLAY ATELQ)
8. Wants further information about survey (GO TO AINFO)
9. Back to SMS

Scr5c Because this study is focused on YOUNGER families, I just need to check whether there are any children aged 0 to 12 who usually live in this household?

IF NECESSARY: BY 'USUALLY' WE MEAN MORE THAN 50% OF THE TIME

1. Yes (CONTINUE)
2. No children 0 to 12 in household (GO TO TERM1)
3. Refused (GO TO TERM1)^S

Scr3 Great, thank you. May I speak to the father or male caregiver in the household please? (Is that you?)

1. Yes, that's me (CONTINUE) GO TO SCR5a
2. New respondent (father) CONTINUE
3. No, not available (MAKE APPOINTMENT; RECORD NAME AND ARRANGE CALL BACK))
4. Refused (GOTO RR1)

*(NEW RESPONDENT – FATHER)

Scr3x Hi, this is (INTERVIEWER NAME) calling on behalf of The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs from the Social Research Centre. We're conducting AN IMPORTANT study with fathers on how they balance work, parenting, and household chores. The results will be used to inform policy decisions by the Department.

1. Continue
2. Stop interview, make appointment (RECORD NAME AND GENDER AND ARRANGE CALL BACK)
3. Respondent refusal (ATTEMPT CONVERSION / RECORD REASON) (GO TO RR1)
4. Queried about how telephone number was obtained (DISPLAY ATELQ)
5. Wants further information about survey (GO TO AINFO)

Scr5a (Can I first just ask you a couple of questions to see if you qualify?) Thinking about all of the HOUSEWORK done in your household, approximately what percentage of ALL the time spent on household chores would you say YOU undertake?

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EXPLAIN AS REQUIRED: By household chores we mean regular, essential chores, such as shopping, cooking, cleaning and paying bills, rather than more sporadic chores, such as certain types of outdoor or household maintenance work.

1. Less than 10%
2. 10-19%
3. 20-29%
4. 30-39%
5. 40-49%
6. 50-59%
7. 60-69%
8. 70-79%
9. 80-89%
10. 90+%
11. (Don't know) (AVOID) (GO TO TERM3)
12. (Refused to provide a % of housework done) (AVOID) (GO TO TERM3)

Scr5b And approximately what percentage of ALL the time spent on PARENTING would you say you undertake? By parenting we mean things like listening to problems, reading or playing with your children, taking them to activities and appointments, getting them to bed, helping with homework, and so on.

1. Less than 10%
2. 10-19%
3. 20-29%
4. 30-39%
5. 40-49%
6. 50-59%
7. 60-69%
8. 70-79%
9. 80-89%
10. 90+%
11. (Don't know) (AVOID) (GO TO TERM3)
12. (Refused) (AVOID) (GO TO TERM3)

PRESCR5c IF CODE NUMBER IN SCR5a PLUS CODE NUMBER IN SCR5b IS ≤ 7 , GO TO TERM3, OTHERWISE CONTINUE

Scr6 If you are able to help I'll need about 20 minutes. If you are OK to do this now I'll be as quick as I can. Otherwise we can call you back at a more convenient time. We would really appreciate your time.

1. Continue
2. No, respondent refusal (ATTEMPT CONVERSION / RECORD REASON) (GO TO RR1)
2. Make SOFT appointment to recontact (RECORD NAME AND ARRANGE CALL BACK)
3. Make HARD appointment to recontact (RECORD NAME AND ARRANGE CALL BACK)

Scr7 Thank you. If I come to any question you would prefer not to answer, just let me know and I'll skip over it. You can withdraw from the study at any point, or complete the rest of the interview at another time. All interviews are voluntary, and we will treat all information you give in strict confidence as far as allowed by law.

1. Continue

Scr8. Our call may be monitored by my supervisor for quality assurance purposes. Please tell me if you don't want this to happen.

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1. Monitoring allowed
2. Monitoring not permitted

*(ALL)

TS2. TIMESTAMP2

Scr9 And just before we start in order to make sure I ask you the right questions as we go through the interview, could you please tell me how many children aged 0-12 years usually live in this household?

INTERVIEWER NOTE: BY 'USUALLY' WE MEAN MORE THAN 50% OF THE TIME

1. One
2. Two
3. Three or more
4. None (UNLIKELY RESPONSE, TERMINATE IF CONFIRMED) (GOTO TERM1)
5. (Refused) (GOTO TERM1)

Scr10. And are you MARRIED to your current partner?

1. Yes
2. No
3. (Refused)

*PROGRAMMER NOTE: At (wife/partner) IF Scr10=1 display "wife" throughout script. OTHERWISE use "partner".

At (child/your youngest child) IF SRC9=1 display "child" throughout script. OTHERWISE display "your youngest child".

At "child(ren)" IF SRC9=1 display "child" OTHERWISE DISPLAY "children"

*(QUERIED HOW TELEPHONE NUMBER WAS OBTAINED)

ATELQ Your telephone number has been chosen at random from all possible telephone numbers in Australia. We find that this is the best way to obtain a representative sample and to make sure we get opinions from a wide range of people.

