

The Deaf Society of New South Wales



Age profile of the NSW signing population

Analysis from the 1996 and 2006 census

Prepared for the Deaf Society of New South Wales by Dr. Louisa Willoughby 2009

Education and employment of sign language users in NSW

This summary reports on data from 2006 Australian Census of Population and Housing. The Deaf Society of New South Wales commissioned the Australian Bureau of Statistics to provide a data set on the demographics of the signing population of NSW and comparative data on the general population. In this report the signing population is defined as all people who indicated on the census form that they 'spoke' Auslan, 'sign language' or a sign language such as BSL at home. There is no way of ascertaining the hearing status of these individuals, though it seems likely that the majority will be Deaf.

Highest educational attainment

Raw numbers

Total - signers	15 - 24 years	25 - 44 years	45 - 64 years	65 years and over	Total all Ages
Bachelor Degree or Higher	6	110	59	4	179
Certificate / Diploma	39	256	113	20	428
School Education Only	202	247	187	98	734
No educational attainment	3	12	11	8	34
Not stated	20	51	52	49	172
TOTAL	270	676	422	179	1,547

Total - general	15 - 24 years	25 - 44 years	45 - 64 years	65 years and over	Total all Ages
Bachelor Degree or Higher	60,167	459,688	281,521	59,073	860,449
Certificate / Diploma	110,866	486,566	391,738	143,205	1,132,375
School Education Only	583,756	664,011	707,876	461,634	2,417,277
No educational attainment	1,186	9,195	18,207	21,377	49,965
Not stated	114,687	224,759	215,656	216,424	771,526
TOTAL	870,662	1,844,219	1,614,998	901,713	5,231,592

Percentage of population in each group

Total - signers	15 - 24 years	25 - 44 years	45 - 64 years	65 years and over	Total all Ages
Bachelor Degree or Higher	2%	16%	14%	2%	12%
Certificate / Diploma	14%	38%	27%	11%	28%
School Education Only	75%	37%	44%	55%	47%
No educational attainment	1%	2%	3%	4%	2%
Not stated	7%	8%	12%	27%	11%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Total - general	15 - 24 years	25 - 44 years	45 - 64 years	65 years and over	Total all Ages
Bachelor Degree or Higher	7%	25%	17%	7%	16%
Certificate / Diploma	13%	26%	24%	16%	22%
School Education Only	67%	36%	44%	51%	46%
No educational attainment	0%	0%	1%	2%	1%
Not stated	13%	12%	13%	24%	15%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Data on education outcomes is summarised in Figure 1 below, which compares educational attainment data for the signing and general populations as a whole(column headed ‘total all ages’ in the tables).

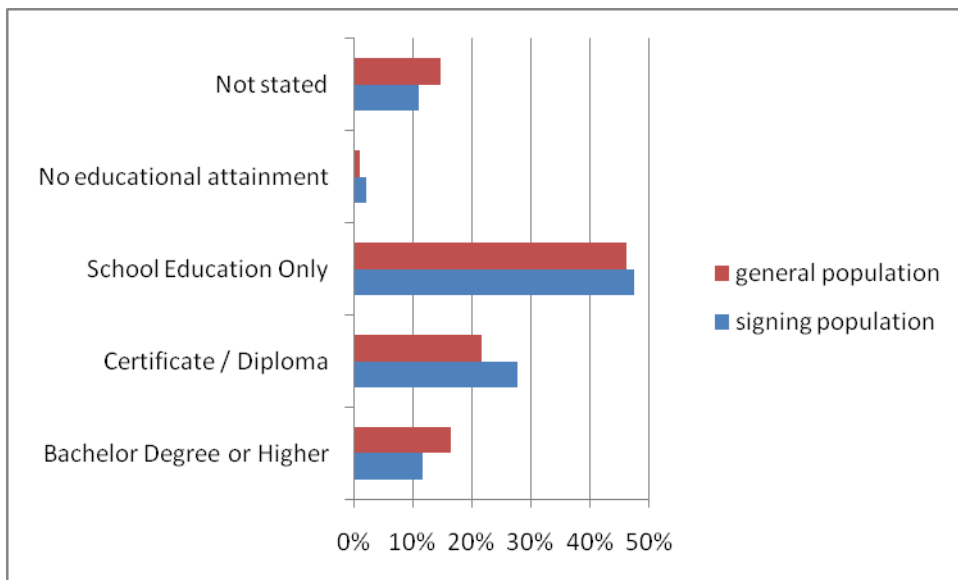


Figure 1 Highest educational attainment – NSW signing and general population

At this very broad level sign language users have reasonably similar educational outcomes to the general population. While they remain underrepresented among people holding degree-level qualifications, they are actually more likely than members of the general population to hold a certificate or diploma level qualification.

