In this chapter “families” are presented according to location and composition. A ‘family’ is defined by the ABS as two or more persons, one of whom is at least 15 years of age, who are related by blood, marriage (registered or de facto), adoption, step or fostering, and who are usually resident in the same household.

‘Families with dependents’ include those families with children aged under 15 years and/or dependent students (15–24 years old).
At the 2006 Census of Population and Housing, 1,294,388 families were recorded in Victoria; an increase of 71,698 or 5.8 per cent since 2001. Of these, 938,640 families were counted in Melbourne and 355,748 in regional Victoria.

Of all families in Victoria, 623,647 had dependents in 2006. Of the families in this group, 336,092 had children aged 0 to 8 years. Families with children aged 0 to 8 years represented 26.0 per cent of all families in Victoria in 2006, slightly less than the percentage in 2001 (27.6 per cent).

In regional Victoria, 165,578 of all families had dependents and of these, 89,697 had children aged 0 to 8 years. Families with children aged 0 to 8 years in regional Victoria represent 13.9 per cent of all families in Victoria with dependents, compared to 15.6 per cent in 2001. Families with children aged 0 to 8 years in regional Victoria represent 6.9 per cent of all families in Victoria, down from 7.7 per cent in 2001.

In Melbourne, 458,069 of all families had dependents. Of this group of families, 246,395 had children aged 0 to 8 years. Families with children aged 0 to 8 years in Melbourne represent 38.1 per cent of all families in Victoria with dependents (40.1 per cent in 2001) and 19.0 per cent of all families in Victoria compared to 19.9 per cent in 2001.

Maps 2.3a, 2.3b, 2.4a and 2.4b are not comparable with the equivalent 2001 maps in the previous Best Start Atlas as the percentages are calculated from a different population. The 2001 data used ‘all families with dependents within each LGA’. For this atlas, 2006 percentages are derived from ‘all families with children aged 0 to 8 years’.
Flowchart 1: Families in Victoria

Families in Victoria: 1,294,388

- Families in Regional Victoria: 355,748
  - Families with dependents: 165,578
  - Families without dependents: 190,170
    - Families with children aged 0–8: 89,697
    - Families without children aged 0–8: 75,881
- Families in Melbourne: 938,640
  - Families with dependents: 458,069
  - Families without dependents: 480,571
    - Families with children aged 0–8: 246,395
    - Families without children aged 0–8: 211,674

Source: ABS 2006, Census
The following maps, 2.1a and 2.1b, are based on the number of families with children aged 0 to 8 years in each LGA as a percentage of the total number of families with children aged 0 to 8 years in Victoria. This represents the distribution of families with children aged 0 to 8 years across Victoria (i.e. where families with children of this age group are located).

The highest percentage of all families with children aged 0 to 8 years in regional Victoria was located in the LGA of Greater Geelong (C) (3.9%). This was followed by the cities of Greater Bendigo (C) (1.9%), Ballarat (C) (1.7%), Latrobe (C) (1.4%) and Greater Shepparton (C) (1.3%) and

The lowest percentages were recorded in Queenscliffe (B) (less than 0.1%), and the Shires of Buloke, Hindmarsh, Loddon, Mansfield, Pyrenees, Strathbogie, Towong and West Wimmera (all 0.1%).
Map 2.1b:
Percentage distribution of all families with children aged 0 to 8 years by LGA in Melbourne
As a percentage of total families in Victoria with children aged 0 to 8 years

- The highest percentages of all families with children aged 0 to 8 years in Melbourne were located in Casey (C) (5.6%), Brimbank (C) (3.7%), Hume (C) (3.7%), Knox (C) (3.1%) and Yarra Ranges (S) (3.0%).

- The lowest percentages were recorded in the LGAs of Melbourne (C) (0.5%), Yarra (C) (1.0%), Port Phillip (C) (1.1%), Stonnington (C), Nillumbik (S) and Maribyrnong (C) (all 1.3%).
Maps 2.2a and 2.2b present data for families with children aged 0 to 8 years in each LGA as a percentage of the total number of families with dependents for that LGA. The maps are showing the share of families with children aged 0 to 8 years out of all families with dependents in that LGA.

