
3 Early childhood education and care

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Attachment tables

Attachment tables are identified in references throughout this Indigenous Compendium by an 'A' prefix (for example, in this chapter, table 3A.1). As the data are directly sourced from the 2014 Report, the Compendium also notes where the original table, figure or text in the 2014 Report can be found. For example, where the Compendium refers to '2014 Report, p. 3.1' this is page 1 of chapter 3 of the 2014 Report, and '2014 Report, table 3A.1' is attachment table 1 of attachment 3A of the 2014 Report. A list of attachment tables referred to in the Compendium is provided at the end of this chapter, and the full attachment tables are available from the Review website at www.pc.gov.au/gsp.

The Early childhood education and care chapter (chapter 3) in the *Report on Government Services 2014* (2014 Report) reports on the performance of early childhood education and care services in each Australian state and territory. Data are reported for Indigenous children for a subset of the performance indicators reported in that chapter — those data are compiled and presented here.

Early childhood education and care aims to meet the care, educational and developmental needs of children. In this chapter, child care services are those provided to children aged 0–12 years, usually by someone other than the child’s parents or guardian(s). Preschool services are provided to children, mainly in the year or two before they begin full time schooling.

Most of the data in this chapter relate to services that are supported by the Australian, State and Territory governments and provided for children aged 0–12 years. Local governments also plan, fund and deliver early childhood education and care. Due to data limitations, the only local government data included are where Australian, State and Territory government funding and/or licensing are involved.

Indigenous data in the Early childhood education and care chapter

The Early childhood education and care chapter in the 2014 Report contains the following data items on Indigenous children:

- representation of Indigenous children attending Australian Government approved child care services, 2013
- representation of Indigenous children in child care and preschool programs, 2012
- Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling, by remoteness area, national only, 2012
- Indigenous children enrolled in a preschool program, 2012
- Indigenous children absent from non-government preschools, 2012
- Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling, by remoteness area, national only, 2012
- Indigenous children attending a preschool program, 2012.

The arrangements for departmental responsibility for early childhood education and care vary across State and Territory governments. There are also differences across states and territories in early childhood education program names and starting ages. Table 3A.1 shows basic information on child care and preschool education programs, such as agency responsibility, program names and starting ages.

The Australian Government and State and Territory governments are working cooperatively to undertake national reforms in the area of early childhood education and care. Through Council of Australian Governments (COAG), governments have

endorsed a number of major funding agreements and initiatives as part of a wider early childhood reform agenda (box 3.1).

Box 3.1 The COAG Early Childhood Reform Agenda

The main COAG national reform initiatives linked specifically to early childhood development, education and care include:

- the National Early Childhood Development Strategy — Investing in the Early Years, a collaboration between the Australian, State and Territory governments. The strategy broadly covers children from before birth to 8 years of age, and aims to improve outcomes for all children and their families, including reducing inequalities in outcomes between groups of children. The strategy, endorsed by COAG in July 2009, includes a range of long term national reform initiatives in the areas of education and care, health, protection, family support and housing that seek to improve early childhood outcomes
- the *National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education* (NP ECE) which aims to achieve universal access to quality early childhood education for all children in the year before full time school by 2013. These reforms have been implemented progressively from 2009 to June 2013. A new *National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education* for the period July 2013 to December 2014 supports universal access to and improved participation by children in quality early childhood education in the year before full time schooling, with a focus on vulnerable and disadvantaged children. These include a range of performance indicators against which progress is measured. The results published from measuring performance against these agreements may differ in some cases, to those presented in this Report, due to differing definitions adopted for calculating national indicators
- the *National Indigenous Reform Agreement* (NIRA) which includes a target to ensure all Indigenous children aged 4 years in remote communities have access to early childhood education by 2013. These reforms have been implemented progressively from 2009–2013
- the *National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development* which aims to establish 35 new Children and Family Centres (CFCs). The locations for 38 CFCs have been agreed, exceeding the original target of 35. These reforms are being implemented progressively until June 2014
- national workforce initiatives to improve the quality and supply of the early childhood education and care workforce

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Box 3.1 (continued)

- the *National Partnership Agreement on the National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care*. This incorporates a *National Quality Framework (NQF) for Early Childhood Education and Care* and a *National Quality Standard (NQS)* to ensure high quality and consistent early childhood education and care across Australia, including streamlined regulatory approaches, an assessment and rating system and an *Early Years Learning Framework* and a *Framework for School Age Care*.

The Australian Government is implementing these changes in partnership with each of the State and Territory governments.

Source: COAG (2009a and 2009b); Department of Education (unpublished).

The Australian Government provides supplementary funding to support the participation of Indigenous children in eligible preschool programs. In 2012, \$14.2 million was provided on a per person and project basis to 1761 government and non-government preschools. The funding covered 10 679 full time equivalent Indigenous preschool enrolments (Department of Education unpublished).