Highest year of schooling

Raw numbers

Total - signers	15 - 24 years	25 - 44 years	45 - 64 years	65 years and over	Total all Ages
Year 12 or equivalent	97	255	90	11	453
Year 11 or equivalent	41	50	14	-	105
Year 10 or equivalent	68	284	162	49	563
Year 9 or equivalent	31	37	68	33	169
Year 8 or below	16	10	37	37	100
Did not go to school	6	17	12	10	45
Highest year of school not stated	12	26	39	36	113
TOTAL	271	679	422	176	1,548

Total – general population	15 - 24 years	25 - 44 years	45 - 64 years	65 years and over	Total all Ages
Year 12 or equivalent	407,188	1,016,741	609,058	185,347	2,218,334
Year 11 or equivalent	103,693	105,525	72,596	31,236	313,050
Year 10 or equivalent	181,281	449,453	505,640	212,379	1,348,753
Year 9 or equivalent	76,211	71,374	149,685	115,073	412,343
Year 8 or below	18,492	34,585	122,177	174,699	349,953
Did not go to school	1,493	10,697	19,885	22,857	54,932
Highest year of school not stated	82,302	155,844	135,958	160,121	534,225
TOTAL	870,660	1,844,219	1,614,999	901,712	5,231,590

Percentage of population in each group

Total - signers	15 - 24 years	25 - 44 years	45 - 64 years	65 years and over	Total all Ages
Year 12 or equivalent	36%	38%	21%	6%	29%
Year 11 or equivalent	15%	7%	3%	0%	7%
Year 10 or equivalent	25%	42%	38%	28%	36%
Year 9 or equivalent	11%	5%	16%	19%	11%
Year 8 or below	6%	1%	9%	21%	6%
Did not go to school	2%	3%	3%	6%	3%
Highest year of school not stated	4%	4%	9%	20%	7%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Total – general population	15 - 24 years	25 - 44 years	45 - 64 years	65 years and over	Total all Ages
Year 12 or equivalent	47%	55%	38%	21%	42%
Year 11 or equivalent	12%	6%	4%	3%	6%
Year 10 or equivalent	21%	24%	31%	24%	26%
Year 9 or equivalent	9%	4%	9%	13%	8%
Year 8 or below	2%	2%	8%	19%	7%
Did not go to school	0%	1%	1%	3%	1%
Highest year of school not stated	9%	8%	8%	18%	10%
TOTAL	0%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Data on schooling is summarised in Figure 2 below, which compares highest year of schooling data for the signing and general populations as a whole (column headed 'total all ages' in the tables).

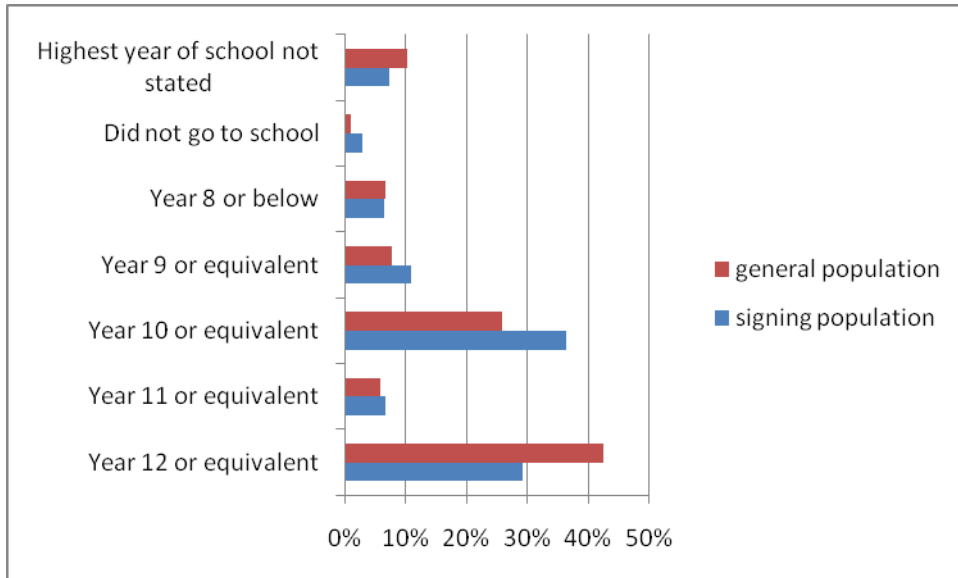


Figure 2 Highest year of schooling – NSW signing and general population

These figures show sign language users continue to lag behind the general population in rates of high school completion. While people in the general population are most likely to have left school having completed Year 12, sign language users mostly left at the end of Year 10.

