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## 14 Children's services

This chapter presents performance and descriptive information for government funded and/or delivered child care and preschool services. Children's services aim to meet the care, education and development needs of children, although the emphasis on these broad objectives may differ across the services. Child care services reported in this chapter include those provided to children aged less than 13 years, usually by someone other than the child's parents or guardian. Preschool services reported in this chapter are provided to children mainly in the year or two before they commence full time schooling.

Unless otherwise stated, the data relate to services that are supported by the Australian, State and Territory governments and provided for children aged less than 13 years. Local governments also plan, fund and deliver children's services. Given data limitations, however, this chapter records data on local government activities only where Australian, State and Territory government funding and licensing are involved. The chapter does not include services that do not receive government funding (unless otherwise noted).

A profile of children's services is presented in section 14.1. This provides a context for assessing the performance indicators presented later in the chapter. All jurisdictions have agreed to develop, and aim to report, comparable indicators; a framework of performance indicators is outlined in section 14.2. The data on performance are discussed in section 14.3 and future directions for performance reporting are discussed in section 14.4. The chapter concludes with jurisdictions' comments in section 14.5. Definitions of terms specific to children's services are found in section 14.6. Section 14.7 lists the supporting tables for this chapter. Supporting tables are identified in references throughout the chapter by an 'A' suffix (for example, table 14A.3 is table 3 in the attachment). Supporting tables are provided on the CD-ROM enclosed with the Report. Section 14.8 lists the references used in this chapter.

Major changes to reporting on children's services this year include reporting data for the first time on preschool service costs, and hospital admissions resulting from injuries sustained in children's services. There are also improvements to data quality and comparability.

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## 14.1 Profile of children's services

### Service overview

Children's services are provided using a variety of service delivery types that can be grouped into the following six broad categories:

- *Centre-based long day care* — comprises services aimed primarily at 0–5 year olds, provided in a centre, usually by a mix of qualified and other staff. Educational, care and recreational programs are provided based on the developmental needs, interests and experience of each child. In some jurisdictions, primary school children may also receive care before and after school, and during school vacations. Centres typically operate for at least eight hours per day on normal working days, for a minimum of 48 weeks per year.
- *Family day care* — comprises services provided in the carer's home. The care is largely aimed at 0–5 year olds, but primary school children may also receive care before and after school, and during school vacations. Central coordination units in all states and territories organise and support a network of carers, often with the help of local governments.<sup>1</sup>
- *Occasional care* — comprises services usually provided at a centre on an hourly or sessional basis for short periods or at irregular intervals for parents who need time to attend appointments, take care of personal matters, undertake casual and part time employment, study or have temporary respite from full time parenting. These services provide developmental activities for children and are aimed primarily at 0–5 year olds. Centres providing these services usually employ a mix of qualified and other staff.
- *Preschool* — comprises services usually provided by a qualified teacher on a sessional basis in dedicated preschools. Preschool programs or curricula may also be provided in long day care centres and other settings. These services are primarily aimed at children in the year before they commence full time schooling (that is, when children are 4 years old in all jurisdictions), although younger children may also attend in all jurisdictions except Victoria.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In WA, family day care licences can be issued for the 0–5 and 5–12 age groups, allowing for licence holders to provide vacation care, and before and after school hours care, as well as long day care.

<sup>2</sup> In Tasmania, the flexibility to enrol children of pre-kindergarten age is permitted only under limited circumstances (such as for gifted children or children previously enrolled in another State or Territory who now reside in Tasmania). In the NT, younger children may attend with approval under certain circumstances, and younger Indigenous children may attend from 3 years of age if accompanied by an adult.

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- *Outside school hours care* — comprises services provided for school aged children (5–12 year olds) outside school hours during term and vacations. Care may be provided on student free days and when school finishes early.
  - *Other services* — comprise government funded services to support children with additional needs or in particular situations (including children from Indigenous or non-English speaking backgrounds, children with a disability or of parents with a disability, and children living in regional and remote areas).

## **Roles and responsibilities**

The Australian Government and the State and Territory governments have different but complementary roles in supporting children’s services. Both levels of government help fund services, provide information and advice to parents and service providers, and help plan, set and maintain operating standards.

The Australian Government’s roles and responsibilities for child care include:

- assisting families to participate in the social and economic life of the community by providing financial support to families, principally through payment of Child Care Benefit. The benefit is payable to families using approved child care services or registered informal carers
- administering a planning system to allocate child care places to those areas that need more places, in conjunction with other levels of government. There is no Australian Government limit on the allocation of centre-based long day care places
- providing information and advice to parents and providers about the availability of Australian Government funded services and some State and Territory funded services
- helping to enhance the quality of child care by funding the National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC) to administer the following quality assurance systems for children’s services:<sup>3</sup>
  - the Quality Improvement and Accreditation System (QIAS) for centre-based long day care centres
  - Family Day Care Quality Assurance (FDCQA) for family day care schemes
  - Outside School Hours Care Quality Assurance (OSHCQA) for outside school hours care services

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<sup>3</sup> Participation in the quality assurance systems is required to remain eligible for continued Child Care Benefit funding approval from the Australian Government.

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- funding organisations to provide information, support and training to service providers
  - providing operational and capital funding to some providers.

State and Territory governments' roles and responsibilities vary across jurisdictions and may include:

- providing operational and capital funding to non-government service providers
- delivering some services directly (especially preschool services)
- developing new child care and preschool services
- licensing and setting standards for children's services providers
- monitoring and resourcing licensed and/or funded children's services providers
- providing information, support, training and development opportunities for children's services providers
- assisting services in enhancing quality by providing curriculum and policy support and advice, as well as training and development for management and staff
- planning to ensure the appropriate mix of services is available to meet the needs of the community
- providing information and advice to parents and others about operating standards and the availability of services
- providing dispute resolution and complaints management processes.

Currently, it is generally the case that State and Territory governments are responsible for providing educational and developmental opportunities, such as preschool services.

### *Quality of care*

Both levels of government are committed to supporting quality children's services. The mechanisms used include licensing, quality assurance, the measurement of performance against standards, and outcomes linked to funding. These mechanisms are used in addition to the provision of curriculum and policy support and advice, and the training and development of management and staff.

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### *Licensing*

State and Territory governments set legislative and regulatory requirements for the licensing of children's services and monitor adherence to these requirements. These regulations include safety standards, staff qualifications, child/staff ratios and health and safety requirements.

The Australian, State and Territory governments have jointly developed national standards for centre-based long day care, family day care and outside school hours care services. These standards express a national view about the level of care all Australians should expect from the different types of child care service available to them. The types of service covered, the standards that apply, and the extent of implementation of these standards vary across jurisdictions.

### *Quality assurance*

The Australian Government has implemented quality assurance systems for Australian Government funded centre-based long day care services, family day care services and outside school hours care services. The broad objective of the quality assurance system is to ensure that children in care have stimulating, positive experiences and interactions that nurture all aspects of their development. The quality assurance systems do this by defining quality child care, providing a way to measure the quality of care provided by the service and identifying areas for ongoing quality improvement. Services participating in the quality assurance system are required to progress through the five step process as outlined in box 14.1.

To be eligible for Child Care Benefit and other funding support, child care services are required to register and satisfactorily participate in quality assurance. Quality assurance is designed to build on and complement the State and Territory government licensing requirements (where they exist).

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**Box 14.1 Accreditation under National Childcare Accreditation Council quality assurance systems**

There are several stages that service providers must progress through prior to National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC) making an accreditation decision.

- Registration — all family day care schemes, outside school hours care services and long day care centres are required to register with NCAC to participate in quality assurance in order to be eligible to receive Child Care Benefit from the Australian Government on behalf of parents and families.
- Self assessment — Each registered provider is required to undertake a self assessment for each of the quality areas against the service delivery standards. The provider is also required to develop and implement a quality improvement plan. The results of the self assessment are submitted to NCAC.
- Validation — Providers are reviewed by a third party ‘validator’ (a child care professional or peer who is selected and trained by NCAC), who visits to assess quality practices. The validator observes the provider’s care practices and completes a report for NCAC. The validator also collects surveys completed by service’s director/coordinator, staff/carers and the parents of children using the service, who provide a rating against the quality standards.
- Moderation — A moderator assesses the providers practices, guided by information from the self assessment, the validator’s report and completed surveys. A ‘quality profile’ is compiled by NCAC showing these various perspectives of the provider’s performance across the quality areas. Indicative weightings for these perspectives are self assessment (20 per cent), staff validation survey (10 per cent), family validation survey (10 per cent), child validation survey (10 per cent), validator’s report (40 per cent), moderator’s rating (10 per cent). Moderators also write a guide for the provider that focuses on quality improvement.
- Accreditation decision — NCAC makes the accreditation decision. To be accredited a provider must achieve a rating of ‘satisfactory’ or higher on all quality areas as detailed in the quality profile.

Accredited providers are required to submit a self assessment to NCAC every 2.5 years. During this period service providers are expected to continuously monitor performance against the quality standards. Services that do not meet accreditation standards are required to submit a new self assessment within six months of the accreditation decision.

*Source:* adapted from NCAC (2004a, 2004b and 2005).

*Funding performance standards and outcomes*

State and Territory governments impose varying performance requirements for funding children’s services. These requirements may include: the employment of higher qualified staff than required by licensing or minimum standards;

self-assessment of quality; and a demonstration of the delivery of quality educational and recreational programs.

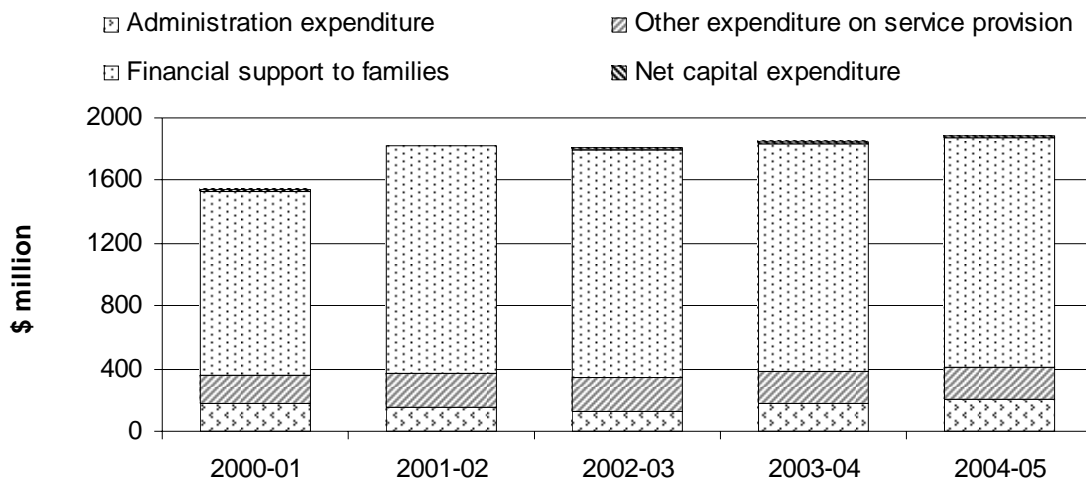
## Funding

Total Australian, State and Territory government expenditure on children's services was approximately \$2487 million in 2004-05, compared with \$2482 million (in real terms) in 2003-04 (table 14A.4).

Australian Government expenditure accounted for 75.9 per cent (\$1886 million) of total government expenditure on children's services in 2004-05. The major component of Australian Government expenditure was financial support to families through assistance with fees, which accounted for 77.8 per cent (\$1468 million) of Australian Government expenditure on children's services. Other expenditure on service provision accounted for a further 10.7 per cent (\$202.3 million), and administration expenditure and net capital expenditure accounted for the remaining 10.7 per cent (\$200.9 million) and 0.8 per cent (\$15.4 million) respectively (figure 14.1).

State and Territory government expenditure on children's services in 2004-05 was approximately \$600.3 million, of which other expenditure on service provision comprised around 52.3 per cent (\$313.7 million). Administration expenditure, financial support to families and net capital expenditure accounted for 42.6 per cent (\$255.8 million), 3.2 per cent (\$19.3 million) and 1.9 per cent (\$11.6 million) respectively (table 14A.4).

Figure 14.1 **Australian Government real expenditure on children's services (2004-05 dollars)**



Source: Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS) (unpublished); table 14A.4.

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In the distribution of total State and Territory government expenditure across all children's service types, the provision of preschool services accounted for the largest proportion (around 83.8 per cent, or \$503.2 million) in 2004-05 (table 14A.5).

The Australian Government provides supplementary funding to support the participation of Indigenous children in preschool programs. In 2003, an estimated \$11.2 million was provided to education providers for 7644 full time equivalent Indigenous preschool enrolments (DEST 2005).

## **Size and scope**

### *Child care services*

The Australian Government supported 561 876 child care places in 2004 — an increase of 8.5 per cent on the number in 2003 (table 14A.8). The majority of Australian Government supported child care places were outside school hours care places (45.2 per cent), followed by centre-based long day care places (40.9 per cent), family day care places (13.3 per cent), occasional care places (0.5 per cent) and other care places (0.2 per cent).

State and Territory governments supported at least 204 000 preschool places in 2004-05 (tables 14A.29, 14A.38, 14A.47, 14A.56, 14A.65, 14A.74, 14A.83 and 14A.92).

In 2004-05, around 115 700 children aged 12 years or younger attended State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care and 748 900 children aged 12 years or younger attended Australian Government approved child care services (tables 14A.10, 14A.30, 14A.39, 14A.48, 14A.57, 14A.66, 14A.75, 14A.84, 14A.93). Some children may attend both Australian and State/Territory funded child care and some services may receive funding from both Australian and State/Territory governments.

Table 14.1 shows the proportion of children in the relevant age groups attending Australian, State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care. Different data collection approaches and the exclusion of certain services funded by some jurisdictions reduce the comparability of these data across jurisdictions.

Table 14.1 **Proportion of children using Australian, State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care, 2004-05<sup>a, b</sup>**

Age	NSW <sup>c</sup>	Vic	Qld	WA	SA <sup>d</sup>	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
0–5 years	50.1	27.9	40.8	25.2	32.6	34.3	39.4	22.0	38.3
6–12 years	13.3	13.8	17.3	8.8	22.6	15.0	22.8	13.9	14.6
<b>0–12 years</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>20.1</b>	<b>27.7</b>	<b>16.0</b>	<b>27.0</b>	<b>23.6</b>	<b>30.3</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>25.2</b>

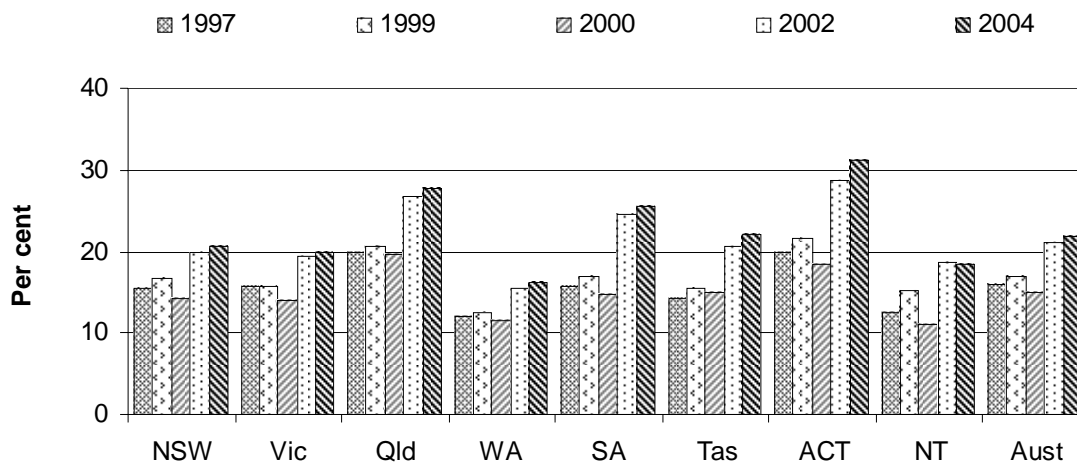
<sup>a</sup> Australian Government data are drawn from the March 2004 Australian Government Census of Child Care Services (AGCCCS). <sup>b</sup> Population as at June 2005. <sup>c</sup> NSW used a revised method of calculating the number of children receiving child care and preschool services. This new method of calculation will provide clear trend data for each age group for child care and preschool. The data include estimates based on the rate of survey return for each year. NSW data are not comparable with data for other states and territories. <sup>d</sup> SA excludes children in non-government preschools.

Source: AGCCCS, March 2004 (unpublished); State and Territory governments (unpublished); Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Australian Demographic Statistics (unpublished); ABS (2002), *Population Projections, Australia*, Cat. no. 3222.0, Canberra; tables 14A.1, 14A.10, 14A.30, 14A.39, 14A.48, 14A.57, 14A.66, 14A.75, 14A.84 and 14A.93.

The majority of children attending Australian Government approved child care in 2004 (approximately 490 600, or 65.5 per cent) were aged 0–5 years (table 14A.10). Nationally, 21.9 per cent of children aged 0–12 years attended Australian Government approved child care services in 2004 (figure 14.2).

The average hours of attendance in child care in 2004 varied considerably across jurisdictions, for all types of service. Nationally, attendance per child at centre-based long day care centres was 19.1 hours per week, while the average attendance per child at family day care was 18.0 hours per week. The national average attendance per child at occasional care was 9.3 hours per week and the national average attendance at vacation care during school holidays was 2.8 days per week (table 14A.9).

**Figure 14.2 Proportion of children aged 0–12 years using Australian Government approved child care<sup>a, b, c, d</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Excludes children cared for in neighbourhood model services. <sup>b</sup> Data for 1997, 1999, 2002 and 2004 are drawn from the respective AGCCCS, while data for 2000 are drawn from Centrelink administrative data. The AGCCCS and Centrelink data are not fully comparable and such comparisons need to be treated with care. <sup>c</sup> Data for WA exclude children attending Department of Education provided kindergartens for 4 year olds, who would otherwise be in child care. <sup>d</sup> Australian total includes children in other Territories.

Source: AGCCCS, August 1997, May 1999, May 2002 and March 2004 (unpublished); Centrelink administrative data, August 2000 (unpublished); ABS Australian Demographic Statistics (unpublished); ABS (2002), Population Projections, Australia, Cat. no. 3222.0, Canberra; table 14A.10.