Within regional Victoria’s LGAs, Swan Hill (S) (58.1%), Mitchell (S) (57.2%), Wodonga (RC) and Horsham (RC) (both 57%) recorded the highest percentages of all families with children aged 0 to 8 years.

The LGAs with the lowest percentages were Queenscliffe (B) (48.6%) and Benalla (RC) (48.8%).
The highest percentages of families with children aged 0 to 8 years in the metropolitan area were in the LGAs of Melton (S) (61.2%), Maribyrnong (C) (60.6%), Port Phillip (C) (60.3%), Darebin (C) (60.0%) and Moreland (C) (59.3%).

The lowest percentages were found in the inner-eastern region of metropolitan Melbourne, including the LGAs of Manningham (C) (45.7%), Boroondara (C) (46.1%), Nillumbik (S) (46.8%) and Monash (C) (47.7%).
Marital Status

Married couples
Out of the 336,094 families in Victoria with children aged 0 to 8 years, 243,363 were married couples, representing 72.4 per cent of all families in this category. Married couples with children aged 0 to 8 years has decreased since 2001 (7,894 or 2.1 per cent).

Of the 89,695 families counted in regional Victoria with children aged 0 to 8 years, 58,788 were married couples. This represents 65.5 per cent of all families in regional Victoria with children aged 0 to 8 years.

In Melbourne, 184,575 of the 246,396 families with children aged 0 to 8 years were married couples. This represents 74.9 per cent of all families in Melbourne with children aged 0 to 8 years.

Couples in a de facto marriage
There were 36,016 couples in a de facto marriage with children aged 0 to 8 years, representing 10.7 per cent of all families with children in this category compared to 8.6 per cent in 2001. As in 2001, less than 1.0 per cent of these couples in a de facto marriage were same-sex couples.

Of the 89,695 families with children aged 0 to 8 years in regional Victoria, 12,710 were couples in a de facto marriage. This represents 14.2 per cent of all families in regional Victoria with children aged 0 to 8 years and an increase of 2,234 or 21.3 per cent since 2001.

In Melbourne, 23,306 of the 246,396 families with children aged 0 to 8 years were couples in a de facto marriage. This represents 9.5 per cent of all families in Melbourne with children aged 0 to 8 years and an increase of 4,902 or 26.6 per cent since 2001.

When mapped by LGA, there was no discernible difference between the geographical distribution of couples by marital status and that of couple families.

One-parent families
Of the 199,002 one-parent families in Victoria, 56,717 had children aged 0 to 8 years. This represents 28.5 per cent of all one-parent families in Victoria, slightly less than the proportion in 2001 (31.5 per cent). One-parent families with children aged 0 to 8 years represented 16.9 per cent of the 336,094 families in Victoria with children aged 0 to 8 years and 9.1 per cent of the 623,647 families with dependents in Victoria.

As in 2001, out of all families with children aged 0 to 8 years, the proportion of one-parent families with children aged 0 to 8 years was substantially higher in the metropolitan area (11.5 per cent) than in regional Victoria (5.4 per cent).
Flowchart 2: Families with children aged 0 to 8 years, by marital status, Victoria

Families in Victoria children aged 0–8: 336,094

- Regional Victoria: 89,695
  - Regional Victoria couple families: 71,491
  - Regional Victoria one-parent families: 18,204

- Melbourne: 246,396
  - Melbourne couple families: 207,882
  - Melbourne one-parent families: 38,514

Source: ABS 2006, Census
In regional Victoria the highest percentages of couple families with children aged 0 to 8 years were recorded in the LGAs of Golden Plains (S) (88.8%), Surf Coast (S) (88.7%), West Wimmera (S) (86.7%), Moyne (S) (86.6%) and Corangamite (S) (86.6%).

The lowest percentages were found in the LGAs of Central Goldfields (S) (71.7%), Latrobe (C) (73.4%), Wodonga (RC) (75.8%), Ballarat (C) (76.2%) and Ararat (RC) (76.6%).
The highest percentages of couple families with children aged 0 to 8 years in metropolitan Melbourne were recorded in the LGAs of Boroondara (C) (92.6%), Nillumbik (S) (91.7%), Bayside (C) (91.0%), Stonnington (C) (90.7%) and Glen Eira (C) (90.4%).