Employment and labour force participation

Note: Labour force participation is calculated as the number of people who are either employed or unemployed and looking for work, divided by the total population for the age group.

Raw numbers

Total	Unemployed		Participants in the labour force	
	signing population	general population	signing population	general population
15 - 24 years	19	60,023	122	520,516
25 - 44 years	46	74,133	490	1,410,536
45 - 64 years	14	47,173	275	1,076,992
65 years and over	0	1,570	13	76,331
Total all Ages	79	182,899	900	3,084,375

Percentage of population in each group

Total	Unemployed		Labour force participation rate	
	signing population	general population	signing population	general population
15 - 24 years	16%	12%	46%	60%
25 - 44 years	9%	5%	72%	76%
45 - 64 years	5%	4%	65%	67%
65 years and over	0%	2%	7%	8%
Total all Ages	9%	6%	58%	59%

While sign language users are about as likely to be in the labour force as members of the general population, their unemployment rate was 50% higher than that of the general population at the time of the census.

Occupation

Note: percentages of people in each occupation exclude those who were unemployed or not in the labour force at the time of the census. Data on those aged 65+ omitted, as they are above the traditional retirement age in Australia.

Raw numbers

Total - signers	15 - 24 years	25 - 44 years	45 - 64 years	Total all Ages
Managers	0	31	24	55
Professionals	13	110	64	191
Technicians and Trades Workers	15	63	21	99
Community and Personal Service Workers	13	53	25	91
Clerical and Administrative Workers	17	84	52	153
Sales Workers	20	20	8	51
Machinery Operators And Drivers	5	24	19	48
Labourers	20	48	42	114
Not stated	0	13	4	17
TOTAL	103	446	259	819

Total – general population	15 - 24 years	25 - 44 years	45 - 64 years	Total all Ages
Managers	20,318	186,797	168,168	394,662
Professionals	47,293	325,592	226,132	614,108
Technicians and Trades Workers	78,719	187,494	122,628	395,584
Community and Personal Service Workers	61,051	110,648	74,275	249,259
Clerical and Administrative Workers	58,240	209,776	169,022	446,978
Sales Workers	106,364	99,925	70,362	281,690
Machinery Operators And Drivers	17,546	84,242	80,709	186,968
Labourers	61,124	108,649	100,080	276,974
Not stated	9,836	23,284	18,441	55,255
TOTAL	460,491	1,336,407	1,029,817	2,901,478

Percentage of population in each group

Total - signers	15 - 24 years	25 - 44 years	45 - 64 years	Total all Ages
Managers	0%	7%	9%	7%
Professionals	13%	25%	25%	23%
Technicians and Trades Workers	15%	14%	8%	12%
Community and Personal Service Workers	13%	12%	10%	11%
Clerical and Administrative Workers	17%	19%	20%	19%
Sales Workers	19%	4%	3%	6%
Machinery Operators And Drivers	5%	5%	7%	6%
Labourers	19%	11%	16%	14%
Not stated	0%	3%	2%	2%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

Total – general population	15 - 24 years	25 - 44 years	45 - 64 years	Total all Ages
	years			
Managers	4%	14%	16%	14%
Professionals	10%	24%	22%	21%
Technicians and Trades Workers	17%	14%	12%	14%
Community and Personal Service Workers	13%	8%	7%	9%
Clerical and Administrative Workers	13%	16%	16%	15%
Sales Workers	23%	7%	7%	10%
Machinery Operators And Drivers	4%	6%	8%	6%
Labourers	13%	8%	10%	10%
Not stated	2%	2%	2%	2%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

Data on occupations is summarised in Figure 3 below, which compares occupation data for the signing and general populations as a whole (column headed ‘total all ages’ in the tables).