### Preschool services

Preschools provide a range of educational and developmental programs (generally on a sessional basis) to children in the year immediately before they commence full time schooling and also, in some jurisdictions, to younger children. The age from which children may attend preschools varies across jurisdictions. Victoria contributes funding towards a preschool program for all 4-year-old children, which is the year before they commence schooling. Children in the NT are funded by government to attend preschool in the year before they commence schooling. Younger children in NSW, Queensland, WA, SA, Tasmania and the ACT may also access government funded preschool services.<sup>4</sup>

Younger Indigenous children living in remote areas in the NT and Queensland also may attend preschools. In SA, a pre-entry program provides one session of preschool a week for 10 weeks in the term before preschool, and children from Indigenous backgrounds may attend preschool at 3 years of age. In the ACT, children from Indigenous backgrounds, children with English as a second language,

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 2.

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and children with a hearing impairment and/or whose parents have a hearing impairment may be eligible for early entry into preschool (for 5.25 hours per week) at 3 years of age.

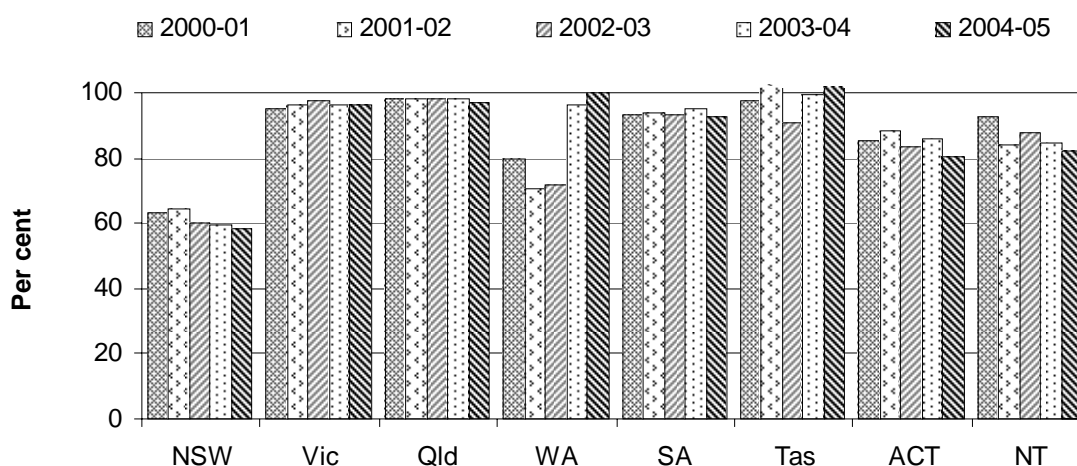
This disparity in the age from which children may access preschool services reduces the comparability of preschool data across jurisdictions. Preschool data are presented for two categories to improve comparability:

- children attending preschool in the year immediately before they commence full time schooling (data that are largely presented on a comparable basis for all jurisdictions)
- younger children attending preschool services.

Approximately 244 200 children attended State and Territory funded and/or provided preschool services in 2004-05. The majority (88.5 per cent, or approximately 216 100 children) were to begin full time schooling the following year (table 14A.11).

Nationally in 2004-05, 83.4 per cent of children of 4 years of age attended funded and/or provided preschool in the year immediately before they commenced school. There is some double counting in several jurisdictions, as well as issues with synchronisation of data collection times, leading to overestimation of the attendance rates being reported (figure 14.3).

**Figure 14.3 Proportion of children attending State and Territory government funded and/or provided preschool services immediately before the commencement of full time schooling<sup>a, b, c, d, e, f</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> The denominator — the population of preschool aged children — is defined as persons aged 4 years in all states and territories. Data for estimated resident population are six months out of sequence with the data for children using State or Territory government funded and/or provided preschool services in year before full time school. 'Year before full time school' includes a number of non-4 year olds. <sup>b</sup> There is some double counting of children in jurisdictions (except in Victoria, SA, Tasmania and the ACT) because some children moved in and out of the preschool system throughout the year and, as a result, the number of children reported in preschool exceeds the number of children in the target population. There is no double counting for Victoria, SA, Tasmania and the ACT because a snapshot is used for each year's data collection. <sup>c</sup> NSW used a revised method of calculating the number of children receiving child care and preschool services. NSW data are not comparable with data for other states and territories. <sup>d</sup> Victorian data include some children attending funded preschool services conducted in centre-based long day care centres and independent schools. <sup>e</sup> WA data for 2000-01 to 2002-03 exclude the non-government sector. Data for 2003-04 include the non-government sector for the first time, resulting in a significant jump in the time series. Changes to the school entry age (and the associated move to full time schooling for pre-year 1 children) have resulted in changes in the reporting of data from 2001-02. From 2002, pre-year 1 students in non-compulsory schooling are not included. <sup>f</sup> Data for SA exclude children in non-government preschools.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); ABS Australian Demographic Statistics (unpublished); ABS (2002), Population Projections, Australia, Cat. no. 3222.0, Canberra; table 14A.11.

Younger children in NSW, Queensland, SA, the ACT and the NT were able to attend government funded preschool services in 2004-05. Nationally, around 11.2 per cent of children aged 3 years attended preschool services in that year (approximately 28 100 children). Participation in 2004-05 differed across jurisdictions, reflecting variation in policies on access to funded preschool services (table 14A.11).

All jurisdictions except NSW, Victoria and the NT provided data on the average hours of attendance for government funded and/or provided preschool services in 2004-05. The average attendance of children in the year immediately before they commenced full time schooling was at least 11 hours per week (tables 14A.47, 14A.56, 14A.65, 14A.74 and 14A.83).

### Employment status of parents

Access to children's services differs according to the service type. The workforce and employment status of parents may influence children's access to services. Those services eligible for Child Care Benefit, for example, give a high priority to children at risk and children of parents with work-related child care needs. Occasional care services give priority to parents requiring care to meet other needs (such as to attend appointments, take care of personal matters or have temporary respite from full time parenting). Details of the labour force and employment status of parents whose children use these services are shown in table 14A.15.

### Services by management type

Children's services are managed by the government (State, Territory and local), community and private sectors. The management structure of services indicates the involvement of these sectors in the direct delivery of children's services. The limited data on the management type of child care need to be interpreted with care because the scope of data collection varies across jurisdictions. Available data on the management type of preschool services in 2004-05, is more complete than that for child care services, and indicate considerable variation across jurisdictions (table 14.2).

**Table 14.2 Proportion of State and Territory licensed and/or registered children's services, by management type, 2004-05 (per cent)<sup>a</sup>**

	NSW	Vic <sup>b</sup>	Qld	WA	SA	Tas <sup>c</sup>	ACT	NT <sup>d</sup>
Child care								
Community managed <sup>e</sup>	31.7	38.9	26.1	18.2	39.7	55.3	82.6	73.8
Private <sup>f</sup>	65.0	46.2	70.6	80.0	34.5	20.5	17.4	26.2
Government managed	3.2	14.9	3.3	1.9	25.9	24.2	–	–
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Preschool								
Community managed <sup>e</sup>	90.1	73.9	23.1	na	4.7	..	8.0	4.2
Private <sup>f</sup>	9.9	8.2	21.6	na	–	24.2	na	na
Government managed	na	17.9	55.3	100.0	95.3	75.8	92.0	95.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<sup>a</sup> Includes all Australian, State and Territory government supported services. <sup>b</sup> All government managed preschools in Victoria are managed by local government. <sup>c</sup> Preschools include funded non-government preschools. <sup>d</sup> Preschool services are provided by the Department of Education directly, but a range of management functions are devolved to school councils and parent management committees. <sup>e</sup> Community managed services include not-for-profit services provided or managed by parents, churches or co-operatives. <sup>f</sup> Private for-profit services provided or managed by a company, private individual or non-government school. **na** Not available. **..** Not applicable. **–** Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); tables 14A.33, 14A.42, 14A.51, 14A.60, 14A.69, 14A.78, 14A.87 and 14A.96.

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## 14.2 Framework of performance indicators

The framework of performance indicators is based on common objectives for children's services endorsed by the Community Services and Disabilities Ministers' Advisory Council (CSDMAC) (box 14.2). The relative emphasis placed on each objective varies across jurisdictions.

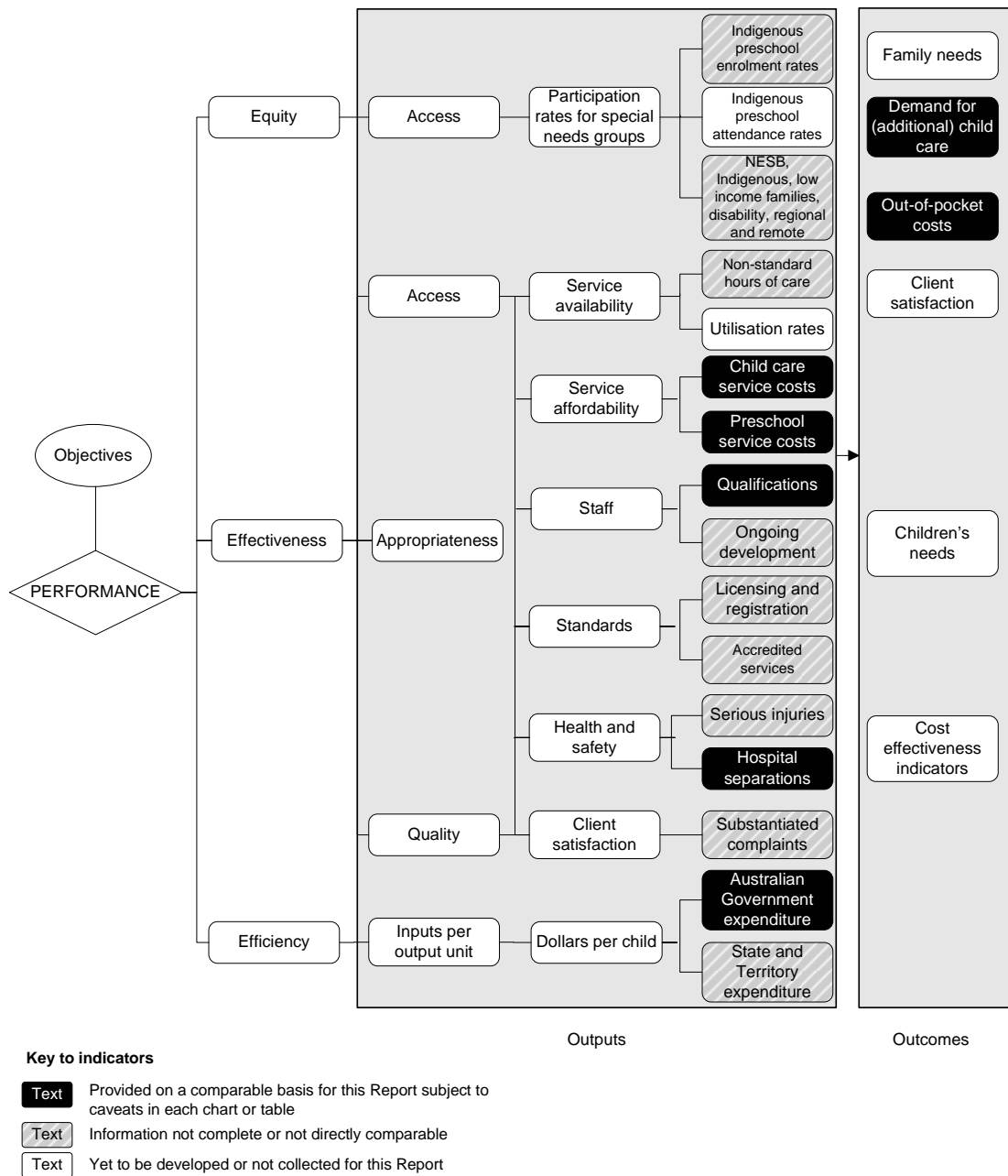
### Box 14.2 Objectives for children's services

Children's services aim to:

- meet the care, education and development needs of children in a safe and nurturing environment
- provide support for families in caring for their children
- provide these services in an equitable and efficient manner.

A performance indicator framework consistent with these objectives is summarised in figure 14.4. The framework shows which data are provided on a comparable basis in the 2006 Report. For data that are not considered directly comparable, the text includes relevant caveats and supporting commentary. Chapter 1 discusses data comparability from a Report-wide perspective (see section 1.6).

Figure 14.4 Performance indicators for children's services



### 14.3 Key performance indicator results

Different delivery contexts, locations and types of client may affect the equity, effectiveness and efficiency of children's services. Much of the data available for reporting in this chapter are not comparable across jurisdictions. Appendix A contains contextual information, which may assist in interpreting the performance indicators presented in this chapter. Definitions of key terms and indicators are in section 14.6.

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## Outputs

### *Equity*

#### *Access — participation rates for special needs groups*

The ‘participation rates for special needs groups’ indicator is explained in box 14.3.

#### **Box 14.3 Participation rates for special needs groups**

‘Participation rates for special needs groups’ is an output (equity — access) indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that all Australian families have equitable access to child care and preschool services, that there is no discrimination between groups, and that there is consideration of the needs of those groups who may have special difficulty accessing services.

This indicator is defined as the proportion of children using child care services who are from targeted special needs groups, compared with the representation of these groups in the community. Data are reported separately for child care and preschool services. Targeted special needs groups include children from a non-English speaking background, children from an Indigenous background, children from low income families, children with a disability, and children from regional and remote areas.

The representation of special needs groups among children’s services users would be expected to be broadly similar to their representation in the community.

The data indicate that the representation of children in special needs groups among users of Australian Government supported child care is sometimes substantially different across jurisdictions (table 14.3). It is important to note that due to the unavailability of certain data items, the Australian Government data exclude flexible and innovative services and other services such as mobile and toy libraries, Indigenous play groups and enrichment programs, which are targeted towards children from these groups. However, there is a general pattern across jurisdictions for children from each special needs group. In almost all jurisdictions:

- children from a non-English speaking background participated in child care at a higher rate than this group’s representation in the community
- the representation of children from an Indigenous background among child care users was lower than this group’s overall representation in the community
- children from low income families participated in child care at a higher rate than this group’s representation in the community

- the representation of children with a disability among child care users was lower than their overall representation in the community
- the proportion of children in regional areas attending child care was generally lower than the proportion of children who live in regional areas
- the proportion of children in remote areas attending child care was lower than the proportion of children who live in remote areas.

**Table 14.3 Proportion of children (aged 0–12 years) from special needs groups attending Australian Government approved child care services, 2004 (per cent)**

<i>Representation</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Children from non-English speaking backgrounds									
In child care services	17.4	13.5	6.3	7.9	6.9	3.4	12.1	8.1	11.6
In the community <sup>a, b</sup>	8.8	8.0	2.7	3.6	3.0	1.1	2.1	4.1	6.1
Children from Indigenous backgrounds									
In child care services	1.6	0.6	2.5	1.8	1.3	1.0	0.7	10.7	1.6
In the community <sup>c, d</sup>	3.6	1.0	5.9	5.8	3.1	6.4	2.1	36.7	4.1
Children from low-income families									
In child care services	28.0	28.3	33.8	32.6	33.0	31.5	12.4	18.8	29.9
In the community <sup>e</sup>	16.7	16.1	15.0	17.3	18.6	19.9	8.0	18.8	16.4
Children with a disability									
In child care services	2.1	2.0	2.0	1.7	3.5	2.2	2.1	2.4	2.1
In the community <sup>f</sup>	8.6	7.2	7.9	9.2	9.9	7.3	7.2	na	8.2
Children from regional and remote areas									
Children from regional areas									
In child care services	25.9	22.5	38.9	18.2	16.2	99.6	–	74.0	28.8
In the community <sup>c, d</sup>	30.0	29.1	45.6	24.0	26.9	97.6	0.3	48.9	33.4
Children from remote areas									
In child care services	0.4	0.1	1.6	5.0	2.0	0.4	–	26.0	1.4
In the community <sup>c, d</sup>	0.8	0.1	4.7	9.2	4.8	2.4	–	51.1	3.2

<sup>a</sup> Data relate to children aged 0–11 years and were obtained from the ABS 2002 Survey of Child Care. These data are not strictly comparable to the proportion of children from a non-English speaking background using the services. <sup>b</sup> Data for Tasmania have a relative standard error of between 25 per cent and 50 per cent and should be used with caution. <sup>c</sup> Data relate to children aged 0–14 years at June 2001 and were obtained from the ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing. <sup>d</sup> These numbers do not include innovative or flexible services that receive direct funding from the Australian Government and are targeted towards children from these groups. <sup>e</sup> Data relate to children aged 0–12 years and were obtained from the ABS 2003-04 Survey of Household Income and Expenditure. <sup>f</sup> Data are estimated from the ABS 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers and relate to children aged 0–14 years, and are thus not strictly comparable to the proportion of child care service users with a disability. **na** Not available. – Nil or rounded to zero.

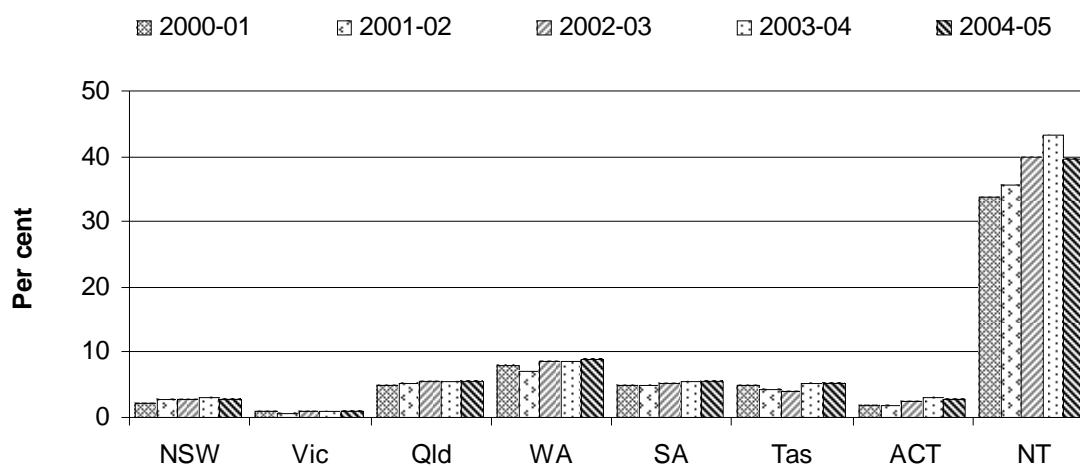
*Source:* AGCCCS (unpublished); ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing (unpublished); ABS 2003-04 Survey of Household Income and Expenditure (unpublished); ABS 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (unpublished); ABS 2002 Child Care Survey (unpublished); table 14A.19.

Estimates for the representation of special needs groups in the community are based on data that may not match the age range used for the participation of special needs groups in preschools. Although the participation of special needs groups in preschools and the representation of special needs groups in the community are not directly comparable, they provide a broad indication of the relative access to preschool for special needs groups.