1. Snap back to Scr1 / Scr2 / Scr5a

*(WANTS ADDITIONAL INFORMATION)

AINFO Further information about the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Office for Women can be found at the following website:

www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa.women.

(ONLY IF NECESSARY) If you'd like to talk with someone from the Department about this study, the number is 02 6244 6044.

1. Snap back to Scr1 / Scr2 / Scr5a

*(REFUSED)

RR1 OK, that's fine, no problem, but could you just tell me the main reason you do not want to participate, because that's important information for us?

1. No comment / just hung up
2. Too busy
3. Not interested
4. Too personal / intrusive
5. Don't like subject matter

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6. Don't believe surveys are confidential / privacy concerns
7. Silent number
8. Don't trust surveys / government
9. Never do surveys
10. 20 minutes is too long
11. Get too many calls for surveys / telemarketing
12. Too old / frail / deaf / unable to do survey (CODE AS TOO OLD / FRAIL / DEAF)
13. Not a residential number (business, etc) (CODE AS NOT A RESIDENTIAL NUMBER)
14. Language difficulty (CODE AS LANGUAGE DIFFICULTY NO FOLLOW UP)
15. Going away / moving house (CODE AS AWAY DURATION)
16. Asked to be taken off list (add to do not call register)
17. Other (Specify)

*(REFUSED)

RR2 RECORD RE-CONTACT TYPE

1. Definitely don't call back
2. Possible conversion

*(ANSWERING MACHINE SCRIPTS)

Answering machine message 1

Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is <SAY NAME> calling on behalf of the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs from the Social Research Centre. We are telephoning households across Australia to conduct an important study with fathers on how they balance work, parenting, and household chores. If you are a father with a child aged 0 to 12 living in the household and both you and your partner work, and you would like to participate in this study, please call 1800 023 040 and we will call you back at a time that is convenient to you. Thank you.

Answering machine message 2

Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is <SAY NAME> calling on behalf of the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs from the Social Research Centre. We left a message recently on your answering machine regarding an important study with fathers on how they balance work, parenting, and household chores. If you are a father with a child aged 0 to 12 living in the household and both you and your partner work, and you would like to participate in this study, please call 1800 023 040 and we will call you back at a time that is convenient to you. Thank you.

Module B: Labour force now and before youngest child born: Respondent

*(ALL)

PreB1. Thanks. I'd like to start out with some questions about your work.

1. Continue

*(ALL)

B1. How many paid jobs do you currently have?

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4 or more
5. (Refused)

*(ALL)

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PREB3 IF B1=2 TO 4 (WORKS MORE THAN ONE JOB) GO TO B3 INTRO i. OTHERS DISPLAY B3 INTRO ii.

*(ALL)

B3 i. And what is your occupation in your main job? (PROBE: What are your main tasks or duties?)

B3ii. What is your occupation? (PROBE: What are your main tasks or duties?)

***Managers**

1. Chief Executives, General Managers And Legislators
2. Farmers And Farm Managers
3. Specialist Managers
4. Hospitality, Retail And Service Managers

***Professionals**

5. Arts And Media Professionals
6. Business, Human Resource And Marketing Professionals
7. Design, Engineering, Science And Transport Professionals
8. Education Professionals
9. Health Professionals
10. ICT Professionals
11. Legal, Social And Welfare Professionals

***Technicians and Trade Workers**

12. Engineering, ICT And Science Technicians
13. Automotive And Engineering Trades Workers
14. Construction Trades Workers
15. Electrotechnology And Telecommunications Trades Workers
16. Food Trades Workers
17. Skilled Animal And Horticultural Workers
18. Other Technicians And Trades Workers

***Community and Personal Service Workers**

19. Health And Welfare Support Workers
20. Carers And Aides
21. Hospitality Workers
22. Protective Service Workers
23. Sports And Personal Service Workers

***Clerical and Administrative workers**

24. Office Managers And Program Administrators
25. Personal Assistants And Secretaries
26. General Clerical Workers
27. Inquiry Clerks And Receptionists
28. Numerical Clerks
29. Clerical And Office Support Workers
30. Other Clerical And Administrative Workers

***Sales Workers**

31. Sales Representatives And Agents
32. Sales Assistants And Salespersons
33. Sales Support Workers

***Machinery Operators and Drivers**

34. Machine And Stationary Plant Operators
35. Mobile Plant Operators
36. Road And Rail Drivers
37. Storepersons

***Labourers**

38. Cleaners And Laundry Workers
39. Construction And Mining Labourers
40. Factory Process Workers
41. Farm, Forestry And Garden Workers
42. Food Preparation Assistants

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43. Other Labourers

***Other**

44. Other occupation (Specify_____)

45. (Don't know)

46. (Refused)

*(ALL)

B4. Approximately how many hours per week do you usually work (in all jobs)?