Framework of performance indicators

The Early childhood education and care performance indicator framework outlined in figure 3.1 identifies the performance indicators reported in the 2014 Report. Data for Indigenous children are reported for a subset of the performance indicators and are presented here. It is important to interpret these data in the context of the broader performance indicator framework.

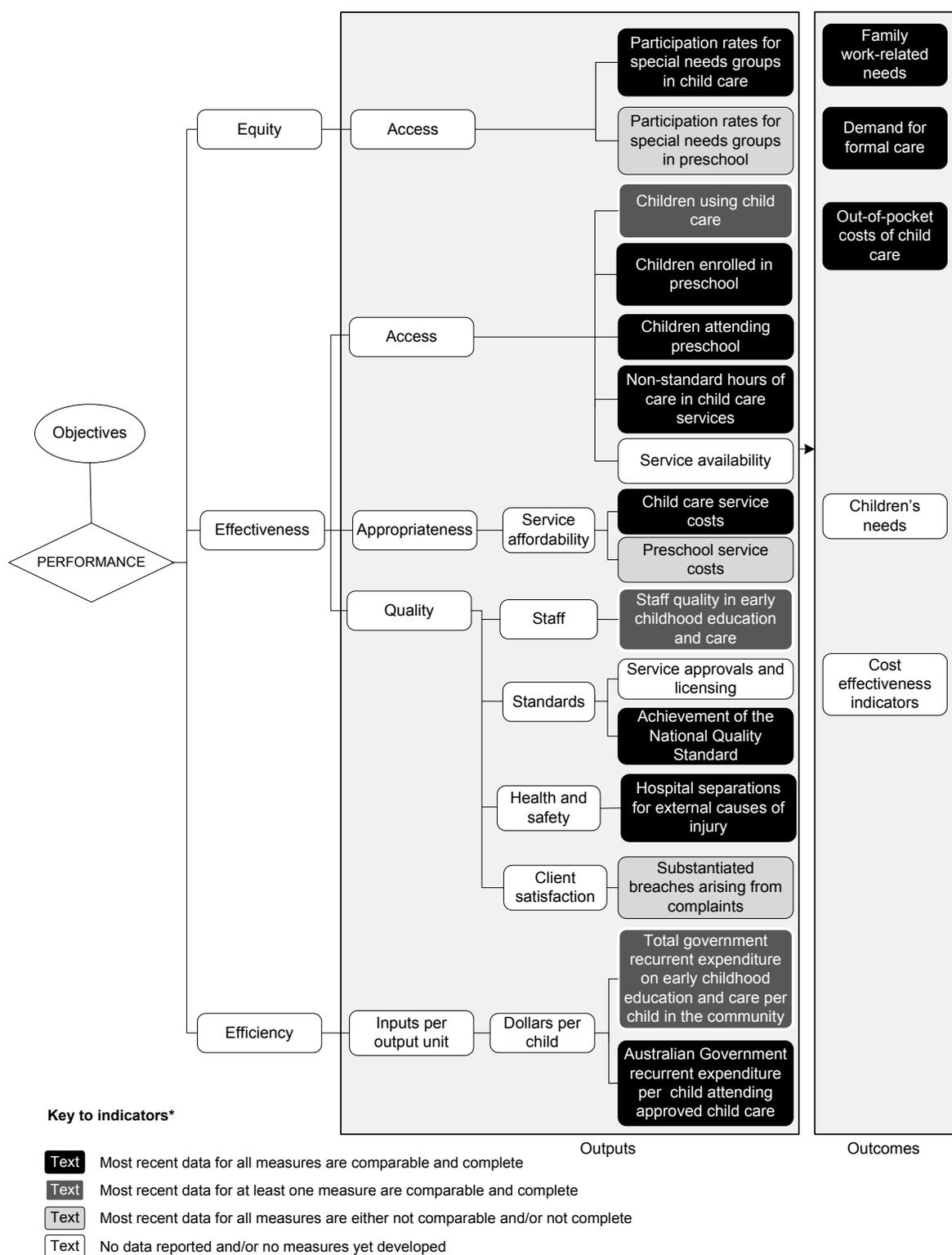
The performance indicator framework provides information on equity, efficiency and effectiveness, and distinguishes the outputs and outcomes of early childhood education and care services (figure 3.1). The performance indicator framework shows which data are complete and comparable in the 2014 Report. For data that are not considered directly comparable, text includes relevant caveats and supporting commentary. Chapter 1 discusses data comparability from a Report-wide perspective (2014 Report, section 1.6).

The Report's statistical context chapter 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) (chapter 2).

COAG has agreed six National Agreements (NAs) to enhance accountability to the public for the outcomes achieved or outputs delivered by a range of government services (see chapter 1 for more detail on reforms to federal financial relations).

There are no service specific NAs that relate to early childhood education and care services, however, the National Indigenous Reform Agreement (NIRA) includes an indicator relevant to this service. Performance indicators reported in this chapter are aligned with relevant performance indicators in the NIRA.