Data on the representation of special needs groups among government funded preschool attendees are provided in table 14.4. The proportion of preschool attendees in 2004-05 who were from special needs groups display no clear pattern, with some groups overrepresented in several jurisdictions and underrepresented in others.

The proportion of preschool enrolments from Indigenous backgrounds has been relatively constant over time within jurisdictions, except in the NT, where it increased between 2000-01 and 2004-05 (figure 14.5). The proportion of Indigenous enrolments largely reflects the proportion of the population in each jurisdiction from Indigenous backgrounds.

**Figure 14.5 Proportion of preschool enrolments from Indigenous backgrounds**



Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); tables 14A.34, 14A.43, 14A.52, 14A.61, 14A.70, 14A.79, 14A.88 and 14A.97.

**Table 14.4 Proportion of children (aged 0–12 years) from special needs groups attending State and Territory funded or provided preschools, 2004-05 (per cent)**

<i>Representation</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Children from non-English speaking backgrounds									
In preschool services	7.4	13.6	1.0	na	9.5	na	7.7	na	6.4
In the community <sup>a, b</sup>	8.8	8.0	2.7	3.6	3.0	1.1	2.1	4.1	6.1
Children from Indigenous backgrounds									
In preschool services	2.9	0.8	5.6	8.9	5.5	5.2	2.7	39.6	4.5
In the community <sup>c, d</sup>	3.6	1.0	5.9	5.8	3.1	6.4	2.1	36.7	4.1
Children with a disability									
In preschool services <sup>e</sup>	6.4	8.8	1.3	3.1	16.0	na	5.2	na	5.9
In the community <sup>f</sup>	8.6	7.2	7.9	9.2	9.9	7.3	7.2	na	8.2
Children from regional and remote areas									
Children from regional areas									
In preschool services	68.6	31.8	50.2	24.2	28.4	98.1	na	na	45.6
In the community <sup>c, d</sup>	30.0	29.1	45.6	24.0	26.9	97.6	0.3	48.9	33.4
Children from remote areas									
In preschool services	1.4	0.1	8.5	3.8	5.9	1.9	na	na	3.5
In the community <sup>c, d</sup>	0.8	0.1	4.7	9.2	4.8	2.4	..	51.1	3.2

<sup>a</sup> Data relate to children aged 0–11 years and were obtained from the ABS 2002 Survey of Child Care. These data are not strictly comparable to the proportion of children from a non-English speaking background using the services. <sup>b</sup> Data for Tasmania has a relative standard error of between 25 per cent and 50 per cent and should be used with caution. <sup>c</sup> Data relate to children aged 0–14 years at June 2001 and were obtained from the ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing. <sup>d</sup> These numbers do not include innovative or flexible services that receive direct funding from the Australian Government and are targeted towards children from these groups. <sup>e</sup> Data are not directly comparable between jurisdictions because there is no national definition or standard on children with a disability. <sup>f</sup> Data are estimated from the ABS 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers and relate to children aged 0–14 years, and are thus not strictly comparable to the proportion of preschool users with a disability. **na** Not available. **..** Not applicable.

*Source:* State and Territory governments (unpublished); ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing (unpublished); ABS 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (unpublished); ABS 2002 Child Care Survey (unpublished); tables 14A.34, 14A.43, 14A.52, 14A.61, 14A.70, 14A.79, 14A.88 and 14A.97.

## *Effectiveness*

### *Service availability — non-standard hours of care*

An indicator of the appropriateness of, and community access to, children’s services is the proportion of services offering ‘non-standard hours of care’ (box 14.4). The definition of ‘non-standard hours’ varies across service types, and a full explanation can be found in section 14.6, which provides definitions for various terms used in this chapter.

### Box 14.4 Non-standard hours of care

The prevalence of services providing 'non-standard hours of care' is an output (service availability) indicator of governments' objective to ensure government funded and/or provided children's services meet the needs of all users.

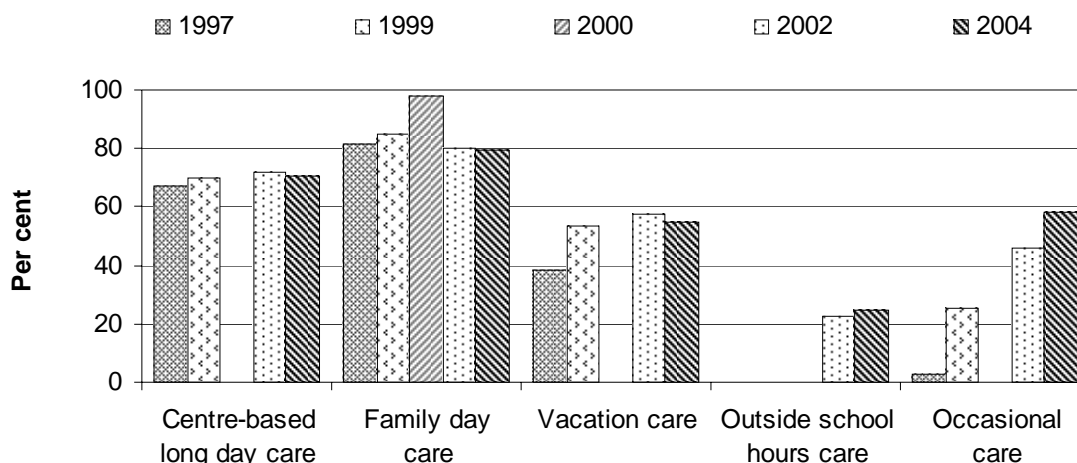
This indicator is defined as the number of services providing non-standard hours of care divided by the total number of services. Data are reported by service type.

A higher proportion of services providing non-standard hours of care may suggest a greater flexibility of services to meet the needs of families.

This indicator does not provide information on the demand for non-standard hours of care. It also provides no information on how closely available non-standard hours services match the needs of users.

Provision of non-standard hours of care may be influenced by a range of factors such as costs to services and parents, demand for care, availability of carers, and compliance with occupational and health and safety requirements. Figure 14.6 shows the proportion of services that provided non-standard hours of care by service type.

Figure 14.6 Australian Government approved child care services providing non-standard hours of care, by service type<sup>a, b, c</sup>



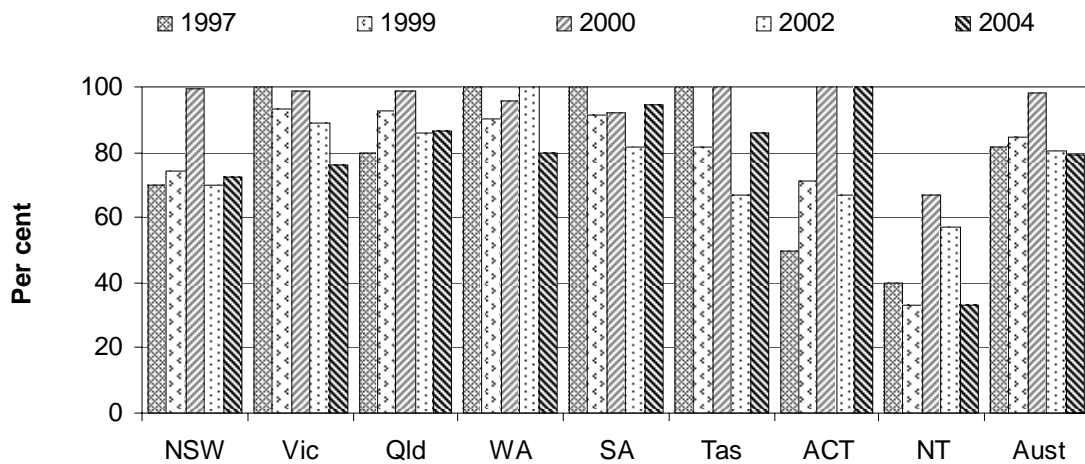
<sup>a</sup> Only family day care data can be reported for 2000. <sup>b</sup> Comparison between 2000 data and data for other years is not possible, given different data collection methods and time frames. <sup>c</sup> An outside school hours care category combined data reported on before school hours care and after school hours care in 2002. Data for the combined category are not available for previous years.

Source: AGCCCS, August 1997, May 1999, May 2002 and March 2004 (unpublished); Centrelink administrative data, August 2000 (unpublished); table 14A.16.

The provision of non-standard hours of care by Australian Government approved family day care schemes in different jurisdictions is shown in figure 14.7.

Limited data are available on services not included in the Australian Government Census of Child Care Services (AGCCCS) that were offering non-standard hours of care. New South Wales and SA were able to provide data on the proportion of their preschools that offered non-standard hours in 2004-05 (tables 14A.34 and 14A.70).<sup>5</sup>

Figure 14.7 **Australian Government approved family day care services providing non-standard hours of care<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Comparison between 2000 data and data for other years is not possible, given different data collection methods and time frames.

Source: AGCCCS, August 1997, May 1999, May 2002 and March 2004 (unpublished); Centrelink administrative data, August 2000 (unpublished); table 14A.16.

#### *Service availability — utilisation rates*

The Steering Committee has identified ‘utilisation rates’ as an indicator of the effectiveness of children’s services (box 14.5). Data for this indicator, however, were not available for the 2006 Report.

<sup>5</sup> In SA, preschools are encouraged to offer back-to-back preschool services to assist parents, particularly in country regions where the need to travel long distances makes it impractical for children to attend preschool more frequently (see footnotes to table 14A.70).

### Box 14.5 Utilisation rates

This indicator will provide an output (service availability) indicator of governments' objective to ensure all Australian families have equitable and adequate access to children's services.

Utilisation refers to the level of usage of a service and can be measured in a number of ways, including vacancy levels and capacity to take on more children. Utilisation rates can also measure how efficiently existing assets are being used. Although governments do not always directly own or operate children's services, the level of utilisation may be relevant where governments provide targeted capital or operational funding to establish or maintain services.

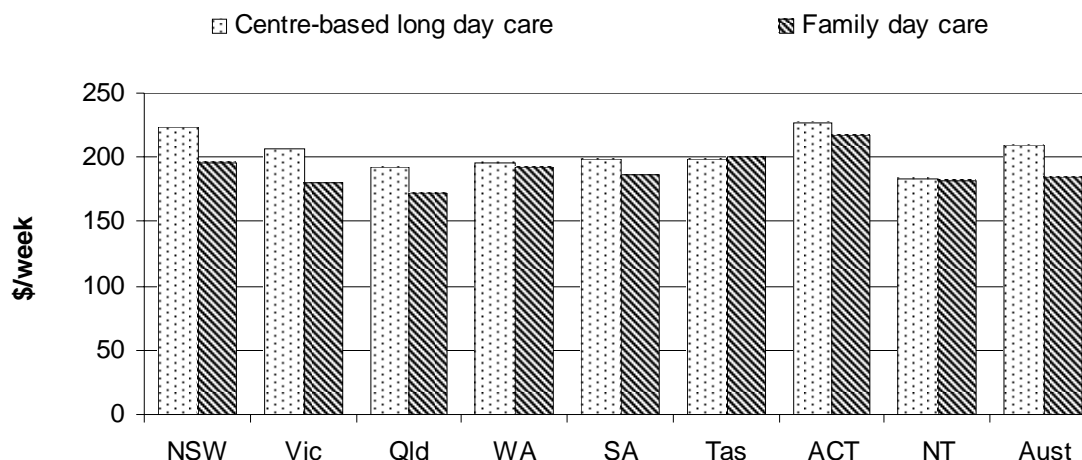
The desirable level of utilisation will depend on a number of factors. High levels of utilisation may be desirable as a measure of efficiency in situations where a community does not require additional services. An alternative view of high utilisation rates is that services are less accessible as there are fewer unused places available.

Data are currently not collected on this indicator. The Steering Committee has identified this indicator for development and reporting in future.

### *Service affordability — child care service costs*

An indicator of the affordability (and thus accessibility) of children's services is the 'child care service cost', represented by average weekly fees for child care services (box 14.6). Nationally, average weekly fees for 50 hours of care in 2004 were higher for centre-based long day care services than for family day care (figure 14.8).

**Figure 14.8 Average fees charged by Australian Government funded child care services, 2004<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Average fees based on 50 hours of care in the Census reference week.

Source: AGCCCS, March 2004 (unpublished); table 14A.25.

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**Box 14.6 Child care service costs**

This indicator is an output (service affordability) indicator of governments' objective to ensure all Australian families have equitable access to children's services regardless of their financial circumstances.

This indicator is defined as average weekly fees for 50 hours of care by service type.

Provided the service quality is held constant, lower service costs are more desirable.

Fee data need to be interpreted with care because fees are independently set by service providers. Charging practices, including fees, are commercial decisions made by individual services, so there is significant variation in the fees charged by services. Fee variation occurs as a result of factors including State and Territory licensing requirements, award wages, and whether fees include charges for additional services such as nappies and meals.

*Service affordability — Preschool service costs*

'Preschool service costs' is an indicator of the affordability and accessibility of preschool services (box 14.7).

Preschool services are delivered by a different mix of community managed, privately managed and government managed service providers across jurisdictions (tables 14A.33, 14A.42, 14A.51, 14A.60, 14A.69, 14A.78, 14A.87 and 14A.96). Differences in fees charged by service providers may reflect commercial decisions (for privately managed services), the extent of cost recovery (for community and government managed services) and whether fees include charges for additional services such as meals and materials.

Preschool service costs per child may also depend on the time spent in preschool. Of the 239 100 children attending preschool in 2002, 9.9 per cent attended preschool for less than five hours per week, 30.5 per cent attended for between five and nine hours per week, 53.8 per cent attended for between 10 and 19 hours per week and 5.8 per cent attended preschool for more than 20 hours per week (ABS 2003).

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### Box 14.7 **Preschool service costs**

Preschool service costs is an indicator of governments' objective that all Australian families have equitable access to children's services regardless of their financial circumstances.

This indicator is defined as the weekly cost of preschool per child (after subsidies received by families). Data are reported as the average and median weekly cost per child.

Provided the service quality and quantity is held constant, lower weekly costs represents more affordable preschool.

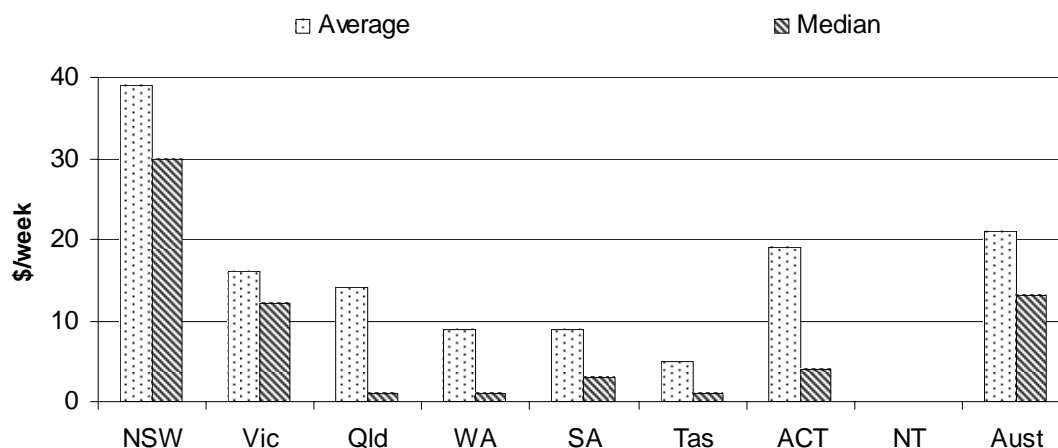
A variety of factors influences preschool costs and care needs to be exercised when interpreting results.

- There may be differences between jurisdictions in the number of hours and sessions attended by children each week.
- Preschool services are provided by a different mix of providers (community, private and government). Differences in charging practices, including fees, may be due to commercial or cost recovery decisions made by individual services. Fee variation can also occur as a result of charges for additional services such as meals and materials.
- Some jurisdictions provide targeted fee relief that lowers fees for some children.

Data for this indicator were obtained from the ABS 2002 Child Care Survey. Given that estimates from the 2002 survey are based on information obtained from a sample of dwellings, they are subject to sampling variability. They may differ from those estimates that would have been produced by a census. Estimates for the smaller jurisdictions are based on small sample sizes and, consequently, are subject to high sampling error. Data for Tasmania, the ACT and the NT, in particular, need to be interpreted with caution. Box 14.18 includes further information about the 2002 survey.

Nationally, the average cost of preschool per child in 2002 was \$21 per week and the median cost (the middle value in the distribution of fees paid per child) was \$13 per week (figure 14.9). Data for Tasmania and the ACT need to be interpreted with caution. Data for the NT are statistically unreliable and are not published. Table 14A.26 provides additional information on the preschool service costs for children by cost range for selected jurisdictions.

Figure 14.9 Children who attended preschool, weekly cost per child (after subsidies), 2002<sup>a, b, c, d, e</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Net costs per child after subsidies have been received. Some children attending preschool services may be eligible for the minimum rate of the Child Care Benefit. <sup>b</sup> The estimates are not based on standardised measures of child age, hours of service provided or preschool service delivery mechanisms. <sup>c</sup> In Victoria and NSW, a fee subsidy is paid directly to services to reduce fees paid by eligible families such as those holding approved concession cards or meeting specified income thresholds. <sup>d</sup> The estimates for Tasmania and the ACT have a relative standard error between 25 per cent and 50 per cent and should be used with caution. <sup>e</sup> The estimate for the NT has a relative standard error greater than 50 per cent and is unreliable for general use.

Source: ABS 2002 Child Care Survey (unpublished); table 14A.26.

### Quality

An important focus of Australian, State and Territory governments is to set and maintain appropriate quality standards in child care and preschool services. Indicators of the quality of children's services are the proportion of qualified staff, the rate of ongoing staff development, the extent of licensing and registration, the proportion of services that have achieved quality accreditation, the number of serious injuries, and the number of substantiated breaches arising from complaints per registered or licensed service, by service type. These data need to be treated with caution because there are differences in reporting across jurisdictions.

### Staff—qualifications

Staff qualifications are an indicator of staff quality (box 14.8).