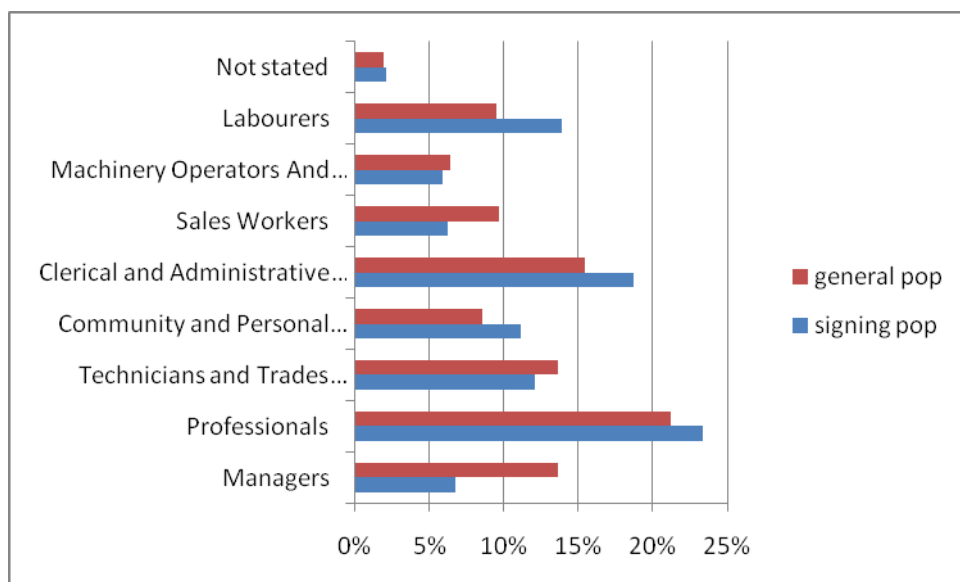


Figure 3 Occupations of those in employment – NSW signing and general population

Occupation data shows that among people employed at the time of the 2006 census, sign language users are over-represented as labourers and in clerical roles, and under-represented as managers and sales people.

Individual weekly income

Raw numbers

Total - signers	15 - 24 years	25 - 44 years	45 - 64 years	65 years and over	Total all Ages
less than \$400	197	39	9	24	269
\$400 - \$799	268	219	173	14	674
\$800 or more	192	120	93	18	423
Not stated	140	24	7	10	181
TOTAL	797	402	282	66	1,547

Total – general population	15 - 24 years	25 - 44 years	45 - 64 years	65 years and over	Total all Ages
less than \$400	535,530	177,593	58,713	98,825	870,661
\$400 - \$799	490,182	487,238	708,981	157,815	1,844,216
\$800 or more	552,828	405,573	539,026	117,571	1,614,998
Not stated	593,354	138,838	67,725	101,799	901,716
TOTAL	2,171,894	1,209,242	1,374,445	476,010	5,231,591

Percentage of population in each group

Total - signers	15 - 24 years	25 - 44 years	45 - 64 years	65 years and over	Total all Ages
less than \$400	73%	40%	45%	77%	52%
\$400 - \$799	14%	32%	28%	13%	26%
\$800 or more	3%	26%	22%	4%	18%
Not stated	9%	2%	4%	6%	4%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Total – general population	15 - 24 years	25 - 44 years	45 - 64 years	65 years and over	Total all Ages
less than \$400	62%	27%	34%	66%	42%
\$400 - \$799	20%	26%	25%	15%	23%
\$800 or more	7%	38%	33%	8%	26%
Not stated	11%	9%	7%	11%	9%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Data on occupations is summarised in Figure 4 below, which compares income data for the signing and general populations as a whole (column headed 'total all ages' in the tables).

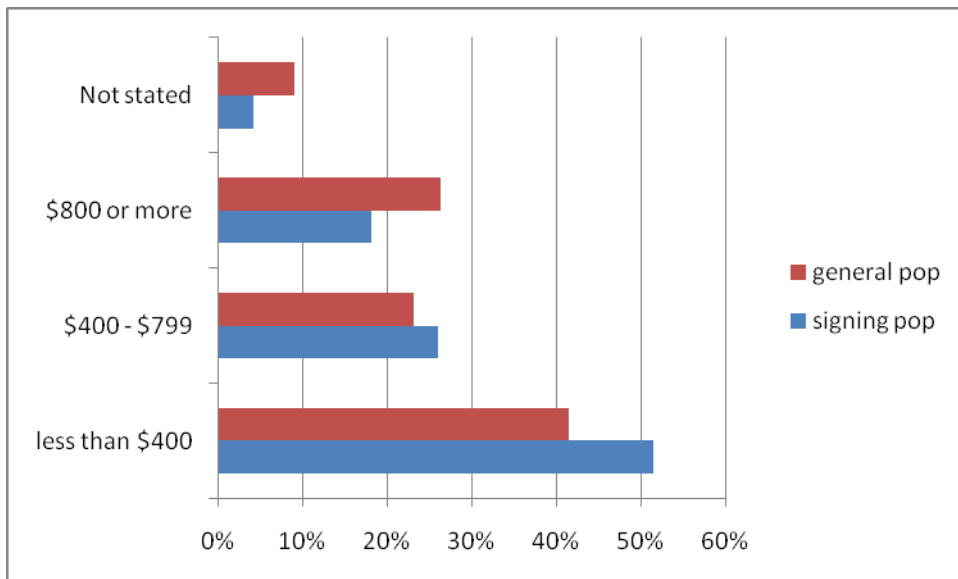


Figure 4 Individual weekly income – NSW signing and general population

Income data shows that sign languages users are overrepresented among those living on less than \$400 a week (individual income) and are underrepresented among people earning \$800 a week or more.