1. Hours (Specify_____) (RANGE: 1 to 99)

2. (Don't know) (AVOID)

3. (Refused)

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*(ALL)

B5. How often does your (main) job require you to... (READ OUT)

INTERVIEWER NOTE: PROBE TO CODEFRAME

STATEMENTS

- a. Work broken shifts or irregular hours?
- b. Work overtime or very long hours?
- c. Work weekends?
- d. Work night shifts?
- e. Take work home?
- f. Travel away from home overnight?
- g. Be on call?

CODEFRAME

1. Always
2. Often
3. Sometimes
4. Rarely
5. Never
6. (Don't know)
7. (Refused)
8. (Doesn't apply)

*(ALL)

B7. Which one of the following best describes your MAIN activity BEFORE THE BIRTH of your (child/youngest child)? Would you say you were... (READ OUT)

1. Employed full time
2. Employed part time
3. Employed casually
4. On leave from a permanent job
5. A full-time stay at home parent (not on leave, studying and not on Newstart)
8. Studying
9. Looking for work
10. Or something else (Specify _____)
11. (Don't know)
12. (Refused)

*(ALL)

B8. If money was not an issue and you were able to, would you prefer to... (READ OUT)

1. Work full time
2. Work part time and look after the children and the home part time
3. Work part time and study part time
4. Study part time and look after the children and the home part time,
5. Stay at home to look after the children and the home, or
6. Something else (specify _____)
7. (Don't know)
8. (Refused)

PreB8a IF HOURS IN B4 >=35 AND B8 = 1 (WORK FULL TIME) GO TO PREC1, OTHERWISE CONTINUE

*(ALL OTHER THAN CURRENTLY WORKS FULL TIME AND WANTS TO WORK FULL TIME)

B8a. What is the MAIN reason you are not currently doing this?

1. (Specify _____)

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2. Is already doing this
3. (Don't know)
4. (Refused)

*(ALL)

TS3. TIMESTAMP3

Module C: Labour force now and before youngest child born: Partner

*(ALL)

PreC1. Now I'd like to ask about your (wife/partner)'s work.

1. Continue

*(ALL)

C1. How many different paid jobs does she currently have?

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4 or more
5. (Don't know)
6. (Refused)

*(ALL)

PREC3 IF C1=2 TO 4 (WORKS MORE THAN ONE JOB) DISPLAY C3 INTRO i. OTHERS DISPLAY C3 INTRO ii.

*(ALL)

C3i And what is your (wife/partner)'s occupation in her main job? (PROBE: What are her main tasks or duties?)

C3iii What is your (wife/partner)'s occupation? (PROBE: What are her main tasks or duties?)

***Managers**

1. Chief Executives, General Managers And Legislators
2. Farmers And Farm Managers
3. Specialist Managers
4. Hospitality, Retail And Service Managers

***Professionals**

5. Arts And Media Professionals
6. Business, Human Resource And Marketing Professionals
7. Design, Engineering, Science And Transport Professionals
8. Education Professionals
9. Health Professionals
10. ICT Professionals
11. Legal, Social And Welfare Professionals

***Technicians and Trade Workers**

12. Engineering, ICT And Science Technicians
13. Automotive And Engineering Trades Workers
14. Construction Trades Workers
15. Electrotechnology And Telecommunications Trades Workers
16. Food Trades Workers
17. Skilled Animal And Horticultural Workers
18. Other Technicians And Trades Workers

***Community and Personal Service Workers**

19. Health And Welfare Support Workers
20. Carers And Aides
21. Hospitality Workers

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- 22. Protective Service Workers
- 23. Sports And Personal Service Workers
- *Clerical and Administrative workers**
- 24. Office Managers And Program Administrators
- 25. Personal Assistants And Secretaries
- 26. General Clerical Workers
- 27. Inquiry Clerks And Receptionists
- 28. Numerical Clerks
- 29. Clerical And Office Support Workers
- 30. Other Clerical And Administrative Workers
- *Sales Workers**
- 31. Sales Representatives And Agents
- 32. Sales Assistants And Salespersons
- 33. Sales Support Workers
- *Machinery Operators and Drivers**
- 34. Machine And Stationary Plant Operators
- 35. Mobile Plant Operators
- 36. Road And Rail Drivers
- 37. Storepersons
- *Labourers**
- 38. Cleaners And Laundry Workers
- 39. Construction And Mining Labourers
- 40. Factory Process Workers
- 41. Farm, Forestry And Garden Workers
- 42. Food Preparation Assistants
- 43. Other Labourers
- *Other**
- 44. Other occupation (Specify_____)
- 45. (Don't know)
- 46. (Refused)

*(ALL)

C4. Approximately how many hours per week does she usually work (in all jobs)?

- 1. Hours (Specify_____) (RANGE: 1 to 99)
- 2. (Don't know) (AVOID)
- 3. (Refused)

*(ALL)

C5. How often does your (wife/partner)'s (main) job require her to... (READ OUT)

INTERVIEWER NOTE: PROBE TO CODEFRAME

STATEMENTS

- a. Work broken shifts or irregular hours?
- b. Work overtime or very long hours?
- c. Work weekends?
- d. Work night shifts?
- e. Take work home?
- f. Travel away from home overnight?
- g. Be on call?