### Box 14.8 Qualifications

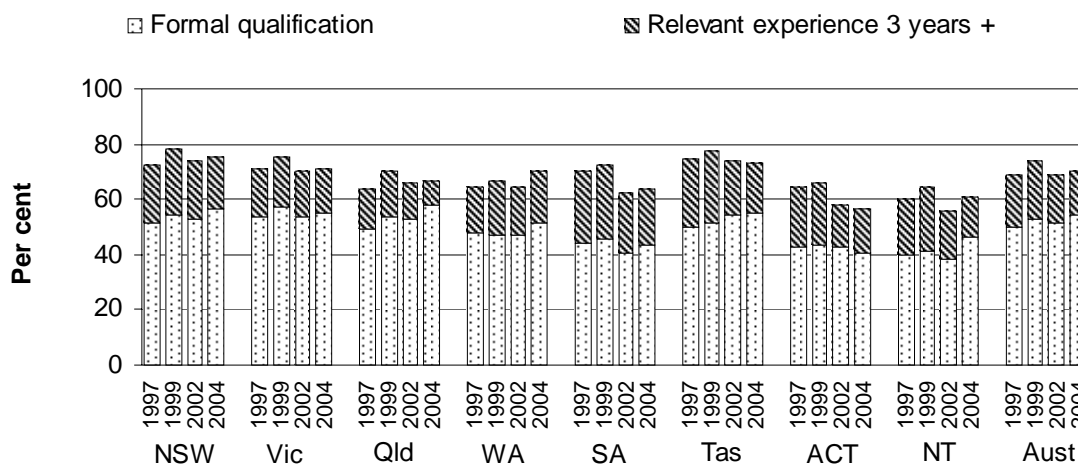
The qualifications of staff in children's services is an output (staff) indicator of governments' objective to ensure staff in government funded or provided children's services are able to provide services which meet the needs of children. In particular, this means ensuring staff have the training and experience to provide a safe and nurturing environment that fulfils the educational and development needs of children.

This indicator is defined as the proportion of primary contact staff with relevant formal qualifications or three or more years of relevant experience.

Some studies and research have shown a link between a higher proportion of qualified and experienced primary contact staff and a higher quality service.

Nationally, there were more than 68 500 primary contact staff employed in Australian Government approved child care in 2004, an increase of 59.2 per cent since 1997 (table 14A.13). The proportion of primary contact staff with relevant formal qualifications or three or more years of relevant experience across jurisdictions over this period is reported in figure 14.10.

Figure 14.10 Paid primary contact staff employed by Australian Government approved child care services, by qualification<sup>a, b</sup>

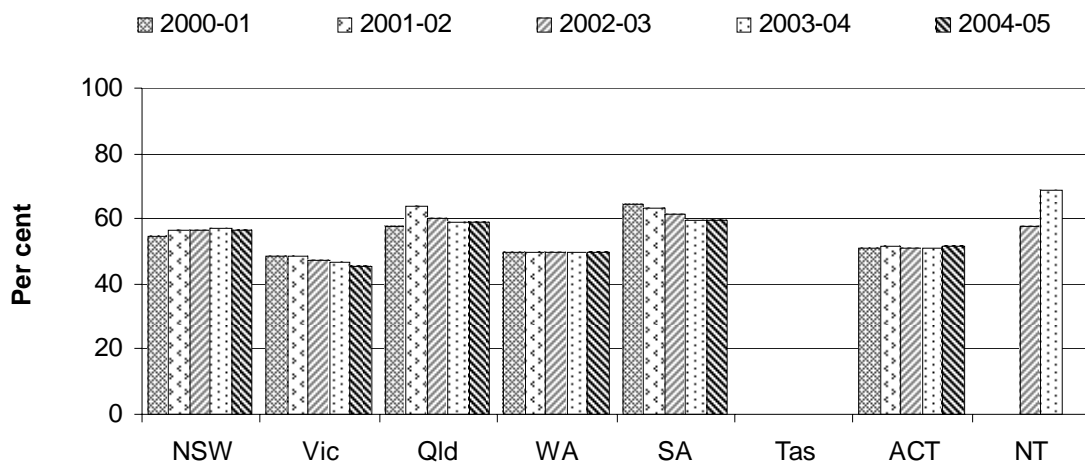


<sup>a</sup> Excludes Aboriginal play groups, mobile and toy libraries, and in-home care. <sup>b</sup> 'Three or more years relevant experience' category excludes staff with a relevant formal qualification.

Source: AGCCCS, August 1997, May 1999, May 2002 and March 2004 (unpublished); table 14A.13.

Some data are available on the qualifications of staff employed by preschool services that received funding from State and Territory governments. The proportion of preschool primary contact staff with a relevant formal qualification is reported in figure 14.11. The comparability of these data is limited, however, by the different licensing and funding arrangements across jurisdictions.

**Figure 14.11 Paid primary contact staff with a relevant formal qualification employed by State and Territory funded and/or managed preschools<sup>a, b, c</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> All funded preschool services in Victoria must have at least two staff but only the preschool teacher must be qualified. <sup>b</sup> Preschools in Queensland must have at least two staff, of whom one must have a relevant formal qualification. <sup>c</sup> Data for Tasmania and some years in the NT are not available.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); tables 14A.32, 14A.41, 14A.50, 14A.59, 14A.68, 14A.77, 14A.86 and 14A.95.

### *Staff — ongoing development*

Ongoing development of the skills and competencies of child care and preschool staff is an indicator of staff quality (box 14.9).

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### Box 14.9 Ongoing development

The ongoing development of staff in children's services is an output (staff) indicator of governments' objective to ensure staff in government funded or provided children's services are able to provide services that meet the needs of children. In particular, this means ensuring staff have the training and experience to provide a safe and nurturing environment that fulfils the educational and development needs of children.

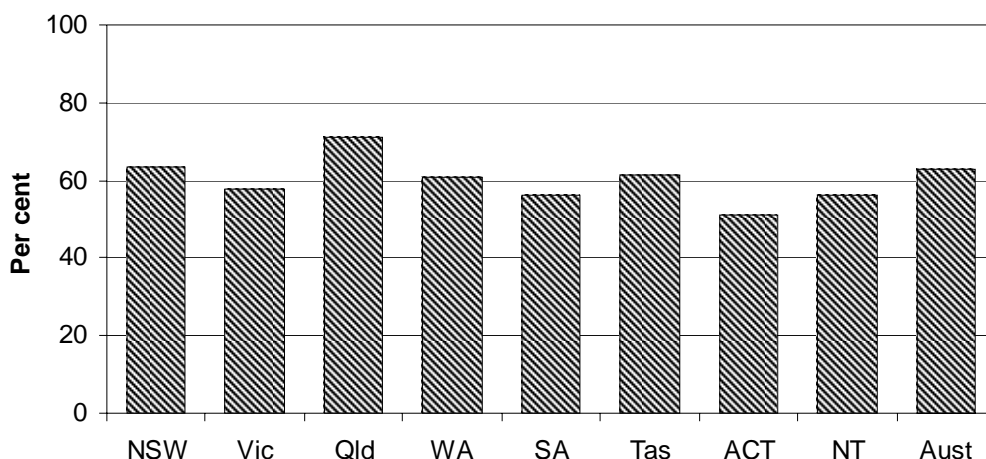
This indicator is defined as the proportion of staff who undertook relevant in-service training in the previous 12 months.

A high rate of in-service training suggests a relatively high quality of service.

This indicator does not provide information on whether the ongoing development undertaken by staff is adequate or sufficiently relevant to improve the quality of the service provided.

Nationally, more than 60 per cent of paid staff working in Australian Government child care services in 2004 undertook relevant in-service training in the previous 12 months (figure 14.12). Limited data are available on training by paid child care and preschool staff employed by State and Territory funded and/or managed service providers. New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and the ACT were able to provide data on the proportion of preschool staff undertaking training in 2004-05 (tables 14A.32, 14A.41, 14A.50 and 14A.86)

Figure 14.12 **Staff in Australian Government child care services who undertook relevant in-service training in previous 12 months, 2004<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Excludes Aboriginal play groups, mobile and toy libraries, and in-home care.

Source: AGCCCS, March 2004 (unpublished); table 14A.14.

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## *Standards*

The Australian Government and the State and Territory governments are committed to supporting the quality of care provided by children's services. The mechanisms used to support quality are accreditation and licensing. These mechanisms are used in addition to the provision of curriculum and policy support and advice, and the training and development of management and staff.

### *Standards — licensing and registration*

State and Territory governments are responsible for licensing children's services in their jurisdiction (box 14.10).

#### **Box 14.10 Licensing and registration**

'Licensing and registration' is an output (standards) indicator of governments' objective to ensure government funded or provided children's services meet the minimum standards considered necessary to provide a safe and nurturing environment, and to meet the educational and development needs of children.

Data are currently not reported on this indicator. The Steering Committee has identified this indicator for development and reporting in future. Descriptive information is reported for some jurisdictions as an interim measure. This information includes the number of licensed services.

A higher proportion of licensed services is desirable.

This indicator does not provide information on the degree to which licensing and registration translates into higher quality service outcomes above the minimum standards of care.

State and Territory governments also undertake activities aimed at the promotion of quality, such as publishing curriculum materials and other resources, and undertaking consumer education.

The types of service covered by legislation vary across jurisdictions (table 14.5).

**Table 14.5 State and Territory licensing and registration of child care services, 2005**

<i>Service type</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>
Long day care <sup>a</sup>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Occasional care <sup>a</sup>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Family day care schemes <sup>b</sup>	✓	x	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	x
Family day care carers <sup>c</sup>	✓	x	x	✓	x	x	x	x
Outside school-hours care	x	x	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x
Other/home-based care <sup>d</sup>	✓	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓	x

<sup>a</sup> In the ACT, licensed as centre-based children's services. <sup>b</sup> In WA, the carers, not the schemes, are licensed. <sup>c</sup> Family day care providers in NSW and WA are individually licensed. Family day carers in Queensland, SA and Tasmania are not required to be licensed, provided they are registered through a family day care scheme. <sup>d</sup> Includes baby sitting agencies in SA. Includes playschools and independent preschools in the ACT.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished).

State and Territory licensing requirements establish the foundations for quality of care by stipulating enforceable standards to support the health, safety, welfare and development needs of children in formal child care settings. Accreditation of services is built on this platform.

Licensed children's services may include centre-based long day care, occasional care, preschools, family day care services and outside school hours care. Australian, State and Territory governments have developed national standards for centre-based long day care, family day care services and outside school hours care. Jurisdictions refer to these standards when writing regulations. The extent of implementation of these standards varies across Australia.

#### *Standards — accredited services*

The NCAC administers quality assurance systems for long day care centres, family day care schemes and outside school hours care services across Australia (box 14.11).

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**Box 14.11 Accredited services**

'Accredited services' is an output (standards) indicator of governments' objective to ensure government funded or provided children's services meet the standards considered necessary to provide a safe and nurturing environment, and to meet the educational and development needs of children. Accredited services have been independently evaluated against a series of national quality standards for the specific child care service type.

This indicator is defined as the number of child care services that are accredited by NCAC expressed as a proportion of services fully assessed. Data are reported for centre-based long day care services, family day care schemes and outside school hours care services.

A higher proportion of centres that have been accredited is more desirable.

This indicator does not provide information on the degree to which accreditation translates into higher quality service outcomes.

The Australian Government also funds professional support services across Australia to assist services participating in the quality assurance systems. State and Territory government initiatives include quality and improvement systems for government preschools (SA and Victoria) and non-government preschools (Queensland). Some other jurisdictions are exploring similar systems.

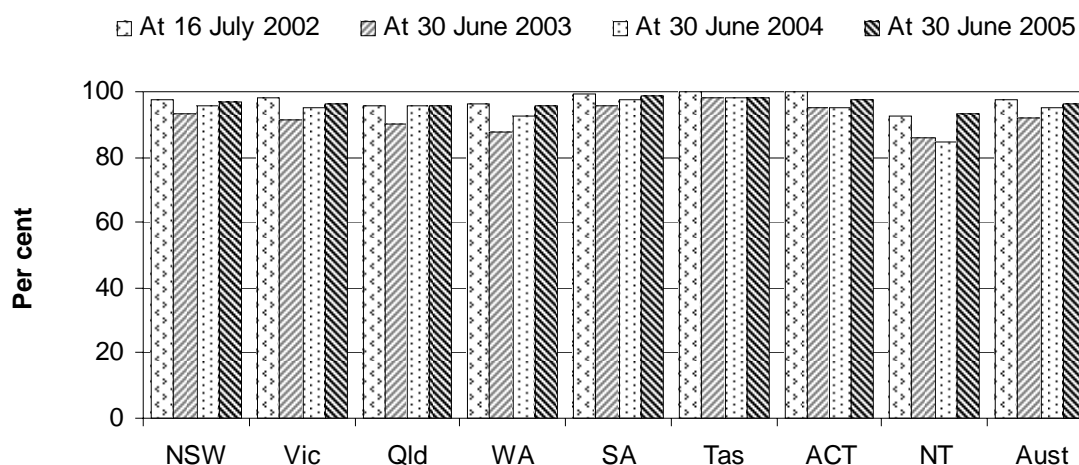
The QIAS for long day child care centres commenced in 1994 and was revised in January 2002. Family Day Care Quality Assurance was introduced on 1 July 2001 and OSHCQA commenced on 1 July 2003. To become accredited under NCAC quality assurance systems service providers are required to achieve and maintain the quality standards set out for each service type. Long day child care services participating in the QIAS receive a 'quality profile' as part of their accreditation decision, which details their performance against the following ten 'quality areas':

- relationships with children
- respect for children
- partnerships with families
- staff interactions
- planning and evaluation
- learning and development
- protective care
- health
- safety
- managing to support quality.

The NCAC accreditation systems are Australian Government initiatives linked to Child Care Benefit funding. All centre-based long day child care services are required to participate in the QIAS to be eligible for approval for Child Care Benefit purposes, and the majority of centre-based long day child care services participate.

Nationally, of the 4747 centres registered to participate in the QIAS at 30 June 2005, 4147 centres had received an accreditation decision (table 14A.2). Of the centres assessed, 96.5 per cent (4001 centres) were successful in achieving accreditation (figure 14.13). The centres that do not meet accreditation standards (146 centres) are required to submit another self study report to NCAC within six months of the date of NCAC's accreditation decision. At 30 June 2005, a further 600 centres (12.6 per cent of those registered to participate in QIAS) were in self study, review or moderation, or awaiting an accreditation decision (table 14A.2).

**Figure 14.13 Accredited centres as a proportion of centres fully assessed under the Quality Improvement and Accreditation System<sup>a, b</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Figures may change daily and are updated every six weeks following an NCAC meeting. <sup>b</sup> Results for Tasmania, the ACT and the NT may be unduly influenced by the relatively small number of services (76, 92 and 53 respectively at 30 June 2005) participating in the process.

Source: NCAC (unpublished); table 14A.2.

Self-study reports from family day care schemes have been submitted from July 2002, with 311 out of 312 schemes accredited at 30 June 2005. One scheme was not accredited and seven were in self study, validation or moderation, or awaiting an accreditation decision (table 14A.2). Family day care schemes also receive a quality profile, which details their performance against the following six quality areas:

- interactions
- physical environments
- children's experiences, learning and development
- health, hygiene, nutrition, safety and wellbeing
- carers and coordination unit staff
- management and administration.

The family day care quality standards (detailed in NCAC 2001) were revised in 2004 based on feedback and consultation with family day care schemes. The revised standards (detailed in NCAC 2004c) came into effect from 1 January 2005.

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All services providing before school, after school and vacation care were required to register with NCAC by 30 September 2003. Each registered outside school hours care service is required to submit a self-study report to NCAC between July 2004 and December 2006. Outside school hours care services receive a quality profile, which details their performance against the following eight quality areas:

- respect for children
- staff interactions and relationships with children
- managing to support quality
- programming and evaluation
- play and development
- health, nutrition and wellbeing
- protective care and safety
- partnerships with families and community links.

There were 2908 outside school hours care services registered at 30 June 2005 to participate in OSHCQA (table 14A.2). Of the 279 services that had received an accreditation decision at 30 June 2005, 74.2 per cent (207 services) were successful in achieving accreditation. A further 2629 services had not yet completed the accreditation process.

#### *Health and safety — serious injuries*

‘Serious injuries’ is an indicator of child care services’ success in providing a safe environment (box 14.12).

#### **Box 14.12 Serious injuries**

‘Serious injuries’ is an output (health and safety) indicator of governments’ objective to ensure children’s services meet the care, educational and development needs of children in a safe and nurturing environment.

This indicator is defined as the number of serious injuries per registered or licensed service provider. A serious injury is defined as an injury requiring hospitalisation or a visit to, or by, a doctor.

Comparable data are not available for this Report. A higher rate of injury does not provide information on whether a jurisdiction has lower service safety and quality, or a more effective reporting and monitoring regime. All else being equal, a low injury rate may indicate a high level of safety.

Data on the number of serious injuries and the number of serious injuries per registered or licensed service provider were limited for 2004-05. Although most jurisdictions could provide some information, the small incident numbers, different approaches to defining serious injuries and differences in data collection approaches mean that jurisdictions cannot be directly compared. Tables 14A.35, 14A.44, 14A.53, 14A.62, 14A.89 and 14A.98 provide a breakdown of the available

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information for each jurisdiction. South Australia and Tasmania did not report on serious injuries.

*Health and safety — hospitalisations for external causes of injury occurring in children's services*

At present, jurisdictions do not have comparable administrative collections on serious injuries occurring in children's services. One source of comparable information is hospitalisations data. 'Hospital separations for external causes of injury' is an indicator of children's services' success in providing a safe environment (box 14.13).

In 2003-04, there were 28 448 injuries to children aged 0-4 years that resulted in a hospital admission in Australia (table 14A.27). Boys accounted for approximately 57.8 per cent of these admissions. In total, the most common causes of injury to children aged 0-4 years were falls (27.7 per cent), exposure to mechanical forces (20.7 per cent) and complications of medical and surgical care (18.5 per cent) (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare unpublished). Boys and girls generally experienced similar causes of injury.

Place of occurrence was recorded for 68.7 per cent of hospitalisations for children aged 0-4 years in 2003-04 (table 14A.27). Of those injuries for which a place of occurrence was recorded in 2003-04, 60.6 per cent occurred in the child's home. This reflects the fact that children in this age group spend the majority of their time in the home and about half do not attend formal care. Nationally, 576 injuries (2.0 per cent) were reported as occurring at a 'school' (which includes day nursery, centre-based child care, and public or private kindergartens and preschools) (figure 14.14).

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**Box 14.13 Hospital separations for external causes of injury**

'Hospital separations for external causes of injury' is an output (health and safety) indicator of governments' objective to ensure that children's services meet the care, educational and developmental needs of children in a safe and nurturing environment.

This indicator is defined as the number of hospital separations for children aged 0–4 years resulting from an external cause of injury occurring in 'school' expressed as a proportion of total hospital separations for children aged 0–4 years resulting from an external cause of injury.

Limiting the data to children aged 0–4 reduces the likelihood that the 'school' place of occurrence includes children in full time compulsory schooling, which children generally attend when they are 5 years old or more. For children in the older age group it is not possible to separate injuries that occur in a children's service from those that occur in a full time formal school setting, and so they are excluded from the indicator.