Figure 3.1 Early childhood education and care performance indicator framework



* A description of the comparability and completeness of each measure is provided in indicator interpretation boxes within the chapter

Source: 2014 Report, figure 3.1, p. 3.15.

Equity

Access — participation rates for special needs groups in child care

‘Participation rates for special needs groups in child care’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that services are provided in an equitable manner to all special needs groups in the community, and that there is consideration of the needs of those groups that can have special difficulty in accessing services (box 3.2).

Box 3.2 Participation rates for special needs groups in child care

‘Participation rates for special needs groups in child care’ 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 for children in child care aged 0–5 and 6–12 years.

Targeted special needs groups include children from NESB, Indigenous children, children from low income families, children with disability, and children from regional and remote areas.

A high or increasing participation rate is desirable. If the representation of special needs groups among child care services users is broadly similar to their representation in the community, this suggests more equitable access.

Data reported for this indicator are:

- comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions, but a break in series means that data prior to 2010 are not comparable to data after 2010. In addition, data for Indigenous children in this Report are not comparable to data in previous editions.
- complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2013 data are available for all jurisdictions.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Data for participation by special needs groups using Australian Government approved child care services for 2013 were drawn from the *National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census 2013* and Department of Education administrative systems. Box 3.4 in the 2014 Report contains more information on the census.

Nationally, Indigenous children aged 0–12 years had a lower representation in child care services in 2013 (2.6 per cent) than their representation in the community in 2012 (4.8 per cent) (tables 3.1 and 3A.13). This was the case for both the 0–5 years age group and the 6–12 years age group (table 3A.12).

Data on representation of special needs groups in State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care for children aged 0–12 years are presented in table 3A.14.

Table 3.1 Proportion of children aged 0–12 years attending Australian Government approved child care services from special needs groups, 2013 (per cent)^{a, b, c}

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
<i>Children from NESB</i>									
In child care services	21.3	24.8	9.0	13.4	10.4	3.5	16.0	10.6	17.3
In the community, 2011	23.7	23.4	13.2	18.0	15.7	7.3	19.2	40.0	20.0
<i>Indigenous children</i>									
In child care services	2.8	0.8	4.0	2.6	1.8	5.7	1.4	11.8	2.6
In the community, 2012	4.5	1.3	6.7	5.8	3.7	7.2	2.5	42.8	4.8
<i>Children from low income families</i>									
In child care services	24.4	26.2	27.5	22.5	23.6	28.9	7.6	14.4	25.0
In the community, 2011-12	22.5	20.4	21.4	13.8	21.9	26.9	7.8	22.5	20.7
<i>Children with disability</i>									
In child care services	3.8	2.5	2.4	2.1	4.2	2.4	2.8	4.7	3.0
In the community, 2009	7.4	5.7	5.8	8.2	5.9	8.4	8.3	5.4	6.6
<i>Children from regional areas</i>									
In child care services ^d	22.3	19.3	29.8	14.5	15.9	100.3	0.1	81.1	24.1
In the community, 2011	26.0	25.0	36.4	18.3	24.7	97.9	0.2	51.2	28.6
<i>Children from remote areas</i>									
In child care services	0.2	–	1.0	3.5	1.5	0.9	..	19.1	0.9
In the community, 2011	0.6	0.1	3.6	7.7	4.1	2.0	..	48.5	2.7

^a Data on children in child care services represent the population of children attending child care in 2013. Data on representation in the community are reported for different years due to the availability of data and are sourced from the ABS *2011 Census of Population and Housing; Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1991 to 2021; Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia, 2011-12 and Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia, 2009*. ^b 2013 data in this Report are preliminary from the *2013 National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census*, except for Indigenous children and children from regional and remote areas, which are from administrative data for the March quarter. Refer to box 3.3 and table 3A.13 for more information. ^c See table 3A.13 for complete footnotes and definitions. ^d The proportion of children from regional areas in child care services can exceed 100 per cent. This may occur because although the number of children in child care services is a unique count for each state and territory, children can attend, and be counted in, services located in more than one remoteness area. .. Not applicable. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: Department of Education (unpublished) administrative data collection and *National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census, 2013 (preliminary data)*; ABS (unpublished) *2011 Census of Population and Housing; Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia, 2011-12*, Cat. no. 6523.0; *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2009*, Cat. no. 4430.0 and *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1991 to 2021 (Series B)*, Cat. no. 3238.0; table 3A.13; 2014 Report, table 3.4, p. 3.20.

Access — participation rates for special needs groups in preschool

‘Participation rates for special needs groups in preschool’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that services are provided in an equitable manner to all special needs groups in the community, and that there is consideration of the needs of those groups that can have special difficulty in accessing services (box 3.3).