CODEFRAME

- 1. Always
- 2. Often
- 3. Sometimes
- 4. Rarely
- 5. Never

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6. (Don't know)
7. (Refused)
8. (Doesn't apply)

*(ALL)

C7. Which one of the following best describes your (wife/partner)'s MAIN activity BEFORE THE BIRTH of your (child/youngest child)? Would you say she was... (READ OUT)

1. Employed full time
2. Employed part time
3. Employed casually
4. On leave from a permanent job
5. A full-time stay at home parent (not on leave, studying and not on Newstart)
8. Studying
9. Looking for work
10. Or something else (Specify_____)
11. (Don't know)
12. (Refused)

*(ALL)

C8. If money was not an issue and she were able to, would she prefer to... (READ OUT)

1. Work full time
2. Work part time and look after the children and the home part time
3. Work part time and study part time
4. Study part time and look after the children and the home part time,
5. Stay at home to look after the children and the home, or
5. Something else (specify _____)
- 6 (Don't know)
7. (Refused)

PreC8a IF HOURS IN C4 >=35 AND C8 = 1 (PREFER TO WORK FULL TIME) GO TO PRED1, OTHERWISE CONTINUE

*(ALL OTHER THAN CURRENTLY WORKS FULL TIME AND WANTS TO WORK FULL TIME)

C8a. What is the MAIN reason she is not currently doing this?

1. (Specify _____)
2. Is already doing this
3. (Don't know)
4. (Refused)

*(ALL)

TS4. TIMESTAMP4

Module D: Feelings about current /ideal housework arrangements

*(ALL)

PreD1. Next I'd like to ask you some questions about how you and your (wife/partner) share household chores.

1. Continue

*(ALL)

D1. Overall, how satisfied would you say you are with your current arrangements regarding the sharing of housework? Would you say you are very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

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1. Very satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. (Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied)
4. Dissatisfied
5. Very dissatisfied
6. (Don't know)
7. (Refused)

PRED2 IF D1=6,7 (DK, Ref) GOTO D3). OTHERS CONTINUE

*(VERY SATISFIED, SATISFIED, DISSATISFIED OR VERY DISSATISFIED AT D1)

D2. Can you tell me the MAIN reason you are <insert response to D1>? What else? Anything else?

1. (Specify _____)
2. (Don't know) (AVOID)
3. (Refused)

*(ALL)

D3. If you could change your current arrangements regarding the overall sharing of housework, would you prefer to... (READ OUT CODES 1 TO 3 ONLY)

1. Keep things the way they are
2. Do less and ask your (wife/partner) to do more, OR
3. Do more and ask your (wife/partner) to do less
4. (Find ways to reduce the total amount of housework you and your (wife/partner) do)
5. Other (specify _____)
6. (Don't know)
7. (Refused)

PRED4 IF D3=4 (REDUCE TOTAL AMOUNT) CONTINUE. OTHERS GOTO TS5

*(REDUCE TOTAL AMOUNT (D3=4))

D4. And how would you reduce the total amount of housework you and your (wife/partner) do?

1. Outsource (get a cleaner,, gardener etc)
2. Just do less
3. Other (Specify _____)
4. (Don't know)
5. (Refused)

*(ALL)

TS5. TIMESTAMP5

Module E: Division of labour and time spent: housework

*(ALL)

E1. Next I'm going to ask you about a range of household tasks, and I'd like you to tell me for each task whether, in a typical week, YOU do MOST OR ALL of this, YOU do A BIT MORE, you share this equally with your (wife/partner), your (WIFE/PARTNER) does A BIT MORE, your (WIFE/PARTNER) does MOST OR ALL, or neither of you does this.

STATEMENTS

- a. Doing the dishes
- b. Preparing the evening meal
- c. Cleaning the bathroom and toilet
- d. Cleaning the rest of the house and vacuuming
- e. Taking out rubbish
- f. Doing the laundry (INTERVIEWER NOTE: THIS INCLUDES IRONING)
- g. Shopping for food and other essentials

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- h. Banking, paying bills, and keeping financial records

CODEFRAME

1. Respondent does MOST OR ALL
2. Respondent does A BIT MORE
3. Share equally
4. (Wife/partner) does A BIT MORE
5. (Wife/partner) does MOST OR ALL
6. Neither does this
7. (Don't know)
8. (Refused)

*PROGRAMMER NOTE: DISPLAY ALL STATEMENTS AT E2a WHERE E1 #6

*PROGRAMMER NOTE:

*(ALL)

E2a. Now I'd like you to tell me approximately how much TIME PER WEEK you and your (wife/partner) spend on each of the following tasks...Please think again about a typical week.

About how much time per week would you say YOU spend <STATEMENT>?

And how about your (wife/partner)? (About how much time would you say SHE spends per week <STATEMENT>?)