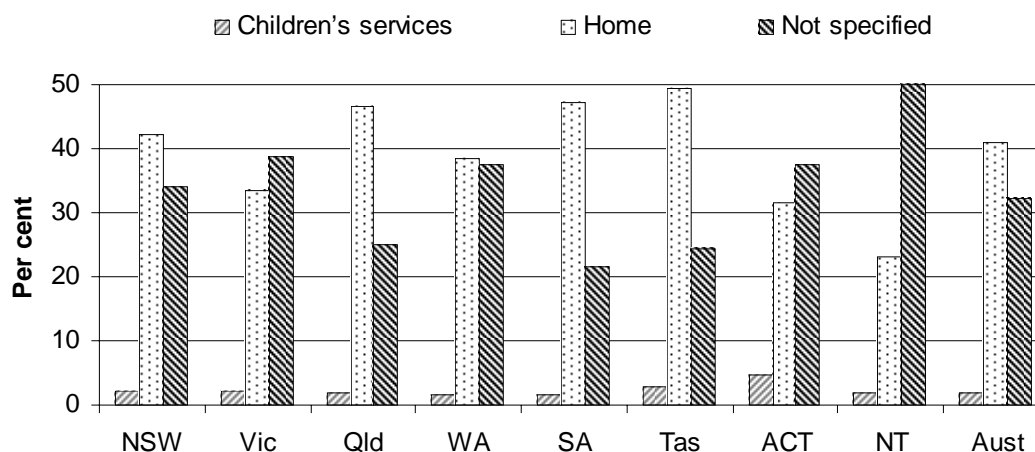
For children aged 0–4 years, the term 'school' incorporates a range of formal children's services settings including kindergarten, preschool and centre-based child care services. Family day care services, which are typically provided in the carer's home, are not likely to be covered by this term. External cause refers to the environmental event, circumstance or condition that causes the injury. Persons admitted to hospital as a result of a pre-existing existing illness or condition (such as asthma), are excluded.

A hospital separation is an episode of care for a person admitted to a hospital. It can be a total hospital stay (from admission to discharge, transfer or death) or portions of hospital stays beginning or ending in a change of type of care (for example from acute to rehabilitation) that cease during a reference period. Injuries resulting in a hospital separation are generally more serious than those requiring treatment at a hospital emergency department or by a general practitioner.

Low or decreasing hospitalisations for external causes of injury for children aged 0–4 years occurring in a 'school' indicates better performance towards achieving the objective of providing the care, educational and development needs of children in a safe and nurturing environment.

All hospital separation data need to be interpreted with care. Nationally, no place of occurrence was reported for 32.3 per cent of hospitalisations of children aged 0–4 years in 2003-04. As a result, this indicator should be interpreted as the minimum proportion of hospital separations for an external cause of injury that occurred in children's services.

**Figure 14.14 Hospital separations for external causes of injury for children aged 0–4 years, by place of occurrence (proportion of total), 2003-04<sup>a, b, c, d, e</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> The definition of school includes a range of formal children's services settings such as kindergarten, preschool and child care services. <sup>b</sup> External cause refers to the environmental event, circumstance or condition that causes the injury. Persons admitted to hospital as a result of a pre-existing existing illness or condition, such as asthma, are excluded. <sup>c</sup> A hospital separation is an episode of care for a person admitted to a hospital. <sup>d</sup> Separations without an external cause and those for which care type was reported as newborn with no qualified days, and records for hospital boarders or posthumous organ procurement are excluded. <sup>e</sup> Injuries occurring in other specified places — covering the remaining places where injuries occurred — are not shown in the figure, but are included in table 14A.27.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Australian Hospital Statistics 2003-04 (unpublished); table 14A.27.

### *Client satisfaction — substantiated breaches arising from complaints*

'Substantiated breaches arising from complaints' is an indicator of community satisfaction with child care services (box 14.14). Breaches identified as a result of normal monitoring and inspection visits are excluded from these data.

Breaches of legislation, regulations or conditions can relate to a broad range of requirements. Some requirements have serious implications for the quality of care provided to children (such as requirements to undertake criminal record checks for staff and requirements to install smoke detectors). Other requirements do not necessarily directly affect the quality of care (such as requirements to display licensing information). Similarly, action taken by regulatory authorities in response to a breach can range from a requirement to comply within a specified time frame through to deregistration or prosecution.

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**Box 14.14 Substantiated breaches arising from complaints**

'Substantiated breaches arising from complaints' is an output (client satisfaction) indicator of governments' objective to ensure government funded or provided children's services meet the needs and expectations of users.

This indicator is defined as the number of substantiated breaches arising from complaints divided by the total number of registered or licensed services. Results are presented by service type. Data on the proportion of substantiated breaches arising from complaints against which action was taken are also reported.

A substantiated breach is defined as a finding by the regulatory body that a service has failed to abide by the State or Territory legislation, regulations or conditions. A complaint is an expression of concern, whether made orally, in writing or in person to the relevant government authority. It does not include complaints made to service management and dealt with at that level.

Complaints data need to be interpreted with care.

- Some jurisdictions give priority to developing client groups who are well informed, as part of improving their service delivery. Clients who are well informed may be more likely to make a complaint than are clients without access to this information.
- The number of approved care providers or parent users per service differs in each service across states and territories.
- Complaints management systems vary across jurisdictions. In SA, for example, the Department of Education and Children's Services is the sole sponsor of family day care. Similar complaints in other states and territories may be managed at a service level and, as such, may not be reported.
- A higher rate of complaints does not provide information on whether a jurisdiction has lower service safety and quality, or a more effective reporting and monitoring regime. All else being equal, a higher rate of breaches arising from complaints may suggest a lower quality service.

Victoria, WA, Tasmania, the ACT and the NT provided data on the number of substantiated breaches arising from complaints and allegations of regulation breaches made to the State and Territory government regulatory bodies in 2004-05 (tables 14A.45, 14A.63, 14A.81, 14A.90 and 14A.99 respectively).

### *Efficiency*

Differences in reported efficiency results across jurisdictions may reflect differences in counting and reporting rules for financial data and in reported expenditure, which are partly due to different treatments of various expenditure items. Information on the comparability of the expenditure is shown in table 14A.6.

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The level of government input per unit of output(s) (unit costs) is a proxy indicator of efficiency. The indicators reported here are:

- Australian Government total expenditure on children's services per child aged 0–12 years in Australia (box 14.15)
- State and Territory government total expenditure on children's services per child aged 0–12 years in the relevant jurisdiction (box 14.16).

Data were sought from all governments on their expenditure by service type. Incomplete data and changes in collection method, however, make it difficult to compare expenditure across jurisdictions and over time. Unit cost data for children's services do not yet contain an estimate of user cost of capital.

*Inputs per output unit — Australian Government expenditure (dollars per child)*

**Box 14.15 Australian Government expenditure per child**

'Australian Government expenditure per child' is an output (efficiency) indicator of governments' objective to maximise the availability and quality of services through the efficient use of taxpayer resources.

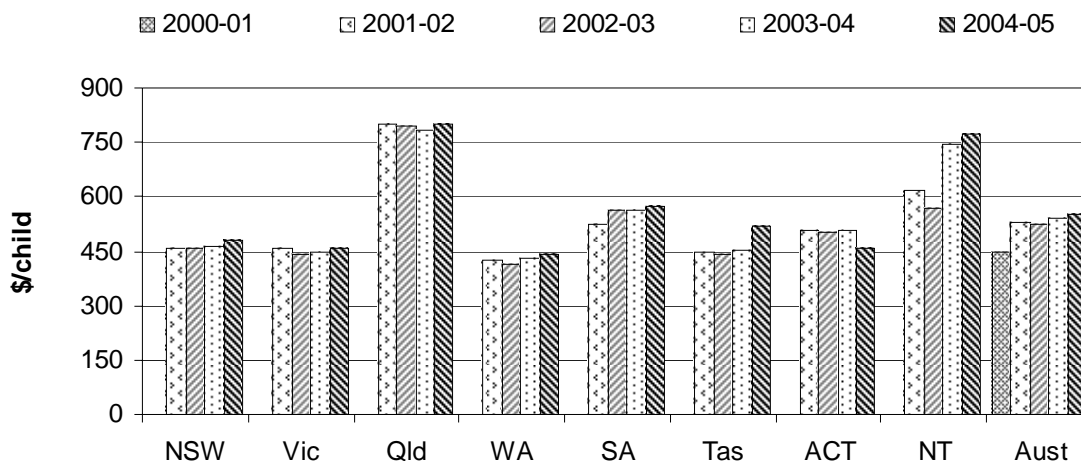
This indicator is defined as Australian Government expenditure on children's services per child aged 0–12 years in Australia.

Provided the level and quality of, and access to, services remains unchanged, lower expenditure per child can indicate greater efficiency of government expenditure.

All efficiency data need to be interpreted with care. Changes in expenditure per child could represent changes in government funding policy. While high or increasing unit costs may reflect deteriorating efficiency, they may also reflect increases in the quality or quantity of service provided. Similarly, low or declining expenditure per child may reflect improving efficiency or lower quality or quantity.

After adjusting for inflation to calculate the 'real' value of expenditure in previous years, Australian Government expenditure on children's services at a national level increased between 2000-01 and 2004-05 (figure 14.15).

Figure 14.15 **Australian Government real expenditure on children's services per child aged 0–12 in the jurisdiction (2004-05 dollars)<sup>a, b, c</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Includes administration expenditure, other expenditure on service provision, financial support to families and net capital expenditure on child care and preschool services. <sup>b</sup> Data by State and Territory were not available for 2000-01. <sup>c</sup> The Australian total includes a component of expenditure that cannot be disaggregated by State and Territory.

Source: FaCS (unpublished); ABS Australian Demographic Statistics (unpublished); ABS (2002), *Population Projections, Australia*, Cat. no. 3222.0, Canberra; table 14A.20.

*Inputs per output unit — State and Territory government expenditure (dollars per child)*

#### Box 14.16 **State and Territory government expenditure per child**

'State and Territory government expenditure per child' is an output (efficiency) indicator of governments' objective to maximise the availability and quality of services through the efficient use of taxpayer resources.

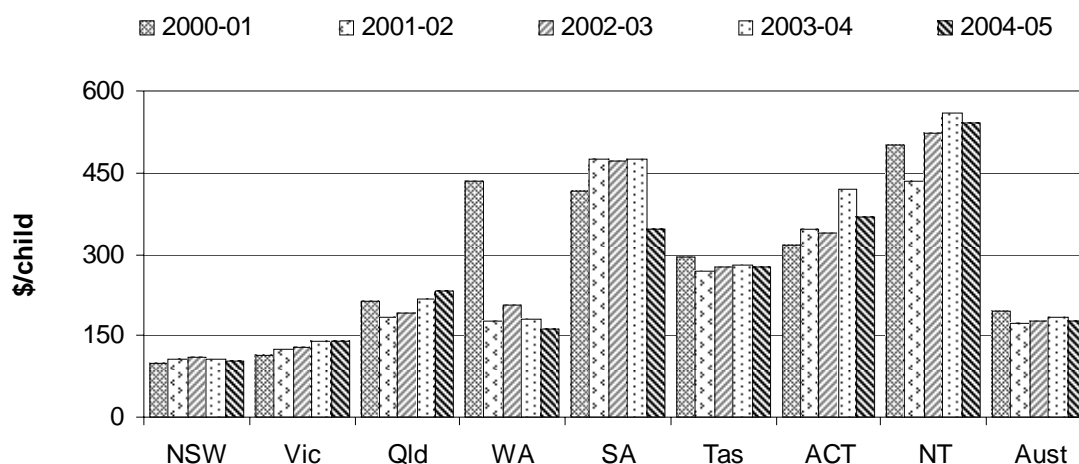
This indicator is defined as State or Territory government expenditure on children's services per child aged 0–12 years in the relevant jurisdiction.

Lower expenditure per child represents greater efficiency of government expenditure, provided the level and quality of, and access to, services remains unchanged.

All efficiency data need to be interpreted with care. Changes in expenditure per child could represent changes in government funding policy. While high or increasing unit costs may reflect deteriorating efficiency, they may also reflect increases in the quality or quantity of service provided. Similarly, low or declining expenditure per child may reflect improving efficiency or lower quality or quantity provided.

Figure 14.16 shows the variation in total real expenditure per child aged 0–12 years by State and Territory governments over the period 2000-01 to 2004-05.

**Figure 14.16 State and Territory real expenditure on children’s services per child aged 0–12 in the jurisdiction (2004-05 dollars)<sup>a, b, c, d, e</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Includes administration expenditure, other expenditure on service provision, financial support to families, and net capital expenditure on child care and preschool services. <sup>b</sup> The increase in Queensland expenditure for 2004-05 is the result of improved reporting processes. This specifically captures information relating to a newly developed output of Child Care Policy and Services, and includes previously unreported information, namely indirect costs, head office overheads and expenditure on policy advice and development. <sup>c</sup> WA expenditure for 2001-02 declined in response to the changes in the school entry age and the associated move to full time schooling for pre-year 1 children. <sup>d</sup> Data for 2003-04 and 2004-05 exclude expenditure on the non-government sector. <sup>e</sup> The drop in SA expenditure per child aged 0–12 years in 2004-05 was due to the exclusion of all Australian Government contributions, which the state currently administers, from the total state/territory real expenditure on children's services.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); ABS Australian Demographic Statistics (unpublished); ABS (2002), *Population Projections, Australia*, Cat. no. 3222.0, Canberra; table 14A.21.

## Outcomes

### *Demand for (additional) child care*

Data on the ‘demand for additional child care services’ provides an indicator of the success of children’s services in meeting the needs of the community (box 14.17).

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**Box 14.17 Demand for (additional) child care**

This indicator provides an outcome indicator of governments' objective to ensure children's services meet the requirements of all Australian families. Expressed need for child care indicates the extent to which children's services are meeting demand by families.

The indicator is defined as the proportion of children aged under 12 years for whom additional services were required in the four weeks before the survey interview.

A lower proportion of children for whom additional services were required indicates demand by families is being met to a greater extent.

One available indicator is the expressed need for additional child care services, collected in the ABS Child Care Survey (box 14.18).

**Box 14.18 ABS Child Care Survey**

The 2002 ABS Child Care Survey was conducted throughout Australia in June 2002, as a supplement to the Labour Force Survey.

Information was obtained from a sample of dwellings through interviews conducted over a two week period with usual residents with children under 12 years of age. In each selected household, detailed information about each child's child care was collected for a maximum of two children. Data were collected for a sample of approximately 10 000 children in total.

The survey included information about whether parents' needs for child care were met. Those families not already using child care or preschool services were asked whether there was any time in the previous four weeks when they wanted to use any child care or preschool services for their child but did not. Those families already using child care or preschool services were asked a similar question to determine whether they had wanted to use any more services in the previous four weeks.

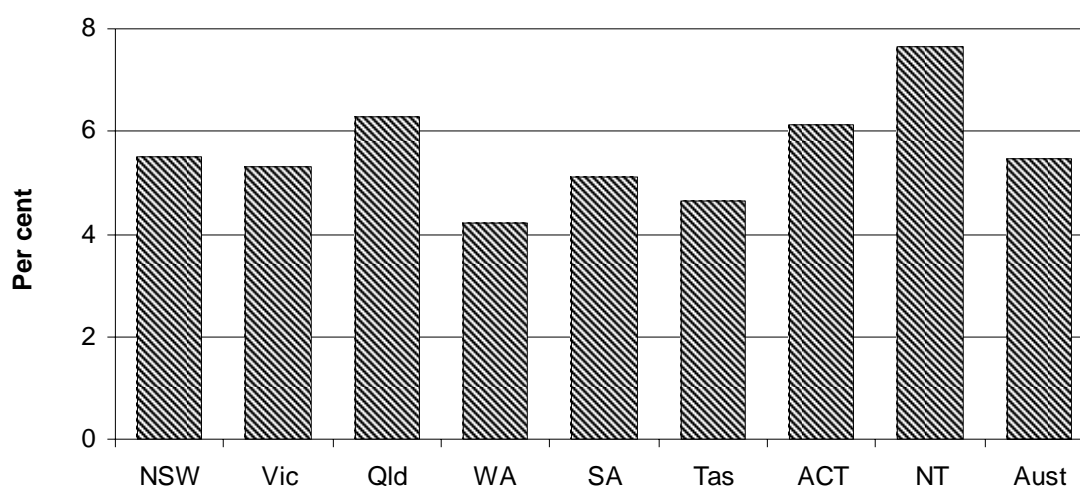
Given that estimates from the 2002 survey are based on information obtained from a sample of dwellings, they are subject to sampling variability. They may differ from those estimates that would have been produced by a census. Estimates for the smaller jurisdictions are based on small sample sizes and, consequently, are subject to high sampling error. Data for Tasmania, the ACT and the NT, in particular, need to be interpreted with caution.

Aggregated survey data need to be interpreted with care, because over and undersupply of child care places can be specific to particular areas, including small and remote communities. Further, the data will not reflect changes in population in some areas since June 2002.

The most recent ABS Child Care Survey was conducted over a two week period in June 2005. Results are expected to be available in the first half of 2006.

Nationally, no additional child care or preschool services were required for the majority (94.4 per cent) of children aged under 12 years in 2002 (figure 14.17). Additional child care services were required, however, for approximately 169 400 children aged under 12 years (table 14A.23). A further 5100 children aged under 12 years required additional preschool services (table 14A.23).

**Figure 14.17 Proportion of children aged under 12 years for whom additional formal child care was required, 2002<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Estimates for the smaller jurisdictions are based on small sample sizes and, consequently, are subject to high sampling error. Data for Tasmania, the ACT and the NT, in particular, need to be interpreted with caution. *Source:* ABS 2002 Child Care Survey (unpublished); table 14A.22.

The reasons given for additional services being required varied between those requiring additional child care services and those requiring additional preschool services. The needs of the parent, including the need to work, was the major reason for desiring additional child care services. Nationally, work-related reasons were cited in 48.4 per cent of circumstances, with personal reasons accounting for an additional 35.8 per cent of cases (figure 14.18). Child-related and other reasons were cited in the remaining 15.8 per cent of cases (table 14A.23).