Box 3.3 Participation rates for special needs groups in preschool

‘Participation rates for special needs groups in preschool’ is defined by two measures:

- proportion of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in a preschool program who are from targeted special needs groups, compared with the representation of these groups in the community. Targeted special needs groups include children from NESB, Indigenous children, children with disability and children from regional and remote areas
- proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling who are disadvantaged, compared with the representation of these groups in the community. Children who are disadvantaged are defined as residing in an area with a Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD) quintile of 1. The SEIFA IRSD quintile of 1 is used as a proxy for the most disadvantaged. The use of SEIFA IRSD as a proxy for disadvantage needs to be interpreted with care as it pertains to the area in which the child resides, rather than to the child specifically.

A high or increasing proportion of children from special needs groups and who are disadvantaged enrolled in a preschool program is desirable. If the representation of special needs groups and disadvantage among children enrolled in a preschool program is broadly similar to their representation in the community, this suggests equitable access.

Data reported for these measures are:

- comparable (subject to caveats) within jurisdictions for 2012 data but a break in series means that data for 2012 are not comparable to data for 2011 (in the previous Report) for special needs groups but are comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions for children who are disadvantaged. Data are not comparable across jurisdictions for special needs groups
- complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period for special needs groups. All required 2012 data are available for all jurisdictions for special needs groups but incomplete for the current reporting period for children who are disadvantaged. All required data were not available for Queensland for children who are disadvantaged.

Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs/2014.

Proportion of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in a preschool program who are from targeted special needs groups

Data for participation by special needs groups in preschool are provided by State and Territory governments for children from NESB and children with disability. Data for Indigenous children and children from regional and remote areas are drawn from the National ECEC Collection 2012. Box 3.6 in the 2014 Report contains additional information on the collection.

Data on the representation of special needs groups for children in a preschool program are provided in table 3.2. Nationally, the representation of Indigenous children aged 3–5 years in a preschool program (4.4 per cent) was lower than their representation in the community (4.8 per cent) though this varies across jurisdictions.

Data on the representation of special needs groups in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling are presented in table 3A.14.

Table 3.2 Proportion of children (aged 3–5 years) enrolled in a preschool program from special needs groups, 2012 (per cent)^{a, b, c, d}

	NSW ^e	Vic ^f	Qld ^g	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT ^h	Aust ⁱ
Children from NESB									
In a preschool program ^j	12.2	14.1	8.2	na	12.4	2.8	22.6	na	10.2
In the community, 2011	23.7	23.4	13.2	17.7	15.4	7.4	19.6	39.3	20.0
Children with disability									
In a preschool program ^{j, k}	7.4	3.9	2.8	3.1	12.0	1.0	3.1	4.2	5.1
In the community, 2009	7.3	3.9	7.3	6.8	5.5	7.2	7.3	np	6.3
Indigenous children									
In a preschool program	4.5	1.2	4.4	6.8	6.1	7.5	3.1	38.4	4.4
In the community, 2012	4.6	1.2	6.7	5.7	3.6	7.0	2.5	40.9	4.8
Children from regional areas									
In a preschool program	31.3	23.3	33.4	17.7	24.3	98.0	3.2	51.7	28.9
In the community, 2011	25.5	24.6	36.0	18.0	24.4	97.8	0.2	51.4	28.1
Children from remote areas									
In a preschool program	0.7	0.1	3.4	7.6	4.0	2.0	..	48.3	2.6
In the community, 2011	0.6	0.1	3.8	7.9	3.9	2.0	..	48.2	2.8

^a Data for children from NESB and children with disability are from State and Territory governments. Data for Indigenous children and children from regional and remote areas are from the National ECEC Collection published by ABS in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012*. Due to the different data sources for preschool data for special needs groups, caution should be used when making comparisons across special needs groups. ^b Data for children from NESB and children with disability in a preschool program include only State and Territory government funded or provided preschool services. Data on enrolment in a preschool program for Indigenous children and children from regional and remote areas include preschool programs as defined by the scope of the National ECEC Collection. This means preschool programs are included irrespective of the type of institution that provides them or whether they are government funded or privately provided. ^c Data on representation in the community are reported for different years due to the availability of data and are sourced from the ABS *2011 Census of Population and Housing; Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia, 2009* and *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1991 to 2021*. ^d Includes children aged 3–5 years on 1 July 2012. ^e Not all children undertaking a preschool program in a long day care setting in NSW are captured in the relevant data collections, resulting in an undercount for NSW. ^f Victorian data for children from NESB and with disability in preschool programs only include 3 year old children who have been approved to attend funded 4 year old kindergarten programs, and so do not include children in programs for 3 year olds. Victorian data for children from NESB and with disability are reported as at 30 June 2012. ^g Episode, rather than child data are used for Queensland Indigenous children and children from regional and remote areas. These data are included in the national total. ^h Preschool data for children from NESB and children with disability in the NT include some children aged over 5 years. ⁱ Data for Australia for children from NESB and children with disability, in preschool, are the total of the sum of the states and territories for which data are available, and should not be interpreted as national data. ^j Data exclude innovative or flexible services that receive direct funding from the Australian Government and are targeted towards children from these groups. ^k Data on children with disability are not directly comparable because the definition of disability varies across jurisdictions. **na** Not available. **..** Not applicable. **np** Not published.