STATEMENTS

- a. Doing the dishes
- b. Preparing the evening meal
- c. Cleaning the bathroom and toilet
- d. Cleaning the rest of the house and vacuuming
- e. Taking out rubbish
- f. Doing the laundry (INTERVIEWER NOTE: 'DOING THE LAUNDRY' INCLUDES IRONING)
- g. Shopping for food and other essentials
- h. Banking, paying bills, and keeping financial records

CODEFRAME

4. Hours per week (Specify ____) (ALLOW 0 TO 30)^s (ALLOW DECIMALS)
5. Minutes per week (Specify____) (ALLOW 0 TO 59)^s
6. (Don't know)
7. (Refused)

*(ALL)

TS6. TIMESTAMP6

Module F: Feelings about current /ideal arrangements: caring for children

*(ALL)

PreF1. Next I'd like to ask you some questions about parenting duties.

1. Continue

*(ALL)

F1. Overall, how satisfied would you say you are with your current arrangements regarding the sharing of parenting? Would you say you are very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

1. Very satisfied
2. Satisfied

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3. (Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied)
4. Dissatisfied
5. Very dissatisfied
6. (Don't know) (AVOID)
7. (Refused) (AVOID)

PREF2 IF F1=6,7 (DK,Ref) GOTO F3. OTHERS CONTINUE

*(VERY SATISFIED, SATISFIED, DISSATISFIED OR VERY DISSATISFIED AT F1)

F2. Can you tell me the MAIN reason you are <response to F1>? What else? Anything else?

1. (Specify _____)
2. (Don't know) (AVOID)
3. (Refused)

*(ALL)

F3. If you could change your current arrangements regarding the sharing of parenting duties, would you prefer to... (READ OUT CODES 1 TO 3 ONLY)

1. Keep things the way they are
2. Do less and ask your (wife/partner) to do more, or
3. Do more and ask your (wife/partner) to do less
4. (Find ways to reduce the total amount of parenting you and your (wife/partner) do by, for example by using (more) childcare)
5. Other (specify _____)
6. (Don't know)
7. (Refused)

PREF4 IF F3=4 (REDUCE TOTAL AMOUNT) CONTINUE. OTHERS GOTO G1

*(REDUCE TOTAL AMOUNT (F3=4))

F4. And how would you reduce the total amount of parenting you and your (wife/partner) do?

1. Have others provide childcare
2. Just do less
3. Other (Specify _____)
4. (Don't know)
5. (Refused)

*(ALL)

TS7. TIMESTAMP7

Module G: Children in household/ relationship

*(ALL)

G1. Next I'm going to ask you a few questions about the (child/youngest child) in your household. First, how old is your (youngest) child?

1. Age given (Specify _____) (RANGE: 0 to 12)
2. (Refused) (AVOID)

*(ALL)

G2. And is your (youngest) child a girl or a boy?

1. Girl
2. Boy
3. (Refused) (AVOID)

*(ALL)

G3. And is your (youngest) child an adopted, step or foster child?

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1. Yes – adopted/step-child/foster child
2. No – biological child
3. (Refused)

PREG4.And now about your relationship...

1. Continue

*(ALL)

G4. How long have you and your (wife/partner) been living together?

INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF LESS THAN ONE MONTH, TYPE '0'; IF A FRACTION, ROUND TO NEAREST WHOLE NUMBER

1. Time in months (specify _____) (RANGE: 0 to 23)
2. Time in years (Specify _____) (RANGE: 0 to 65)
3. (Refused)

PREG5 IF SCR10=1 (MARRIED) CONTINUE, OTHERWISE GO TO PREH1

*(MARRIED)

G5. And how long have you been married?

INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF LESS THAN ONE MONTH, TYPE '0'; IF A FRACTION, ROUND TO NEAREST WHOLE NUMBER

1. Time in months (specify _____) (RANGE: 0 to 23)
2. Time in years (Specify _____) (RANGE: 0 to 65)
3. (Refused)

*(ALL)

TS8. TIMESTAMP8

Module H: Division of labour and time spent: caring for children

*(ALL)

PreH1 Now I'd like to ask you a few more questions about parenting.

*(ALL)

H1. First, I'm going to read out a list of parenting tasks. For each, can you tell me whether, in a typical week, YOU do MOST OR ALL of this, YOU do A BIT MORE, you share this equally with your (wife/partner), your (WIFE/PARTNER) does A BIT MORE, your (WIFE/PARTNER) does MOST OR ALL, or neither of you does this.

INTERVIEWER NOTE: THIS INCLUDES TIME WITH ALL CHILDREN, OVERALL

STATEMENTS

- a. Helping with homework (DISPLAY ONLY IF AGE GIVEN AT G1 >= 5)
- b. Listening to problems (DISPLAY ONLY IF AGE GIVEN AT G1 >= 3)
- c. Taking them to activities and appointments (INTERVIEWER NOTE: THIS INCLUDES TIME SPENT WAITING FOR TRAINS AND BUSES, BUT DOES NOT INCLUDE TIME SPENT AT THE ACTIVITY OR APPOINTMENT)
- d. Reading or playing with them
- e. Supervising or monitoring activities or play (INTERVIEWER NOTE: THIS INCLUDES SUPERVISING GAMES AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES SUCH AS SWIMMING, BEING AN ADULT PRESENCE FOR CHILDREN TO TURN TO, MAINTAINING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT, MONITORING CHILDREN PLAYING OUTSIDE THE HOME)
- f. Bathing and dressing (DISPLAY ONLY IF AGE GIVEN AT G1 <= 5)