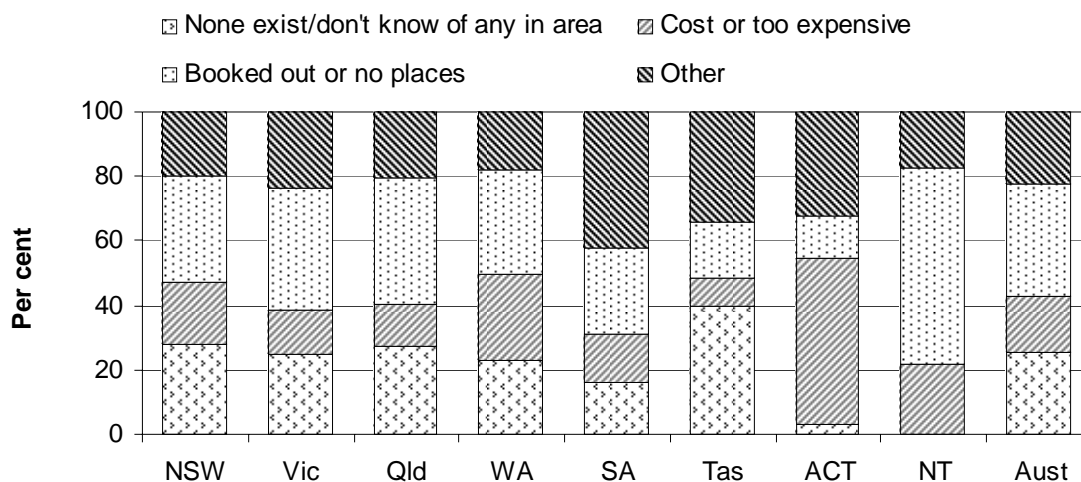
The most common reason given for not being able to access additional child care services was lack of available places ('booked out or no places', table 14A.24), accounting for 34.8 per cent of the national total. No services being available (or known of) in the area, and the cost of services were also significant reasons, accounting for 25.3 per cent and 17.3 per cent respectively of the number of children requiring additional child care services (figure 14.19).

Figure 14.18 Children aged under 12 years who required additional child care services by main reason required, 2002<sup>a</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Estimates for the smaller jurisdictions are based on small sample sizes and, consequently, are subject to high sampling error. Data for Tasmania, the ACT and the NT, in particular, need to be interpreted with caution. Source: ABS 2002 Child Care Survey (unpublished); table 14A.23.

Figure 14.19 Children aged under 12 years by main reason additional child care services not used, 2002<sup>a, b</sup>



<sup>a</sup> 'None exist/don't know of any in area' includes 'not known whether care available'. 'Other' includes 'other service related', 'child-related' and 'other'. <sup>b</sup> Estimates for the smaller jurisdictions are based on small sample sizes and, consequently, are subject to high sampling error. Data for Tasmania, the ACT and the NT, in particular, need to be interpreted with caution.

Source: ABS 2002 Child Care Survey (unpublished); table 14A.24.

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### *Out-of-pocket costs*

'Out-of-pocket costs' of child care is an indicator of the affordability and accessibility of child care services (box 14.19).

#### **Box 14.19 Out-of-pocket costs**

'Out-of-pocket costs' is an outcome indicator of governments' objective that all Australian families have equitable access to children's services regardless of their financial circumstances.

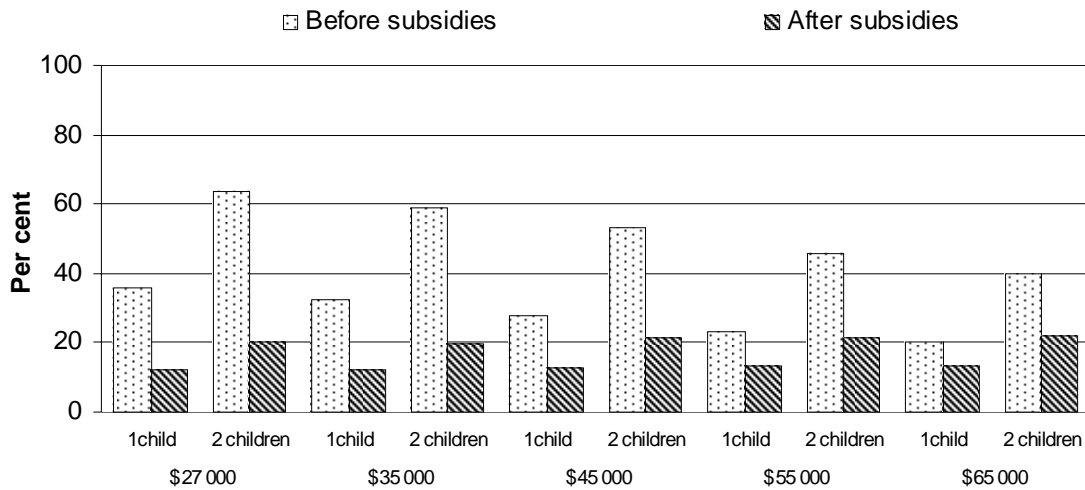
This indicator is defined as the proportion of weekly disposable income that representative families spend on child care services before and after the payment of child care subsidies. Data are estimated for families with a 60:40 income split and gross annual income of \$27 000, \$35 000, \$45 000, \$55 000 and \$65 000. Families are assumed to have either one or two children who attend full time care (equal to 50 hours per child per week) in centre-based long day care and family day care.

Lower out-of-pocket costs for child care as a proportion of weekly disposable income (after child care subsidies) represents more affordable child care. Similar percentages across income groups suggest a more equitable outcome.

Care needs to be exercised when interpreting results, however, because a variety of factors may influence child care fees.

After the payment of child care subsidies, out-of-pocket costs as a proportion of weekly family income in 2004 was generally similar across income bands compared to the case before subsidies were paid (figure 14.20).

Figure 14.20 **Out-of-pocket costs of child care for families with children in full time centre-based long day care, as a proportion of weekly disposable income, by gross annual family income, 2004<sup>a, b</sup>**

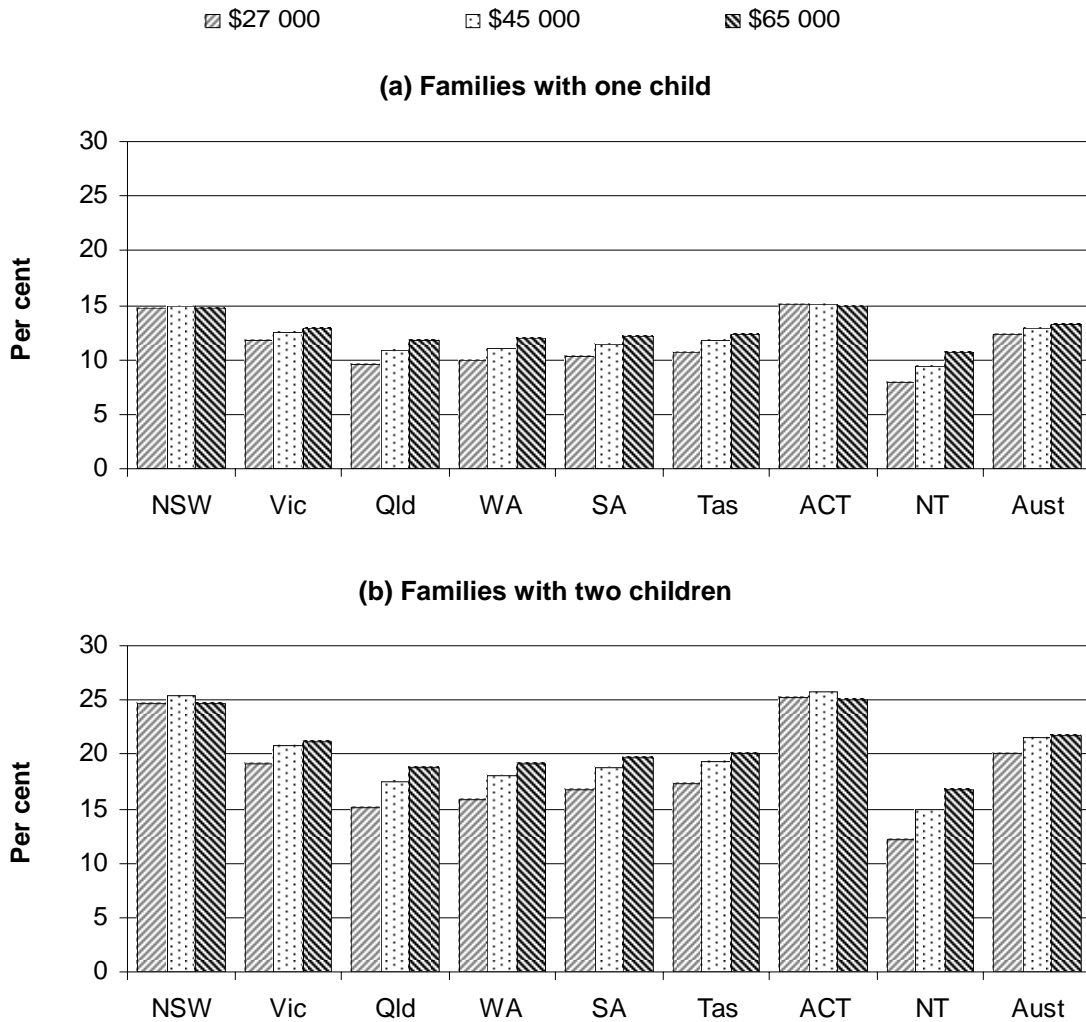


<sup>a</sup> Disposable income calculations are based on 20 March 2004 tax and payment parameters. Calculations are modelled on couple families with dual incomes (60:40 income split) with one or two dependent children aged under 5 years. <sup>b</sup> Out-of-pocket cost calculations are based on June 2004 average fees.

Source: AGCCCS March 2004 (unpublished); table 14A.17.

Figure 14.21 shows out-of-pocket costs (after subsidies) in 2004 for centre-based long day care for families with one child and with two children in care across jurisdictions. Out-of-pocket costs (after subsidies) for family day care in 2004 are shown in figure 14.22.

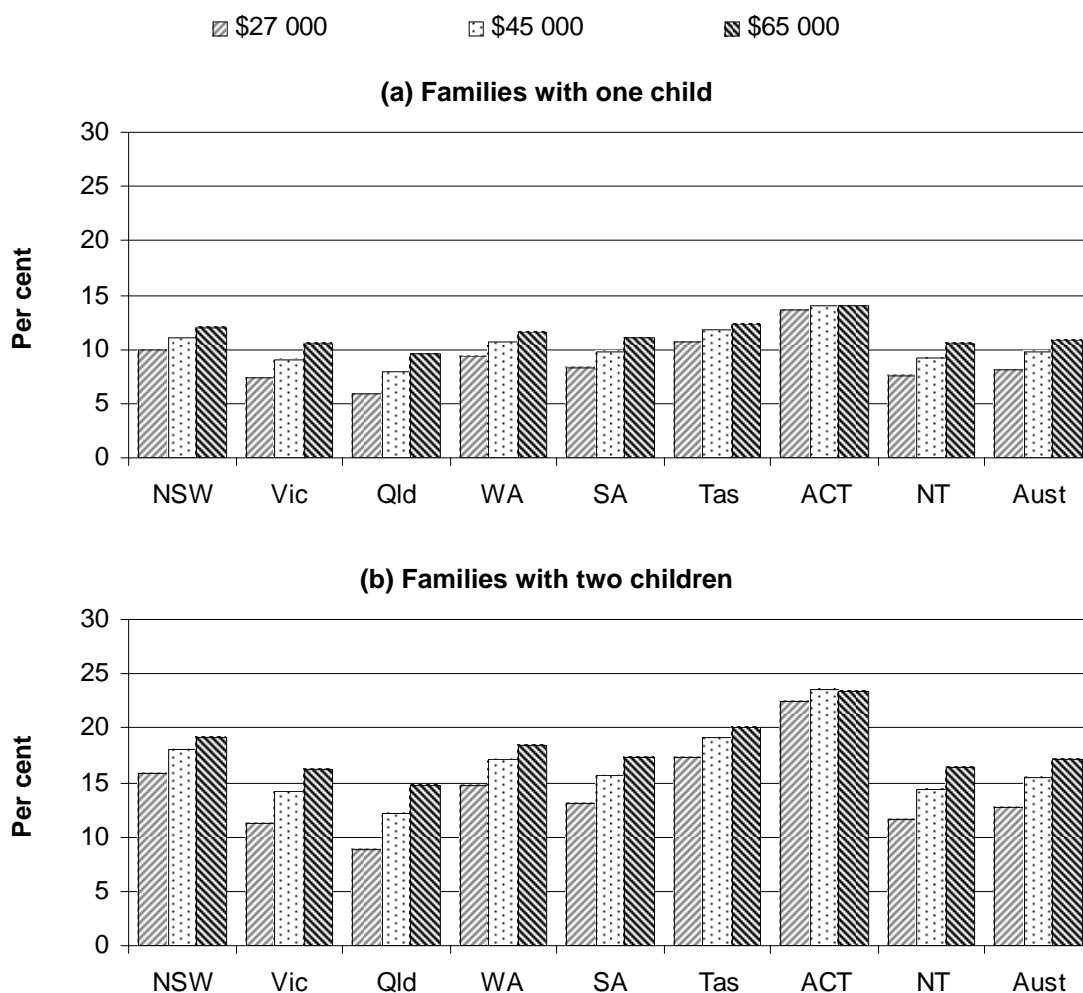
**Figure 14.21 Out-of-pocket costs for centre-based long day care (after subsidies), as a proportion of weekly disposable income, by gross annual family income, 2004<sup>a, b</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Disposable income calculations are based on 20 March 2004 tax and payment parameters. Calculations are modelled on couple families with dual incomes (60:40 income split) with one or two dependent children aged under 5 years. <sup>b</sup> Out-of-pocket cost calculations are based on June 2004 average fees, after subsidies.

Source: AGCCCS March 2004 (unpublished); table 14A.17.

Figure 14.22 **Out-of-pocket costs for family day care (after subsidies), as a proportion of weekly disposable income, by gross annual family income, 2004<sup>a, b</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Disposable income calculations are based on 20 March 2004 tax and payment parameters. Calculations are modelled on couple families with dual incomes (60:40 income split) with one or two dependent children aged under 5 years. <sup>b</sup> Out-of-pocket cost calculations are based on June 2004 average fees, after subsidies.

Source: AGCCCS March 2004 (unpublished); table 14A.18.

### Client satisfaction

The Steering Committee has identified 'client satisfaction' as an outcome indicator of children's services meeting family needs (box 14.20). Data for this indicator, however, were not available for the 2006 Report.

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**Box 14.20 Client satisfaction**

'Client satisfaction' has been identified as an outcome indicator of governments' objective to ensure children's services meet the needs and expectations of all users.

Data are currently not collected on this indicator. The Steering Committee has identified this indicator for development and reporting in future.

## 14.4 Future directions in performance reporting

The Steering Committee is committed to improving the comparability, completeness and overall quality of reported data for all indicators included within the performance indicator framework.

### Improving reporting of existing indicators

Processes for refining definitions, estimation methods and counting rules are continuing. Further work is planned to improve the consistency and comparability of performance information across jurisdictions. Changes in the children's services industry have required jurisdictions to revise collection methods, and these revisions have reduced the comparability of historical data across years and across jurisdictions. It will take some time before the improvements are reflected in the chapter.

### Future indicator development

The Review will continue to improve the appropriateness and completeness of the performance indicator framework. Future work on indicators will focus on:

- developing an access indicator for Indigenous preschool attendance
- developing a service availability indicator for utilisation rates
- revising the quality indicators for health and safety, and substantiated breaches arising from complaints
- developing indicators to measure the extent to which children's services meet family needs, including investigating an outcome indicator of client satisfaction
- developing indicators to measure the extent to which children's services meet children's needs
- completing the quality indicators for licensing, accreditation and registration

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- improving the government expenditure efficiency indicators
  - conducting a rolling revision of all indicators within the framework.

While these areas have been identified as requiring further work, improvements to the chapter and progress on performance reporting will not be limited to these indicators.

## **Improving the completeness and comparability of data**

### *National Minimum Data Set*

The National Community Services Information Management Group (NCSIMG) is developing a National Minimum Data Set (NMDS) for children's services. When completed, this data set will provide a framework for collecting a minimum set of nationally comparable data and assist the development of measurable performance indicators and descriptors.

The collection covers information about the organisations that provide child care and preschool services, the characteristics of workers delivering these services and the characteristics of the children who attend them. The data items in the NMDS were pilot tested in two phases, the first in 2002 and the second in 2004.

In September 2005, the data items were endorsed by NCSIMG, completing the development phase. A full report of the development process was due to be released at the end of 2005. The project is now moving to the implementation phase. Outstanding issues to be addressed are agreement about the best mechanism for data collection, funding arrangements, and the creation and maintenance of a register of service providers.

### *ABS Child Care Survey*

The ABS conducted its Child Care Survey over a two week period in June 2005. It is expected that the results of the 2005 survey will be published in the first half of 2006. The Children's Services Working Group will examine additional published and unpublished data from the survey for inclusion in the 2007 Report.

Following a request by the Children's Services Working Group, the ABS changed the age scope of the 2005 Child Care Survey from children aged under 12 years to children aged under 13 years. This change will more closely align statistics from the Child Care Survey with other data collected by jurisdictions published in the Report.

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### *Data collection*

Consistency in the data collected by State and Territory governments is an important goal to improve data comparability. There is still room for improvement in the data collection process. One way of improving comparability is to collect data in a (preferably common) sample week that is representative of a typical standard week (and does not include any public holidays) in each State and Territory.

Another way to improve the consistency of data is to use common definitions. Although the children's service NMDS is yet to be implemented, several jurisdictions are reviewing their statistical collections and incorporating definitions from the NMDS where possible. As the NMDS definitions are more widely adopted in jurisdictions' separate collections, there will be better comparability of data across jurisdictions.

## **14.5 Jurisdictions' comments**

This section provides comments from each jurisdiction on the services covered in this chapter. Appendix A contains data that may assist in interpreting the performance indicators presented in this chapter. These data cover a range of demographic and geographic characteristics, including age profile, geographic distribution of the population, income levels, education levels, tenure of dwellings and cultural heritage (including Indigenous and ethnic status).

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## Australian Government comments

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The Australian Government is currently finalising the National Agenda for Early Childhood with state and territory governments. The National Agenda will provide the overarching policy framework for national activity which promotes optimal child development during the first eight years of life. It is intended to guide current and future Australian Government early childhood investment, and that made by a wide range of stakeholders, as well as serve as a vehicle for collaboration with state and territory governments in support of young children and their families. It is anticipated that the National Agenda will be publicly released in early 2006.

New measures are being implemented to improve the affordability of child care. The Child Care Tax Rebate will provide families receiving Child Care Benefit and who use approved child care with a 30 per cent tax rebate for out-of-pocket expenses from 1 January 2005. Increased assistance has also been provided to grandparents with primary care of their grandchildren. From November 2004, the work test was waived for eligible grandparent carers, allowing access to up to 50 hours of Child Care Benefit. From January 2005, grandparents who are the primary carers of their grandchildren and who receive an income support payment, have been eligible for a special rate of Child Care Benefit which covers the full cost of approved child care for up to 50 hours per child per week.