Source: ABS (unpublished) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012*, Cat. no. 4240.0; State and Territory governments (unpublished); ABS (unpublished) *2011 Census of Population and Housing; Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2009*, Cat. no. 4430.0 and *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1991 to 2021 (Series B)*, Cat. no. 3238.0; table 3A.14; 2014 Report, table 3.5, p. 3.24.

Effectiveness

Access — children enrolled in preschool

‘Children enrolled in preschool’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that all families have equitable access to preschool services (box 3.4).

Box 3.4 Children enrolled in preschool

‘Children enrolled in preschool’ is defined by two measures:

- proportion of children who are enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling. The proportion of children is calculated using children aged 4 years as a proxy for children in the year before full time schooling and is sourced from ABS’ population data
- proportion of Indigenous children (by geographic location) who are enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling. The proportion of Indigenous children is calculated using Indigenous children aged 4 years as a proxy for children in the year before full time schooling and is derived from ABS’ population data. These data are provided on a national basis by remoteness categories ‘major cities’, ‘inner/outer regional areas’ and ‘remote/very remote areas’.

Data reported for children who are enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling includes children aged 4 and 5 years on 1 July 2012, but excludes children aged 5 years who were enrolled in preschool in the previous year as a 4 year old. To be considered as enrolled, the child must have attended the preschool program for at least one hour during the reference period, or be absent due to illness or extended holiday leave and expected to return.

A high or increasing proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program can indicate a high or increasing level of service availability, and is desirable. However, this indicator can be difficult to interpret as:

- the preschool starting age for children varies across states and territories. A higher proportion of children enrolled at a particular age can reflect the preschool starting age in a particular jurisdiction
- participation in preschool is not compulsory. This indicator does not provide information on parental preferences for using preschool, or other factors, such as school starting age, which can affect use of preschool

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Box 3.4 (continued)

- overestimation of enrolment in some states and territories (for example, where enrolment rates exceed 100 per cent) can be due to children: moving interstate during a preschool year; attending multiple providers to access an appropriate amount of care; attending multiple service types and/or attending preschool for more than one year. Overestimation may also result from children enrolled in a preschool program in a jurisdiction different to the one in which they live, for example, between the ACT and NSW or because the measures are based on the number of 4 and 5 year olds who are enrolled as a proportion of the number of 4 year olds in the population.

Data reported for these measures are:

- comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions but a break in series means that data for 2012 are not comparable to data for 2011 (in the previous Report) for children who are enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling. Data are not on a jurisdiction basis so comparability is not applicable for Indigenous children (by geographic location) who are enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling
- complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2012 data are available for all jurisdictions.

Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs2014.

Proportion of Indigenous children (by geographic location) who are enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling

National data on the proportion of Indigenous children enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling are presented by remoteness areas (major cities; inner/outer regional areas; remote/very remote areas) in table 3A.18. In 2012, amongst Indigenous children in major cities, 69.9 per cent were enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling. In regional areas, 79.3 per cent of Indigenous children were enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling. In remote areas, 88.4 per cent of Indigenous children were enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling (table 3A.18).

Contextual data are provided for all jurisdictions on the number of Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program and Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling. These data are also presented by remoteness areas (table 3A.19).

Access — children attending preschool

‘Children attending preschool’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that all families have equitable access to preschool services (box 3.5).

Box 3.5 Children attending preschool

‘Children attending preschool’ is defined by three measures:

- proportion of children who are attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling. The proportion of children is calculated using children aged 4 years as a proxy for children in the year before full time schooling and is sourced from ABS’ population data
- the number of Indigenous children absent from non-government preschools, as a proportion of all Indigenous children enrolled in non-government preschools. Data are sourced from the National Preschool Census. Data on Indigenous preschool attendance rates are limited to Indigenous children enrolled in non-government preschools. Non-government preschools include preschool programs delivered in government funded, registered, licensed and/or approved services, and these arrangements vary across jurisdictions. Preschool programs operated by commercial providers are excluded. A child is deemed absent if they missed one or more of the sessions they were enrolled in during the reference week. Preschool attendance is not compulsory
- proportion of Indigenous children (by geographic location) who are attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling. The proportion of Indigenous children is calculated using Indigenous children aged 4 years as a proxy for children in the year before full time schooling and is derived from ABS’ population data. These data are provided on a national basis by remoteness categories ‘major cities’, ‘inner/outer regional areas’ and ‘remote/very remote areas’.

Data reported for children who are attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling includes children aged 4 and 5 years on 1 July 2012, but excludes children aged 5 years who attended preschool in the previous year as a 4 year old. A child is considered to be attending a preschool program if the child was enrolled and present for at least one hour during the reference period.