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- g. Feeding (DISPLAY ONLY IF AGE GIVEN AT G1 <= 2)
- h. Getting them to bed (DISPLAY ONLY IF AGE GIVEN AT G1 <=10)

CODEFRAME

- 1. Respondent does MOST OR ALL
- 2. Respondent does A BIT MORE
- 3. Share equally
- 4. Wife/partner does A BIT MORE
- 5. Wife/partner does MOST OR ALL
- 6. Neither does this
- 7. Child(ren) don't do this
- 8. Don't know
- 9. Refused

*PROGRAMMER NOTE: ONLY DISPLAY STATEMENTS AT H2a IF H1 RESPONSE FOR THAT STATEMENT ≠ 6,7 (Neither partner does this, children don't do this).

*(ALL)

H2a. Now I'd like you to tell me approximately how much TIME PER WEEK you and your (wife/partner) spend on each of the following parenting tasks. Again, please think about a typical week.

About how much time per week would you say YOU spend <STATEMENT>?

And how about your (wife/partner)? (About how much time per week would you say she spends <STATEMENT>?)

STATEMENTS

- a. Helping with homework (DISPLAY ONLY IF AGE GIVEN AT G1 >= 5)
- b. Listening to problems (DISPLAY ONLY IF AGE GIVEN AT G1 >= 3)
- c. Taking them to activities and appointments (INTERVIEWER NOTE: THIS INCLUDES TIME SPENT WAITING FOR TRAINS AND BUSES, BUT DOES NOT INCLUDE TIME SPENT AT THE ACTIVITY OR APPOINTMENT)
- d. Reading or playing with them
- e. SUPERVISING OR MONITORING activities or play (INTERVIEWER NOTE: THIS INCLUDES SUPERVISING GAMES AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES SUCH AS SWIMMING, BEING AN ADULT PRESENCE FOR CHILDREN TO TURN TO, MAINTAINING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT, MONITORING CHILDREN PLAYING OUTSIDE THE HOME)
- f. Bathing and dressing (DISPLAY ONLY IF AGE GIVEN AT G1 <= 5)
- g. Feeding (DISPLAY ONLY IF AGE GIVEN AT G1 <= 2)
- h. Getting them to bed (DISPLAY ONLY IF AGE GIVEN AT G1 <=10)

CODEFRAME

- 1. Hours per week (specify____) (RANGE: 0 to 99) (ALLOW DECIMALS)
- 2. Minutes per week (specify ____) (RANGE: 0 TO 99)
- 3. Don't know
- 4. Refused

*(ALL)

H4a. Since you have been living with your (wife/partner), have you always done about <response from Scr5a> of the housework?

- 1. Yes GO TO H4b
- 2. No
- 3. (Don't know) GO TO H4b
- 4. (Refused) GO TO H4b

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*(NOT ALWAYS SHARED HOUSEWORK EQUALLY (H4a=2))

H5. What is the MAIN reason your arrangements regarding the sharing of housework changed?

1. (Specify _____)
2. (Don't know)
3. (Refused)

*(ALL)

H4b. And how about time spent parenting? Since you have been living with your (wife/partner), have you always done about <response from Scr5b> of the parenting?

- | | | |
|----|--------------|----------|
| 1 | Yes | GO TO H7 |
| 2 | No | |
| 3 | (Don't know) | GO TO H7 |
| 4. | (Refused) | GO TO H7 |

*(NOT ALWAYS SHARED PARENTING EQUALLY (H4b=2))

H6. What is the MAIN reason your arrangements regarding the sharing of parenting changed?

1. (Specify _____)
2. (Don't know)
3. (Refused)

*(ALL)

H7. I'm now going to read out some statements about your attitudes towards paid work. For each one, please tell me how strongly you agree or disagree on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is strongly disagree and 7 is strongly agree.

STATEMENTS

- a. Working helps me to better appreciate the time I spend with my children
- b. Because of the requirements of my job, my family time is less enjoyable and more pressured
- c. It is much better for everyone involved if the man earns the money and the woman takes care of the home and children
- d. A working mother can establish just as good a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work for pay

CODEFRAME

- | | |
|----|-------------------|
| 1 | Strongly disagree |
| 2. | 2 |
| 3. | 3 |
| 4. | 4 |
| 5. | 5 |
| 6. | 6 |
| 7. | Strongly Agree |
| 8. | (Don't know) |
| 9. | (Refused) |

*(ALL)

TS9. TIMESTAMP9

Module I: Income – Respondent

I1. We are interested in how income relates to the sharing of parenting and housework. Please know that any information you give me is completely confidential and will not be reported to any government department. So could I just ask, what was YOUR OWN PERSONAL

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approximate income, from all sources, before tax is taken out, over the last 12 months?
Would you say it's... (READ OUT)

1. Less than \$20,000
2. \$20,000 to less than \$40,000
3. \$40,000 to less than \$60,000
4. \$60,000 to less than \$80,000
5. \$80,000 to less than \$100,000
6. \$100,000 to less than \$150,000, or
7. \$150,000 or more
8. (Don't know / can't say) (AVOID)
9. (Refused)

*(ALL)

I3. Other than Family Tax Benefit, do you receive any Centrelink payments?