The 2005-06 Budget saw further investment in child care including an increase of 84 300 Outside School Hours Care places, 2500 Family Day Care places and 1000 In-Home Care places over the next four years. Increased funding will also be made available through the Jobs Education Training Child Care program to support 52 000 low income families to meet the cost of child care, ensuring that child care costs are not a barrier for parents making the transition from income support to employment.

The implementation of the new Child Care Support program in 2004-05 has resulted in the development of the new Inclusion and Professional Support Program. Professional Support Co-ordinators are in place to provide a national focus on the delivery of professional support to child care services throughout Australia. From January 2006, 67 Inclusion Support Agencies will be established on a regional basis to co-ordinate assistance to child care services to build their skill base and capacity to include children with additional needs into child care.

Attracting and retaining staff is a widely recognised challenge facing the child care sector, with shortages in rural and remote areas of particular concern. The Australian Government is committed to building capacity and skills in the workforce through collaborative research projects across all jurisdictions, and through funding of the Inclusion and Professional Support Program, which aims to increase the skill level of child care workers and service staff in line with nationally consistent principles.

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## **New South Wales Government comments**

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The central feature of the NSW Government's Early Childhood Services Policy is its focus on the importance of the early years of life through a system of good quality children's services that are responsive to the needs of children, regardless of their age or service type attended, and in the context of their families and the communities in which they live.

The NSW Government supports a wide range of children's services, including preschools, long day care, occasional care, mobile services, family day care, home based care and vacation care. This support is provided through initiatives including funding, licensing, training and research.

Children's services have been recognised for the benefits they provide for children's healthy development, and for early intervention benefits. Early childhood experiences crucially affect the health and wellbeing of children, and the attainment of further competence at later ages. NSW continues to implement strategies to improve access to and participation in children's services for all children, especially those with additional needs.

The NSW regulatory framework recognises the integrated nature of early childhood education and care. All licensed early childhood services are required by regulation to provide an education program tailored to each child's intellectual, physical, social and emotional development and employ appropriately qualified teaching staff.

For this reason, the structure of the children's services chapter continues to pose difficulties in comparing the performance of NSW with that of other jurisdictions, and in accurately reporting NSW data. The chapter is based on distinguishing preschool from child care, which does not reflect the integrated delivery of early childhood education in NSW. NSW urges caution in any use or interpretation of this data in relation to the number of children that access a preschool program.

A number of strategies have supported the implementation of the new Children's Services Regulation 2004. These include 81 service provider briefings in locations across NSW. The briefing presentation and frequently asked questions are available on DoCS (Department of Community Services) website, along with a comprehensive new Guide to Children's Services Licensing for use by licensees and prospective licensees.

DoCS Regional staff have undergone training on new licensing processes and resources have been developed to support staff including a new Licensing and Monitoring Manual and Operational Guide.

The report of the Stage Two Review of Preschool Affordability has been delivered. Continuing work focuses on reform of the policy, planning and funding framework for NSW children's services with the goal of enhanced and equitable access for disadvantaged families to preschool services, sector reconfiguration and administrative reforms.

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## Victorian Government comments



The Victorian Government's vision for children is to provide them with the best possible start in life and to give parents the help they need to achieve this. In December 2004 the Government released *Putting Children First ... the next steps* in response to the recommendations of the Premier's Children's Advisory Committee. Structural changes have been introduced including the appointment of a Minister for Children, the establishment of an Office for Children and a new Victorian Children's Council to provide independent ongoing expert advice to Government.

*Putting Children First* also outlines the Government's intention to develop a Plan for Victoria's children. The Plan will define the desired outcomes for children and the best ways for these to be measured and monitored. It will also build on the strong partnership between State and Local Government and the work that Local Government has undertaken to prepare Municipal Early Years Plans.

In 2005 the Government commenced a process to regulate family day care schemes and outside school hours care services. The first step is establishing a register of all existing family day care schemes and outside school hours care services.

In 2004-05 the Government provided funding of \$500 000 to assist organisations plan for new outside school hours care services or additional service types.

In 2005-06, the third year of the three year Children's First capital project, a further 21 projects have been funded, bringing the total to 50 across the State. This initiative provides contributory funding to bring together services such as kindergarten, child care, maternal and child health, and early intervention in new or extended facilities. It is supported by a new web based design guide that provides information about the planning and design of children's services.

The provision of kindergarten programs by long day care settings is being promoted through the allocation of an additional \$19.3 million over four years in the 2005-06 State Budget. This funding will increase the kindergarten per capita rate available to long day care services that provide a kindergarten program.

Kindergarten cluster management continues to strengthen the delivery of kindergarten programs in the state. To support this initiative, mentoring and leadership training has been provided to staff in the clusters.

Kindergarten affordability for low-income families is being improved through a 25 per cent increase in the kindergarten fee subsidy from 1 January 2006, an increase from \$255 to \$320 per year. Approximately 27 per cent of children attending kindergarten benefit from the fee subsidy.

A new kit, *Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in kindergarten*, promotes participation of Indigenous children in kindergarten programs. The kit contains practical tools to assist teachers to develop culturally inclusive programs and to promote the importance of kindergarten to the Indigenous community.



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## Queensland Government comments

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The Queensland Government promotes high quality children's services that are responsive to children and flexible in addressing contemporary family needs. The *Queensland Child Care Strategic Plan 2000–2005* and *Education and Training Reforms for the Future* package provide a strong foundation for the development of quality services, innovative practice and life-long learning.

By June 2005, Queensland Government child care training initiatives assisted 2572 child care staff to complete awards and gain the qualification they require to work in licensed services, 87 of these were achieved by Indigenous child care professionals in Far North Queensland. The Queensland training initiatives support legislative requirements for increased qualifications in centre-based child care services and acknowledge the link between staff qualifications and quality child care.

The Queensland Government has introduced legislation that requires school age care services to be licensed. As part of an ongoing program to assist school age care services meet licensing requirements, \$1 million was distributed to 32 services during 2004-05. The funding assisted with the upgrade of facilities and was in addition to \$370 000 provided in equipment grants to not-for-profit services.

From 2007, the Queensland Government will implement a full-time, non-compulsory preparatory year, delivered in schools, for all Queensland children of eligible age. The preparatory year, which will replace the current sessional preschool program, will be acknowledged as the first year of school in Queensland. The Queensland Studies Authority has developed the *Early Years Curriculum Guidelines* for use by teachers when planning, implementing and monitoring preparatory programs. The Queensland Government will continue to support preschool education through the provision of targeted funding for the community kindergarten sector.

In April 2005, the Queensland Department of Communities established the Office for Children to strengthen the department's approach to prevention and early intervention and place greater emphasis on child care and family support.

The Queensland Government continues to explore new models of integrated children's services through the Child Care and Family Support Hub Strategy. Research to investigate the impact of child care and family support hubs in rural, remote and disadvantaged areas was extended during 2004-05. Additional funding of almost \$500 000 was allocated in 2004-05, bringing the total number of child care and family support hubs to 26.

The Queensland Government remains committed to using data and research to inform planning and decision making and is working to enhance the availability, integrity and comparability of data for future Reports.

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## Western Australian Government comments

“ The Department for Community Development is developing child care regulations, required due to the proclamation of the new *Children and Community Services Act 2004* from March 2006.

Sector wide consultations by the Department has given the child care sector and other stakeholders, the opportunity to contribute to the regulatory framework, resulting in recommendations for improved licensing standards.

The implementation of the new regulations will be completed in two stages: improvements of a more minor nature will take effect from the commencement of the *Children and Community Services Act 2004*; and as soon as practicable after the commencement of the new regulations, more complex issues such as staffing, group sizes, transport and building and premises will be incorporated.

Training for licensing staff in Certificate IV in Government: Statutory Compliance has contributed to the Department's improved ability to impose sanctions for breaches of the regulations.

The Child Care Advisory Committee reports to the Minister for Community Development and had its inaugural meeting in November 2004. The Department completed its 2004-05 contract with the Australian Government to provide training for the outside school hours care sector to implement the Child Care Services Quality Assurance Program. A further contract of \$253 060 was awarded for July 2005 to November 2006.

The Western Australian Department of Education and Training provides access to an eleven hour per week, free, universal kindergarten program for eligible children. The kindergarten year is the first of two non compulsory years of schooling, with the majority of children attending both years. Twenty eight Aboriginal kindergartens support student learning and development, by providing culturally appropriate programs with an emphasis on literacy, numeracy and family and community involvement.

The Western Australian Curriculum Framework defines the outcomes of schooling for all students from kindergarten to Year 12 and is mandated for all schools. For government schools, the Outcomes and Standards Framework is the tool that will be used to monitor children's progress and achievement and to plan for improvement in relation to Curriculum Framework outcomes. In the pre-compulsory years, the curriculum emphasis is on social, emotional, physical, literacy and numeracy development and learning within an integrated, interactive program.

A number of programs supporting early childhood teachers are underway. These include the Home-Schools Links strategy that aims to support teachers in building positive relationships with parents/caregivers, the Pre-primary Profile project that supports continuity of education between home, pre-compulsory and compulsory schooling and the Fundamental Movement Skills project, that aims to build children's skills and confidence to participate in physical activity as a way of supporting their well being, including combating obesity.

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## South Australian Government comments

“ In 2004-05, South Australia took significant steps to position its system to accept the challenges that a new generation of young children and their families present.

A Ministerial Inquiry into Early Childhood Services in South Australia was initiated in 2004 reflecting the State Government's commitment to develop South Australia as the nation's leading 'family friendly' state. A review of this nature had not been undertaken in 20 years. The Inquiry took into account the views of parents, carers, early childhood services staff, the community and government agencies across the State and considered the latest early childhood research and practice locally, nationally and internationally. The Minister for Education and Children's Services, launched the Inquiry report *The Virtual Village: Raising a Child in the New Millennium* on 16 June 2005.

The structures for the delivery of early childhood services have been reviewed and realigned. The Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) has established the Office of Early Childhood Services, to drive the development of long-term directions of early childhood services in South Australia. In addition, ten pilot early childhood service centres will be established as part of an \$8.1 million package to improve services for young children. These centres will create extra childcare places in disadvantaged areas and will be configured to meet the needs of their local communities, providing childcare and education, family support and health services for children aged from before birth to eight years.

The Early Years Literacy Program began in earnest as a proactive, intervention measure focussing on improving the literacy skills and outcomes of young children. Specialised literacy professional learning is being provided to all preschool to year 3 teachers, whilst additional teachers have been provided in preschools to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander three year olds.

South Australia's first public specialised early learning programs, designed specifically to cater for children with high support needs and disabilities, opened as part of a \$1.43 million State Government initiative in 2004 and 2005. The six programs in metropolitan and country areas provide educational programs for children with a wide range of disabilities, including children with autism.

The state's commitment to special needs groups continued with the launch of the DECS Aboriginal Strategy 2005–2010. The strategy actively seeks to accelerate the educational outcomes of all Aboriginal children and students across South Australia. The 'Learning Together' project has a specific focus to support Aboriginal families to access and participate in health and education services. Twenty two percent of the total number of families accessing this community-linked program were Aboriginal.

Increasing access to child care for families in high-need locations continued as a priority. The first of four new child care centres opened in February 2005. Services include child care, out of school hours care, crisis care advocacy, play groups, breakfast club, counselling, family mediation, youth mentoring and community arts.”

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## Tasmanian Government comments



The Tasmanian Government continues to be committed to the importance of the early years and is currently involved in the development of a whole of government policy framework, and a number of community based initiatives with non-government agencies. This will improve collaboration and integration, and enhance early learning opportunities for young children and their families.

The Department of Education provides education and library services to children in this age group, and is also responsible for the regulation of child care services.

The Child Care Act 2001 has now been implemented for the last two years. Approved Registration Bodies—Class 1 (Family Day Care Schemes), and Centre Based Care—Class 2 (OSHC) have been licensed for the first time, although standards for the latter are being implemented in a staggered approach, with the expectation that services will be licensed against the full set by 2007. Work is also continuing on the development of standards for Approved Registration Bodies—Class 2 (In-Home Care).

Minor amendments to the Child Care Act 2001 will be made in 2005-06. The main purpose of this is to ensure that persons who have the authority to give directions and make decisions in respect of the management of a child care service (but who do not operate the service, or are not the licensee or an employee, eg external managers, franchisees) are able to be assessed for fitness and propriety and may be subject to disciplinary action, as appropriate. The amendments also enable some administrative processes to be streamlined and to better reflect practice.

All six services funded through the State Government's child care in schools program have been established. This has increased the number of child care places by more than 300.

The major work around the development of the new Essential Learnings curriculum has been completed. It is not mandatory for child care services, however many are choosing to implement it. All schools have begun to assess and report against this, including kindergartens (preschools).

From the beginning of the 2004 school year, enrolment in preparatory became compulsory and children are now expected to attend school on a full time basis from the beginning of the school year, although exceptions may be granted.

The Department of Health and Human Services also has a significant role in the delivery of services to young children. The Our Kids Bureau within this agency, works with a number of agencies to progress issues focussing on child health and wellbeing, in particular facilitating the provision of Family Partnership Training across government and non-government organisations. The Agency has also developed a strategic plan for early childhood for 2005–2008 which focuses on early childhood health issues provided within the Family, Child and Youth Health Service division.



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## Australian Capital Territory Government comments

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The ACT Government has a vision for the children of Canberra that encourages and supports them to reach their full potential, a place where children are active citizens and a great and safe place for children.

The Department of Education and Training is responsible for providing preschool services for all eligible children in the year immediately prior to their entry to school. In 2004 the ACT Government committed \$8 million over three years to increase the number of hours children are eligible to attend preschool from 10.5 to 12 hours a week. This initiative will be fully implemented by 2006.

The ACT Department of Education and Training is undertaking a renewal of the curriculum. The new curriculum will cover Preschool to Year Ten and will be based on a framework of thirty 'essential learning' achievements for children in the twenty-first century.

The Office for Children, Youth and Family Support was integrated within the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services in November 2004 to create a comprehensive human service delivery agency for the ACT Government.

Children's Services within the Office for Children, Youth and Family Support is responsible for the licensing of and monitoring of children's services in the ACT to ensure they meet the requirements of the Children and Young People Act 1999.

Children's Services provides ongoing professional support and advice to stakeholders involved with children's services in the ACT through the delivery of licensing presentations to services, management committees and training providers. Regular meetings and newsletters provide the opportunities for information sharing and networking throughout the sector.

The ongoing implementation of the Children's Plan launched in 2004 builds on the ACT Government's commitment to strengthening communities in the development and delivery of services for children in the Territory.

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## Northern Territory Government comments

“ Increasing attention is being given to ensuring that children in the Northern Territory get the best start in life. The focus of effort is on improving the health and wellbeing of Indigenous children, supporting families and communities to care for and protect children, strengthening early learning and promoting service integration, quality and viability.

The Territory has a small and young population of dispersed across one-sixth of the national landmass. About 40 per cent of the 0–12 population are Indigenous children, some 75 per cent of whom live in small remote communities and towns. Diseconomies of scale, an environment ranging from desert to tropical climates, and the particular interests, needs and priorities of the population have resulted in unique approaches to providing children’s services in the Northern Territory.

Comparability for reporting purposes therefore continues to be difficult. For example, this and previous Reports indicate a considerably lower participation level of Indigenous children in child care services, however the data do not include participation in other services and activities such as innovative child care centres, JET creches, mobile services, playgroups and informal care services, which are preferred service models in a number of communities.

In 2004-05, new legislation was drafted, including provision for regulation of a broader scope of children’s services. This legislation gives emphasis to prevention and early intervention measures, alongside investigation and response to child maltreatment.

The Northern Territory Government provides access to universal preschool education for four year old children, and for some three year olds. At five years of age, children commonly attend all-day universally available transition education, which supports their successful inclusion in primary school. In 2004-05, a trial of earlier age of entry to transition and preschool education continued in nine locations, enabling children turning four by 30 June to enrol in these trial sites in term one.

Access to child health services and parent information and support has improved through expanded programs in several remote Indigenous communities. Work continues to strengthen integrated planning approaches and to promote child and family-centred service delivery.

A Five-Year Aboriginal Health and Families framework for action from 2005–2010 places a strong emphasis on the early years and on building better core services to reduce risks for young Aboriginal children and to promote their health and wellbeing. Children’s services will be working to make a significant contribution to this priority.

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## 14.6 Definitions of key terms and indicators

<b>Administration expenditure</b>	All expenditure by the departments responsible for the provision of licensing, advice, policy development, grants administration and training services. Responsible departments include those that administer policy for, fund and license/accredit child care and preschool services in each jurisdiction.
<b>Centre-based long day care</b>	Services aimed primarily at 0–5 year olds that are provided in a centre, usually by a mix of qualified and other staff. Educational, care and recreational programs are provided based on the developmental needs, interests and experience of each child. In some jurisdictions, primary school children may also receive care before and after school, and during school vacations. Centres typically operate for at least eight hours per day on normal working days, for a minimum of 48 weeks per year.
<b>Child care</b>	The meeting of a child's care, education and developmental needs by a person other than the child's parent or guardian. The main types of service are centre-based long day care, family day care, outside school hours care (vacation, before/after school hours and 'pupil free days' care), occasional care and other care.
<b>Children</b>	All resident male and female Australians aged 12 years or younger at 30 June of each year.
<b>Children from Indigenous backgrounds</b>	Children of Indigenous descent who identify as being Indigenous and are accepted as such by the community in which they live.
<b>Children from low income families</b>	Families who are receiving the maximum rate of Child Care Benefit.
<b>Children from non-English speaking backgrounds</b>	Children living in situations where the main language spoken is not English.
<b>Children's services</b>	All government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services (unless otherwise stated).
<b>Counting rules</b>	Prescribed standards, definitions and mathematical methods for determining descriptors and performance indicators for monitoring government services.
<b>Disability related care</b>	Care of children who have a developmental delay or disability (including a intellectual, sensory or physical impairment), or who have parent(s) with a disability.
<b>External cause (of injury)</b>	The environmental event, circumstance or condition that causes an injury.
<b>Family day care</b>	Services provided in the carer's home. The care is largely aimed at 0–5 year olds, but primary school children may also receive care before and after school, and during school vacations. Central coordination units in all states and territories organise and support a network of carers, often with the help of local governments.
<b>Financial support to families</b>	Any form of fee relief paid by governments to the users of children's services (for example, Child Care Benefit).