A high or increasing proportion of children attending a preschool program can indicate a high or increasing level of service availability, and is desirable. However, this indicator can be difficult to interpret as:

- the preschool starting age for children varies across states and territories. A higher proportion of children attending at a particular age can reflect the preschool starting age in a particular jurisdiction
- participation in preschool is not compulsory. This indicator does not provide information on parental preferences for using preschool, or other factors, such as school starting age, which can affect use of preschool

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Box 3.5 (continued)

- overestimation of attendance in some states and territories (for example, where attendance rates exceed 100 per cent) can be due to children: moving interstate during a preschool year; attending multiple providers to access an appropriate amount of care; attending multiple service types and/or attending preschool for more than one year. Overestimation may also result from children attending preschool in a jurisdiction different to the one in which they live, for example, between the ACT and NSW or because measures are based on the number of 4 and 5 year olds attending as a proportion of the number of 4 year olds in the population.

A low or decreasing absentee rate indicates a high or increasing rate of attendance at preschools, and is desirable.

Data reported for these measures are:

- comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions but a break in series means that data 2012 are not comparable to data for 2011 (in the previous Report) for children who are attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling. Data are not on a jurisdiction basis so comparability is not applicable for Indigenous children (by geographic location) who are attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling
- complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2012 data are available for all jurisdictions.

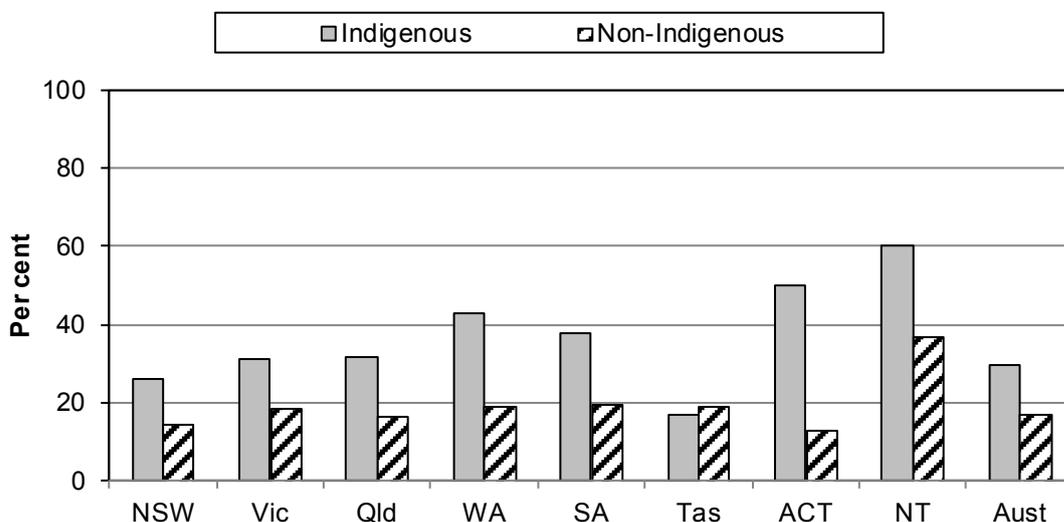
Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs2014.

Enrolled children absent from a non-government preschool

This measure provides a broad indication of the participation of Indigenous children in preschools. These data are sourced from the National Preschool Census (NPC) and relate only to non-government preschools. These data can overlap with the preschool program data provided by the National ECEC Collection and are therefore not directly comparable with other preschool data included in this Report. The NPC collected data from 97.0 per cent of the 3484 non-government preschools in scope for the 2012 NPC (Department of Education unpublished). This represents approximately 69.3 per cent of all government and non-government preschools, though this proportion varies considerably across jurisdictions (table 3A.25). Data for jurisdictions with a small number of non-government preschools should be interpreted with care.

In 2012, non-attendance by Indigenous children was higher than non-attendance by non-Indigenous children in all jurisdictions except Tasmania (figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2 Enrolled children absent from non-government preschools, 2012^{a, b, c, d}



^a Data on attendance are limited to non-government preschools. At the national level, approximately 69.3 per cent of all government and non-government preschools are non-government, though this percentage varies across jurisdictions: 89.7 per cent in NSW, 100 per cent in Victoria, 94.1 per cent in Queensland, 27.5 per cent in WA, 16.4 per cent in SA, 25.2 per cent in Tasmania, 14.7 per cent in the ACT, and 7.4 per cent in the NT. Preschool attendance data for jurisdictions with a small proportion of non-government preschools should be interpreted with care. ^b Preschool attendance is not compulsory. ^c Attendance was measured during the week of 30 July-3 August 2012. Children are counted as absent if they are absent for one or more of the sessions that they were enrolled in during this week. Absences due to illness can be higher during winter than at other times of the year. ^d Data for non-Indigenous children are derived from data on Indigenous children and all children.

Source: Department of Education (unpublished) *National Preschool Census 2012*; table 3A.25; 2014 Report, figure 3.8, p. 3.27.