IF NECESSARY: Please know that this information is completely confidential. It will not be reported to any government department or affect any payments you may be receiving.

PROGRAMMER NOTE: ALLOW MULTIPLES

1. NO (SINGLE RESPONSE)
2. Age Pension (from Australian Government)
3. Austudy/Abstudy
4. Carer Allowance (Child disability allowance)
5. Carer Payment
6. Disability Pension (paid by DVA)
7. Disability Support Pension (paid by Centrelink)
8. Mature Age Allowance
9. Mature Age Partner Allowance
10. Newstart Allowance
11. Parenting Payment
12. Partner Allowance
13. Pensions (benefit from overseas government)
14. Service Pension (paid by DVA) (exclude superannuation)
15. Sickness allowance
16. Sole parent pension
17. Special Benefit
18. War widows pension (paid by DVA)
19. Widow allowance (including Widow B Pension)
20. Wife Pension
21. Youth Allowance
22. Other government pensions/allowances (specify_____)

*(ALL)

TS10. TIMESTAMP10

Module J: Income - Partner

*(ALL)

J1. And what was your (WIFE/PARTNER)'s approximate income, from all sources, before tax is taken out, over the last 12 months? Would you say it's... (READ OUT)

IF NECESSARY: Please know that any information you give me is completely confidential and will not be reported to any government department.

1. Less than \$20,000
2. \$20,000 to less than \$40,000
3. \$40,000 to less than \$60,000

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4. \$60,000 to less than \$80,000
5. \$80,000 to less than \$100,000
6. \$100,000 to less than \$150,000, or
7. \$150,000 or more
8. (Don't know / can't say) (AVOID)
9. (Refused)

*(ALL)

J3. Other than Family Tax Benefit, does your (wife/partner) receive any Centrelink payments?

IF NECESSARY: Please know that this information is completely confidential. It will not be reported to any government department or affect any payments you may be receiving.

PROGRAMMER NOTE: ALLOW MULTIPLES

1. NO (SINGLE RESPONSE)
2. Age Pension (from Australian Government)
3. Austudy/Abstudy
4. Carer Allowance (Child disability allowance)
5. Carer Payment
6. Disability Pension (paid by DVA)
7. Disability Support Pension (paid by Centrelink)
8. Mature Age Allowance
9. Mature Age Partner Allowance
10. Newstart Allowance
11. Parenting Payment
12. Partner Allowance
13. Pensions (benefit from overseas government)
14. Service Pension (paid by DVA) (exclude superannuation)
15. Sickness allowance
16. Sole parent pension
17. Special Benefit
18. War widows pension (paid by DVA)
19. Widow allowance (including Widow B Pension)
20. Wife Pension
21. Youth Allowance
22. Other government pensions/allowances (specify_____)

*(ALL)

TS11. TIMESTAMP11

Module K: Other demographics

*(ALL)

PreK1. Finally, we'd like to ask a few questions about you and your (wife/partner) to be sure we've spoken with a good range of people.

*(ALL)

K1. Do you mind if I ask how old you are?

1. Age given (RECORD AGE IN YEARS _____) (RANGE 18 TO 99)
2. (Refused)

PREK1a IF K1=2 CONTINUE. OTHERS GOTO K2

*(Refused Age (K1a=2))

K1a. Well, do you mind telling me which of the following age categories you fall into? (READ OUT)

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1. 18-24
2. 25-34
3. 35-44
4. 45-54
5. 55-64
6. 65 or older
7. (Refused)

*(ALL)

K2. And how old is your (wife/partner)?

1. Age given (RECORD AGE IN YEARS _____) (RANGE 18 TO 99)
2. (Refused)

PREK2a IF K2=2 CONTINUE. OTHERS GOTO K3

*(Refused partner's age (K2=2))

K2a. Well, do you mind telling me which of the following age categories she falls into? (READ OUT)

1. 18-24
2. 25-34
3. 35-44
4. 45-54
5. 55-64
6. 65 or older
7. (Refused)

*(ALL)

K3. What is the highest level of education you have completed? ((PROMPT ONLY IF NECESSARY)

INTERVIEWER NOTE: Prompt if completed high school or below: Have you completed any TAFE or trade qualifications?

1. Never attended school
2. Some primary school
3. Completed primary school
4. Some high school (i.e. Year 7 to Year 11, Form 1 to Form 5)
5. Completed high school (i.e. Year 12, Form 6, HSC)
6. TAFE or Trade Certificate or Diploma
7. University, CAE or some other Tertiary Institute degree, including post university (i.e. postgraduate diploma, Master's degree, PhD)
8. Other (Specify _____)
9. (Don't know)
10. (Refused)

*(ALL)

K4. And your (wife/partner)?