<b>Formal child care</b>	Organised care provided by a person other than the child's parent or guardian, usually outside of the child's home — for example, centre-based long day care, family day care, outside school hours care, vacation care and occasional care (excluding babysitting).
<b>Formal qualifications</b>	Early childhood-related teaching degree (three or four years), a child care certificate or associate diploma (two years) and/or other relevant qualifications (for example, a diploma or degree in child care [three years or more], primary teaching, other teaching, nursing [including mothercraft nursing], psychology and social work). Some jurisdictions do not recognise one year certificates.
<b>Full time equivalent staff numbers</b>	A measure of the total level of staff resources used. A full time staff member is employed full time and engaged solely in activities that fall within the scope of children's services covered in the chapter. The full time equivalent of part time staff is calculated on the basis of the proportion of time spent on activities within the scope of the data collection compared with that spent by a full time staff member solely occupied by the same activities.
<b>Government funded or/and provided</b>	All government financed services — that is, services that receive government contributions towards providing a specified service (including private services eligible for Child Care Benefit) and/or services for which the government has primary responsibility for delivery.
<b>Hospital separation</b>	An episode of care for a person admitted to a hospital. It can be a total hospital stay (from admission to discharge, transfer or death) or portions of hospital stays beginning or ending in a change of type of care (for example from acute to rehabilitation) that cease during a reference period.
<b>Informal child care</b>	Child care arrangements provided privately (for example, by friends, relatives, nannies) for which no government assistance (other than the minimum rate of Child Care Benefit for Registered Care) is provided. Such care is unregulated in most states and territories.
<b>In-home care</b>	Care provided by an approved carer in the child's home. Families eligible for in-home care include those where the parent(s) or child has an illness/disability, those in regional or remote areas, those where the parents are working shift work or non-standard hours, those with multiple births (more than two) and/or more than two children under school age, and those with a breastfeeding mother working from home.
<b>In-service training</b>	Formal training only (that is, structured training sessions that may be conducted in-house or externally), including training in work or own time but not training towards qualifications included in obtaining formal qualifications. It includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• management or financial training</li> <li>• training for additional needs children (such as children with a disability, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children and children from a culturally diverse background)</li> <li>• other child care-related training</li> <li>• other relevant courses (such as a first aid certificate).</li> </ul>
<b>Licensed services</b>	Those services that comply with the relevant State or Territory licensing regulations. These regulations cover matters such as the number of children whom the service can care for, safety requirements and the required qualifications of carers.

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<b>Net capital expenditure</b>	Expenditure on the acquisition or enhancement of fixed assets, less trade-in values and/or receipts from the sale of replaced or otherwise disposed of items. Capital expenditure does not include expenditure on fixed assets which falls below threshold capitalisation levels, depreciation or costs associated maintaining, renting or leasing equipment.
<b>Non-standard hours of care</b>	<p>Defined by service type as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• centre-based long day care — providers of service for more than 10 hours per day on Monday to Friday and/or service on weekends</li> <li>• preschool — providers of service for more than six hours per day</li> <li>• family day care — providers of service for more than 50 hours per week and/or service overnight and/or on weekends</li> <li>• vacation care — providers of service for more than 10 hours per day</li> <li>• before school hours care — providers of service for more than two hours before school</li> <li>• after school care — providers of service for more than three hours after school</li> <li>• occasional care — providers of service for more than eight hours per day</li> <li>• other — providers of service for more than 10 hours per day.</li> </ul>
<b>Occasional care</b>	Services usually provided at a centre on an hourly or sessional basis for short periods or at irregular intervals for parents who need time to attend appointments, take care of personal matters, undertake casual and part time employment, study or have temporary respite from full time parenting. These services provide developmental activities for children and are aimed primarily at 0–5 year olds. Centres providing these services usually employ a mix of qualified and other staff.
<b>Other expenditure on service provision</b>	Includes all recurrent expenditure on government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services except administration and financial support to families. It includes one-off, non-capital payments to peak agencies that support child care and preschool service providers.
<b>Other services</b>	Government funded services to support children with additional needs or in particular situations (including children from an Indigenous or non-English speaking background, children with a disability or of parents with a disability, and children living in regional and remote areas).
<b>Outside school hours care</b>	Services provided for school aged children (5–12 year olds) outside school hours during term and vacations. Care may be provided on student free days and when school finishes early.
<b>Preschools</b>	Services usually provided by a qualified teacher on a sessional basis in dedicated preschools. Preschool programs or curricula may also be provided in long day care centres and other settings. These services are primarily aimed at children in the year before they commence full time schooling (that is, when children are 4 years old in all jurisdictions), although younger children may also attend in most jurisdictions.
<b>Primary contact staff</b>	Staff whose primary function is to provide care and/or preschool services to children.

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<b>Real expenditure</b>	Actual expenditure adjusted for changes in prices. Adjustments were made using the GDP price deflator and expressed in terms of final year prices.
<b>Recurrent expenditure</b>	Expenditure that does not result in the creation or acquisition of fixed assets (new or second hand). It consists mainly of expenditure on wages, salaries and supplements, purchases of goods and services, and the consumption of fixed capital (depreciation).
<b>Regional and remote areas</b>	<p>Geographic location is based on the ABS's Australian Standard Geographical Classification of Remoteness Areas, which categorises areas as 'major cities', 'inner regional', 'outer regional', 'remote', 'very remote' and 'migratory'. The criteria for remoteness areas are based on the Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia, which measures the remoteness of a point based on the physical road distance to the nearest urban centre in each of five size classes (ABS 2001).</p> <p>The 'regional' classification used in this chapter was derived by adding data for inner regional and outer regional areas. The 'remote' classification was derived by adding data for remote, very remote and migratory areas.</p> <p>In previous reports, geographic location data was based on the rural, remote and metropolitan areas classification (DPIE and DSH 1994).</p>
<b>Serious injury Service</b>	<p>Injury requiring hospitalisation or a visit to (or by) a doctor.</p> <p>The type of service provided. Preschool service, for example, is a package of educational and developmental services received by a child in the year or two before full time schooling. Preschool services may be provided by either a preschool service provider or a child care service provider.</p>
<b>Service type</b>	<p>The categories for which data were collected, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• centre-based long day care</li> <li>• family day care</li> <li>• outside school hours care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– vacation care</li> <li>– before/after school care</li> </ul> </li> <li>• occasional care</li> <li>• 'other' care</li> <li>• preschool services.</li> </ul>
<b>Special needs group</b>	An identifiable group within the general population who may have special difficulty accessing services. Special needs groups for which data are reported in this chapter include: children from a non-English speaking background, children from an Indigenous background, children from low income families (Australian Government child care only), children with a disability, and children from regional or remote areas.
<b>Substantiated breach arising from a complaint</b>	An expression of concern about a child care or preschool service, made orally, in writing or in person to the regulatory authority, which constitutes a failure by the service to abide by the State or Territory legislation, regulations or conditions. This concern is investigated and subsequently considered to have substance by the regulatory body.
<b>Vacation care</b>	Care and developmental activities provided for school age children during school vacation periods.

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## 14.7 Supporting tables

Supporting tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an 'A' suffix (for example, table 14A.3 is table 3 in the attachment). Supporting tables are provided on the CD-ROM enclosed with the Report. The files containing the supporting tables are provided in Microsoft Excel format as \Publications\Reports\2006\Attach\_stat\_app.xls and in Adobe PDF format as \Publications\Reports\2006\Attach\_stat\_app.pdf. The files containing the supporting tables can also be found on the Review web page ([www.pc.gov.au/gsp](http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp)). Users without access to the CD-ROM or Internet can contact the Secretariat to obtain the supporting tables (see contact details on the inside front cover of the Report).

### All jurisdictions data

<b>Table 14A.1</b>	Estimated resident population, children aged 12 years and younger ('000)
<b>Table 14A.2</b>	Progress in the Quality Improvement and Accreditation System, Family Day Care Quality Assurance, and Outside School Hours Care Quality Assurance, Australia (number)
<b>Table 14A.3</b>	Australian Government real expenditure on children's services (2004-05 dollars) (\$'000)
<b>Table 14A.4</b>	Total government real expenditure on children's services (2004-05 dollars) (\$'000)
<b>Table 14A.5</b>	State and Territory Government real expenditure on child care and preschool services (2004-05 dollars) (\$'000)
<b>Table 14A.6</b>	Comparability of expenditure — items included, 2004-05
<b>Table 14A.7</b>	Treatment of assets by children's services agencies, 2004-05
<b>Table 14A.8</b>	Places provided by Australian Government approved child care services (number)
<b>Table 14A.9</b>	Average attendance at Australian Government approved child care services
<b>Table 14A.10</b>	Children aged 0–12 years using Australian Government approved child care services
<b>Table 14A.11</b>	Children aged 0–5 years using State and Territory Government funded and/or provided preschool services, by age
<b>Table 14A.12</b>	Staff employed by Australian Government approved child care services
<b>Table 14A.13</b>	Paid primary contact staff employed by Australian Government approved child care services, by qualification
<b>Table 14A.14</b>	Staff in Australian Government approved child care services who undertook relevant in-service training in previous 12 months
<b>Table 14A.15</b>	Children using services, by labour force or employment status of parents (per cent)
<b>Table 14A.16</b>	Access and equity indicators: service availability during non-standard hours for Australian Government approved child care services (per cent)

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<b>Table 14A.17</b>	Outcome indicator: out-of-pocket costs of child care for families with children in full time centre-based long day care, as a proportion of weekly disposable income, by gross annual family incomes, June 2004 (per cent)
<b>Table 14A.18</b>	Outcome indicator: out-of-pocket costs of child care for families with children in full time family day care, as a proportion of weekly disposable income, by gross annual family incomes, June 2004 (per cent)
<b>Table 14A.19</b>	Equity indicator: Representation of special needs groups in attendees at Australian Government approved child care services (per cent)
<b>Table 14A.20</b>	Efficiency indicators: Australian Government expenditure on child care services per child aged 0–12 years in the jurisdiction (2004-05 dollars) (\$/child)
<b>Table 14A.21</b>	Total State/Territory real expenditure on children's services per child aged 0–12 years in the jurisdiction (2004-05 dollars) (\$/child)
<b>Table 14A.22</b>	Children aged 0–11 years by whether (additional) formal care was required, 2002
<b>Table 14A.23</b>	Children aged 0–11 years who required (additional) formal care by main reason required, 2002
<b>Table 14A.24</b>	Children aged 0–11 years by main reason (additional) formal care not used, 2002
<b>Table 14A.25</b>	Average fees charged by Australian Government funded services, 2004 (\$)
<b>Table 14A.26</b>	Children who attended preschool, weekly cost per child (after subsidies), 2002
<b>Table 14.A27</b>	Hospital separations for external cause of injuries, persons aged 0–4 years, all hospitals, by place of occurrence, 2003-04

#### **Single jurisdiction data – NSW**

<b>Table 14A.28</b>	State Government real expenditure on child care and preschool services, New South Wales (2004-05 dollars) (\$'000)
<b>Table 14A.29</b>	Characteristics of child care and preschool services not included in the Australian Government Census of Child Care Services, New South Wales
<b>Table 14A.30</b>	Children aged 0–12 years using State Government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services, by age, New South Wales
<b>Table 14A.31</b>	Staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, New South Wales
<b>Table 14A.32</b>	Paid staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, by qualification and experience, New South Wales
<b>Table 14A.33</b>	Licensed and/or registered service providers, by management type, New South Wales
<b>Table 14A.34</b>	Access and equity indicators: Service availability during non-standard hours and participation by target groups, New South Wales
<b>Table 14A.35</b>	Quality indicators: number of serious injuries sustained per registered or licensed service provider, New South Wales
<b>Table 14A.36</b>	Quality indicators: substantiated breaches arising from complaints about State Government registered or licensed service providers, New South Wales

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### Single jurisdiction data – Vic

<b>Table 14A.37</b>	State Government real expenditure on child care and preschool services, Victoria (2004-05 dollars) (\$'000)
<b>Table 14A.38</b>	Characteristics of child care and preschool services not included in the Australian Government Census of Child Care Services, Victoria
<b>Table 14A.39</b>	Children aged 0–12 years using State Government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services, by age, Victoria
<b>Table 14A.40</b>	Staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, Victoria
<b>Table 14A.41</b>	Paid staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, by qualification and experience, Victoria
<b>Table 14A.42</b>	Licensed and/or registered service providers, by management type, Victoria
<b>Table 14A.43</b>	Access and equity indicators: Service availability during non-standard hours and participation by target groups, Victoria
<b>Table 14A.44</b>	Quality indicators: number of serious injuries sustained per registered or licensed service provider, Victoria
<b>Table 14A.45</b>	Quality indicators: substantiated breaches arising from complaints about State Government registered or licensed service providers, Victoria

### Single jurisdiction data – Qld

<b>Table 14A.46</b>	State Government real expenditure on child care and preschool services, Queensland (2004-05 dollars) (\$'000)
<b>Table 14A.47</b>	Characteristics of child care and preschool services not included in the Australian Government Census of Child Care Services, Queensland
<b>Table 14A.48</b>	Children aged 0–12 years using State Government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services, by age, Queensland
<b>Table 14A.49</b>	Staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, Queensland
<b>Table 14A.50</b>	Paid staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, by qualification and experience, Queensland
<b>Table 14A.51</b>	Licensed and/or registered service providers, by management type, Queensland
<b>Table 14A.52</b>	Access and equity indicators: Service availability during non-standard hours and participation by target groups, Queensland
<b>Table 14A.53</b>	Quality indicators: number of serious injuries sustained per registered or licensed service provider, Queensland
<b>Table 14A.54</b>	Quality indicators: substantiated breaches arising from complaints about State Government registered or licensed service providers, Queensland

### Single jurisdiction data – WA

<b>Table 14A.55</b>	State Government real expenditure on child care and preschool services, Western Australia (2004-05 dollars) (\$'000)
<b>Table 14A.56</b>	Characteristics of child care and preschool services not included in the Australian Government Census of Child Care Services, Western Australia

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<b>Table 14A.57</b>	Children aged 0–12 years using State Government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services, by age, Western Australia
<b>Table 14A.58</b>	Staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, Western Australia
<b>Table 14A.59</b>	Paid staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, by qualification and experience, Western Australia
<b>Table 14A.60</b>	Licensed and/or registered service providers, by management type, Western Australia
<b>Table 14A.61</b>	Access and equity indicators: Service availability during non-standard hours and participation by target groups, Western Australia
<b>Table 14A.62</b>	Quality indicators: number of serious injuries sustained per registered or licensed service provider, Western Australia
<b>Table 14A.63</b>	Quality indicators: substantiated breaches arising from complaints about State Government registered or licensed service providers, Western Australia
<b>Single jurisdiction data – SA</b>	
<b>Table 14A.64</b>	State Government real expenditure on child care and preschool services, South Australia (2004-05 dollars) (\$'000)
<b>Table 14A.65</b>	Characteristics of child care and preschool services not included in the Australian Government Census of Child Care Services, South Australia
<b>Table 14A.66</b>	Children aged 0–12 years using State Government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services, by age, South Australia
<b>Table 14A.67</b>	Staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, South Australia
<b>Table 14A.68</b>	Paid staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, by qualification and experience, South Australia
<b>Table 14A.69</b>	Licensed and/or registered service providers, by management type, South Australia
<b>Table 14A.70</b>	Access and equity indicators: Service availability during non-standard hours and participation by target groups, South Australia
<b>Table 14A.71</b>	Quality indicators: number of serious injuries sustained per registered or licensed service provider, South Australia
<b>Table 14A.72</b>	Quality indicators: substantiated breaches arising from complaints about State Government registered or licensed service providers, South Australia
<b>Single jurisdiction data – Tas</b>	
<b>Table 14A.73</b>	State Government real expenditure on child care and preschool services, Tasmania (2004-05 dollars) (\$'000)
<b>Table 14A.74</b>	Characteristics of child care and preschool services not included in the Australian Government Census of Child Care Services, Tasmania
<b>Table 14A.75</b>	Children aged 0–12 years using State Government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services, by age, Tasmania
<b>Table 14A.76</b>	Staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, Tasmania

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<b>Table 14A.77</b>	Paid staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, by qualification and experience, Tasmania
<b>Table 14A.78</b>	Licensed and/or registered service providers, by management type, Tasmania
<b>Table 14A.79</b>	Access and equity indicators: Service availability during non-standard hours and participation by target groups, Tasmania
<b>Table 14A.80</b>	Quality indicators: number of serious injuries sustained per registered or licensed service provider, Tasmania
<b>Table 14A.81</b>	Quality indicators: substantiated breaches arising from complaints about State Government registered or licensed service providers, Tasmania

#### **Single jurisdiction data – ACT**

<b>Table 14A.82</b>	State Government real expenditure on child care and preschool services, Australian Capital Territory (2003-04 dollars) (\$'000)
<b>Table 14A.83</b>	Characteristics of child care and preschool services not included in the Australian Government Census of Child Care Services, Australian Capital Territory
<b>Table 14A.84</b>	Children aged 0–12 years using State Government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services, by age, Australian Capital Territory
<b>Table 14A.85</b>	Staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, Australian Capital Territory
<b>Table 14A.86</b>	Paid staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, by qualification and experience, Australian Capital Territory
<b>Table 14A.87</b>	Licensed and/or registered service providers, by management type, Australian Capital Territory
<b>Table 14A.88</b>	Access and equity indicators: Service availability during non-standard hours and participation by target groups, Australian Capital Territory
<b>Table 14A.89</b>	Quality indicators: number of serious injuries sustained per registered or licensed service provider, Australian Capital Territory
<b>Table 14A.90</b>	Quality indicators: substantiated breaches arising from complaints about State Government registered or licensed service providers, Australian Capital Territory

#### **Single jurisdiction data – NT**

<b>Table 14A.91</b>	State Government real expenditure on child care and preschool services, Northern Territory (2004-05 dollars) (\$'000)
<b>Table 14A.92</b>	Characteristics of child care and preschool services not included in the Australian Government Census of Child Care Services, Northern Territory
<b>Table 14A.93</b>	Children aged 0–12 years using State Government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services, by age, Northern Territory
<b>Table 14A.94</b>	Staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, Northern Territory
<b>Table 14A.95</b>	Paid staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, by qualification and experience, Northern Territory

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<b>Table 14A.96</b>	Licensed and/or registered service providers, by management type, Northern Territory
<b>Table 14A.97</b>	Access and equity indicators: Service availability during non-standard hours and participation by target groups, Northern Territory
<b>Table 14A.98</b>	Quality indicators: number of serious injuries sustained per registered or licensed service provider, Northern Territory
<b>Table 14A.99</b>	Quality indicators: substantiated breaches arising from complaints about State Government registered or licensed service providers, Northern Territory

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