Proportion of Indigenous children (by geographic location) who are attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling

National data on the proportion of Indigenous children attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling are presented by remoteness areas (major cities; inner/outer regional areas; remote/very remote areas) in table 3A.26. In 2012, amongst Indigenous children in major cities, 67.3 per cent attended a preschool program in the year before full time schooling. In regional areas, 74.3 per cent of Indigenous children attended a preschool program in the year before full time schooling. In remote areas, 77.5 per cent of Indigenous children attended a preschool program in the year before full time schooling (table 3A.26).

Contextual data are provided for all jurisdictions on the number of Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years who attended a preschool program and Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years who attended a preschool program in the year before full time schooling. These data are also presented by remoteness areas (table 3A.27).

Definitions of key terms

Australian Government approved child care service	A service approved by the Australian Government to receive Child Care Benefit (CCB) on behalf of families.
Child care services	The meeting of a child's care, education and developmental needs by a person other than the child's parent or guardian. The main models of service are centre-based long day care, family day care, outside school hours care (before/after school hours and 'pupil free days' care), vacation care, occasional care and other care.
Children	All resident male and female Australians aged 12 years or younger at 30 June of each year (unless otherwise stated).
Children from low income families	Families who are receiving the maximum rate of CCB.
Government funded and/or provided	All government financed services — that is, services that receive government contributions towards providing a specified service (including private services eligible for CCB) and/or services for which the government has primary responsibility for delivery.
Indigenous children	Children of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin who self-identify or are identified by a parent or guardian to be of Aboriginal or Torres Strait islander origin.
Preschool services	Comprises services that deliver early childhood education programs provided by a qualified teacher that are aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling, although different starting ages occur across jurisdictions.
Regional and remote areas	Geographic location is based on the ABS' Australian Statistical Geography Standard 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 (ARIA+) 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. The 'regional' classification used in the chapter is derived by adding data for inner regional and outer regional areas. The 'remote' classification is derived by adding data for remote, very remote and migratory areas.
Special needs group	An identifiable group within the general population who can have special difficulty accessing services. Special needs groups for which data are reported in this chapter include: children from NESB; Indigenous children; children from low income families (Australian Government child care only); children with disability; and children from regional or remote areas.

List of attachment tables

Attachment tables for data within this chapter are contained in the attachment to the Compendium. These tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by a '3A' prefix (for example, table 3A.1 is table 1 in the Early childhood education and care attachment). Attachment tables are on the Review website (www.pc.gov.au/gsp).

All jurisdiction data

Table 3A.1	Early Childhood Education and Care in Australia, as at 30 June 2013
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References

- COAG (Council of Australian Governments) 2009a, *Investing in the Early Years — A National Early Childhood Development Strategy. An initiative of the Council of Australian Governments*, 2 July 2009, www.coag.gov.au/coag_meeting_outcomes/2009-07-02/docs/national_ECD_strategy.pdf (accessed 7 October 2011).
- 2009b, *Communique 7 December 2009 Brisbane Meeting*, Canberra, www.coag.gov.au/coag_meeting_outcomes/2009-12-07/docs/20091207_communique.pdf (accessed 7 October 2011).

3A Early childhood education and care

— attachment

Tables in this attachment are sourced from the Early childhood education and care attachment of the 2014 Report. Table numbers refer to the 2014 Report, for example, a reference to ‘2014 Report, table 3A.15’ refers to attachment table 15 of attachment 3A of the 2014 Report.

Definitions for indicators and descriptors in this attachment are in the Early childhood education and care chapter of the Compendium.

Data in this Compendium are examined by the Early Childhood Education and Care Working Group, but have not been formally audited by the Secretariat. Unsourced information was obtained from the Australian, State and Territory governments.

This file is available in Adobe PDF format on the Review web page (www.pc.gov.au/gsp).

Attachment contents

All jurisdiction data

- Table 3A.1** Early Childhood Education and Care in Australia, as at 30 June 2013
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All jurisdiction data

TABLE 3A.1

Table 3A.1 **Early Childhood Education and Care in Australia, as at 30 June 2013 (a)**

	<i>Child care</i>	<i>Preschool</i>			<i>Transition to primary school</i> <i>Year prior to Year One</i>	
	<i>Agency (b)</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Age of entry</i>	<i>Agency (b)</i>	<i>School year</i>	<i>Age of entry</i>
NSW (c)	Department of Education and Communities	Preschool	generally 4 and 5 year olds	Department of Education and Communities	Kindergarten	5 by 31 July
Vic (d)	Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	Kindergarten	4 by 30 April	Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	Preparatory (Prep)	5 by 30 April
Qld (e)	Department of Education, Training and Employment	Kindergarten	4 by 30 June	Department of Education, Training and Employment	Preparatory Year (Prep)	5 by 30 June
WA	Department of Local Government and Communities	Kindergarten	4 by 30 June	Department of Education	Pre Primary	5 by 30 June
SA (f)	Department for Education and Child Development	Preschool Kindergarten	entry after 4th birthday	Department for Education and Child Development	Reception	entry after 5th birthday
Tas	Department of Education	Kindergarten	4 by 1 January	Department of Education	Preparatory	5 by 1 January
ACT (g)	Community Services Directorate and Education and Training Directorate	Preschool	4 by 30 April	Education and Training Directorate	Kindergarten	5 by 30 April
NT (h)	Department of Education	Preschool	4 by 30 June, or 3 for Indigenous children in remote areas	Department of Education	Transition	5 by 30 June