The lowest percentages were in the LGAs of Frankston (C) (75.9%), Brimbank (C) (76.4%), Greater Dandenong (C) (77.6%), Maribyrnong (C) (79.3%) and Yarra (C) (80.2%).
Expressed as a percentage of all families with children aged 0 to 8 years within each LGA, the highest percentages of one-parent families with children aged 0 to 8 years in regional Victoria were recorded in Central Goldfields (S) (28.3%), Latrobe (C) (26.6%), Wodonga (RC) (24.2%), Ballarat (RC) (23.8%) and Ararat (RC) (23.4%).

The lowest percentages were in Golden Plains (S) (11.2%), Surf Coast (S) (11.3%), West Wimmera (S) (13.3%), Moyne (S) and Corangamite (S) (both 13.4%).
Map 2.4b:
One-parent families with children aged 0 to 8 years, within each LGA in Melbourne
As a percentage of all families with children aged 0 to 8 years within each LGA

- The highest percentages of one-parent families with children aged 0 to 8 years in the metropolitan area were the LGAs of Frankston (C) (24.1%), Brimbank (C) (23.6%), Greater Dandenong (C) (22.4%), Maribyrnong (C) (20.7%) and Yarra (C) (19.8%).
- The lowest percentages were in Boroondara (C) (7.1%), Nillumbik (S) (8.3%), Bayside (C) (9.0%), Stonnington (C) (9.3%) and Glen Eira (C) (9.6%).
Families with Indigenous dependents

At the 2006 Census of Population and Housing, there were 623,647 families with dependents in Victoria. Of these, 7,223 were families with Indigenous dependents, representing 1.2 per cent of all families in this category, compared to 0.9 per cent in 2001.

The percentage of all families with Indigenous dependents was higher in regional Victoria (2.3%) than in metropolitan Melbourne (0.7%).

Of the 336,092 families with children aged 0 to 8 years in Victoria, 4,652 were families with Indigenous children aged 0 to 8 years, representing 1.4 per cent of families in this category. This has increased since 2001 where families with Indigenous children aged 0 to 8 years represented 1.1 per cent of all families with children aged 0 to 8 years.

The percentage of families with Indigenous children aged 0 to 8 years continues to be higher in regional Victoria (2.8%) than in metropolitan Melbourne (0.9%).
In regional Victoria, the LGAs with the highest percentages of all families with Indigenous dependents recorded were Swan Hill (S) (6.9%), Greater Shepparton (C) (5.8%), East Gippsland (S) (5.8%), Mildura (RC) (5.2%) and Glenelg (S) (4.3%).

The lowest percentages were found in the LGAs of Pyrenees (S), Surf Coast (S), Macedon Ranges (S), Corangamite (S) and South Gippsland (S) (all under 1.0%).
In the metropolitan area, the highest percentage of all families with Indigenous dependents was in the LGA of Darebin (C) (1.7%) followed by Frankston (C), Whittlesea (C) and Wyndham (C) (all 1.2%).

The lowest percentages were mainly in the inner-eastern and southern regions of Melbourne, including Boroondara (C), Manningham (C), Glen Eira (C) and Bayside (C) (all 0.2%).
In regional Victoria, the LGAs with the highest percentages of families with Indigenous children aged 0 to 8 years, were Swan Hill (S) (8.5%), East Gippsland (S) (7.5%), Greater Shepparton (C) (6.8%) and Mildura (RC) (6.6%).

The lowest percentages were in the LGAs of Surf Coast (S), Macedon Ranges (S) and Moorabool (S) (all under 1.0%).
Map 2.6b: All families with Indigenous children aged 0 to 8 years within each LGA in Melbourne
As a percentage of all families with children aged 0 to 8 years within each LGA

- The highest percentages of families with Indigenous children aged 0 to 8 years in the metropolitan area were in the LGAs of Darebin (C) (1.9%), Frankston (C) (1.5%) and Whittlesea (C) (1.5%).

- Inner-eastern and southern regions of Melbourne had the lowest percentages. This included the LGAs of Bayside (C), Boroondara (C), Glen Eira (C) and Manningham (C), all with 0.2%. 