1. Never attended school
2. Some primary school
3. Completed primary school
4. Some high school (i.e. Year 7 to Year 11, Form 1 to Form 5)
5. Completed high school (i.e. Year 12, Form 6, HSC)
6. TAFE or Trade Certificate or Diploma
7. University, CAE or some other Tertiary Institute degree, including post university (i.e. postgraduate diploma, Master's degree, PhD)
8. Other (Specify _____)

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9. (Don't know)
10. (Refused)

*(ALL)

K5. In which country were you born?

1. Australia (includes External Territories)
2. United Kingdom (incl. England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland)
3. New Zealand
4. Italy
5. Greece
6. China
7. Vietnam
8. Lebanon
9. Other (Specify _____)
10. (Don't know)
11. (Refused)

*(ALL)

K6. And your (wife/partner)?

1. Australia (includes External Territories)
2. United Kingdom (incl. England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland)
3. New Zealand
4. Italy
5. Greece
6. China
7. Vietnam
8. Lebanon
9. Other (Specify _____)
10. (Don't know)
11. (Refused)

*(ALL)

K7. Do you speak a language other than English at home?

1. No, English only
2. Yes, Italian
3. Yes, Greek
4. Yes, Cantonese
5. Yes, Mandarin
6. Yes, Arabic
7. Yes, Vietnamese
8. Yes, German
9. Yes, Spanish
10. Yes, Tagalog (Filipino)
11. Yes, Other (Specify _____)
12. (Don't know)
13. (Refused)

*(ALL)

TS12. TIMESTAMP12

*(ALL)

END1. That's the end of the survey....Just in case you missed it, my name is [...] and I'm calling on behalf of the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs from the Social Research Centre. If you have any questions about this study I have a number I can give you if you like. (1800 023 040)

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- TERM1 Sorry, but for this study we're looking to talk to fathers of children aged 12 or under
- TERM2 Sorry, but for this study we're looking to talk to fathers where both partners are currently in the labour force
- TERM3 Sorry, but for this study we're looking to talk to fathers who share about equally with their partner the childcare and housework

Appendix 2 – Source of quotations

Table 2: Source of quotations

Ref No.	Research Style	Location	Kids Age	Male Work	Female Work
1	Paired Interview	Melbourne	0-5	Full Time	Part Time
2	Paired Interview	Melbourne	6-12	Full Time	Part Time
3	Male Separate Interview	Melbourne	0-5	Full Time	Full Time
4	Female Separate Interview				
5	Male Separate Interview	Melbourne	6-12	Full Time	Full Time
6	Female Separate Interview				
7	Paired Interview	Bendigo	0-5	Full Time	Full Time
8	Paired Interview	Bendigo	6-12	Full Time	Part Time
9	Male Separate Interview	Bendigo	0-5	Full Time	Maternity Leave (due to go Part Time soon)
10	Female Separate Interview				
11	Male Separate Interview	Bendigo	6-12	Full Time Teaching Student	Part Time
12	Female Separate Interview				
13	Paired Interview	Brisbane	0-5	Part Time	Full Time
14	Paired Interview	Brisbane	6-12	Full Time	Full Time
15	Male Separate Interview	Brisbane	0-5	Full Time	Part Time
16	Female Separate Interview				
17	Male Separate Interview	Brisbane	6-12	Full Time	Part Time
18	Female Separate Interview				
19	Male Focus Group	Melbourne	0-5	x5 Full Time x2 Part Time	x7 Part Time
20	Female Focus Group				
21	Male Focus Group	Brisbane	6-12	x8 Full Time	x1 Full Time x7 Part Time
22	Female Focus Group				
23	Couples Group	Bendigo	0-5	x4 Full Time	x4 Part Time
24	Couples Group	Melbourne	6-12	x3 Full Time	X1 Full Time x2 Part Time

Appendix 3 – Breakdown of household tasks and parental care duties

Table 3: Breakdown of common household tasks identified across research

Household Tasks	
Cooking	Breakfast Lunch Dinner
Cleaning	Cleaning up after meals Vacuuming Dusting Mopping Windows Bathroom Drains
Clothes	Washing Clothes Putting out to dry Ironing Sorting Clothes
Beds	Making beds Changing bed clothes
Paying Bills	
Shopping	Groceries Presents Clothes
Gardening	Mowing Plants Watering Raking leaves
Bins	Rubbish Recycling
Pets	Feeding Walking Taking to vet Cleaning litter tray
General Maintenance	Car Around house (inside and out)

Table 4: Breakdown of common parental care duties identified across research

Parental Care	
Getting kids up	
Feeding	Bottles Meals Pack lunches
Cleaning	Changing Nappies Bath time Washing kids (teeth, body, hair) Changing wet beds
Dressing kids	
School	Packing Bag Homework School Duties (Tuck shop, day trips, PTA) Transport to and from
General Time with kids	Conflict resolution Reading stories Playing games / sports Reacting to demands Getting up in middle of night Cuddles
Cleaning up after kids	
Transporting to and from activities	
Kids parties	Attending Hosting
Bedtime	