- (a) The Early childhood education and care chapter reports data for child care and preschool services only. Data on primary school are reported in the School education chapter (chapter 4), but relate to 2012. Information on the first year of primary school are included here to show the point at which children can transition from preschool to the first year of primary school in each jurisdiction.
- (b) The departmental responsibility of agencies varies between child care and preschool. Agency responsibility refers to licensing services for child care, and licensing, funding and/or providing services for preschool programs. State and Territory education departments are responsible for primary school.
- (c) In NSW, all licensed children's services for under 6 year olds (who have not commenced Kindergarten) are required to offer programs that meet children's educational and developmental needs.

TABLE 3A.1

Table 3A.1 Early Childhood Education and Care in Australia, as at 30 June 2013 (a)

- (d) In Victoria, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children known to child protection are eligible for free kindergarten through Early Start Kindergarten funding if they are aged 3 by 30 April of the year in which they are enrolled.
- (e) All licensed children's services in Queensland are required to provide an appropriate program that is designed to stimulate and develop each child's creative, emotional, intellectual, lingual, physical, recreational and social potential.
- (f) In SA, some children are entitled to enrol in preschool earlier. Indigenous children and children under the guardianship of the Minister can enter from 3 years, children with additional needs (which includes gifted children) and those living in small rural communities may commence at 3 ½ years. The compulsory school starting age in SA is 6 years at the oldest.
- (g) In the ACT, private preschools are monitored and assessed by the ACT Community Services Directorate.
- (h) In the NT children turning four after 30 June are eligible to enrol in a preschool program after their birthday, if places are available and with the understanding that the child will access more than 12 months of preschool. Indigenous children living in remote areas are eligible to enrol in preschool if they turn three on or prior to 30 June of the same year.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished).

TABLE 3A.12

Table 3A.12 **Representation of special needs groups attending Australian Government approved child care services (per cent), by age group, 2013 (a), (b), (c)**

	<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									
Children aged 0–5 in child care services	23.0	25.6	9.7	14.3	12.4	3.9	17.0	12.5	18.5
Children aged 0–5 in the community, 2011	25.0	24.8	14.1	18.9	16.7	8.1	20.8	38.7	21.2
Children aged 6–12 in child care services	17.6	23.2	7.8	11.2	7.3	2.5	14.4	7.1	14.8
Children aged 6–12 in the community, 2011	22.5	22.1	12.4	17.2	14.8	6.7	17.7	41.1	19.0
Indigenous children									
Children aged 0–5 in child care services	3.1	0.9	4.3	2.8	1.9	5.9	1.4	11.2	2.9
Children aged 0–5 in the community, 2012	4.8	1.3	6.9	5.9	3.7	7.6	2.6	40.8	5.0
Children aged 6–12 in child care services	2.1	0.6	3.3	2.1	1.7	5.2	1.3	13.0	2.1
Children aged 6–12 in the community, 2012	4.2	1.2	6.4	5.8	3.6	6.9	2.4	44.6	4.7
Children from low-income families									
Children aged 0–5 in child care services	25.7	25.7	28.8	22.1	24.1	30.0	8.2	14.9	25.6
Children aged 0–5 in the community, 2011-12	22.2	17.6	23.5	14.1	24.0	28.3	8.9	15.9	20.4
Children aged 6–12 in child care services	21.1	27.4	24.9	23.5	23.0	26.5	6.3	13.3	23.6
Children aged 6–12 in the community, 2011-12	22.9	23.1	19.6	13.5	19.9	25.6	6.6	28.5	20.9
Children with disability									
Children aged 0–5 in child care services	4.0	2.4	2.1	2.0	3.4	2.0	2.6	2.8	2.9
Children aged 0–5 in the community, 2009	4.6	2.8	4.0	5.2	3.4	4.7	3.7	np	4.0
Children aged 6–12 in child care services	3.4	2.8	2.8	2.5	5.5	3.4	3.3	8.2	3.3
Children aged 6–12 in the community, 2009	9.8	8.3	7.4	10.9	8.2	11.8	12.9	8.5	9.0
Children from regional areas									
Children aged 0–5 in child care services	23.4	20.7	30.9	15.7	17.2	99.1	0.1	78.4	25.2
Children aged 0–5 in the community, 2011	24.7	23.9	35.5	17.5	23.6	97.8	0.2	51.7	27.5
Children aged 6–12 in child care services	19.0	16.1	26.9	10.9	13.7	99.3	–	86.4	21.1
Children aged 6–12 in the community, 2011	27.2	26.0	37.1	19.0	25.6	98.0	0.2	50.7	29.5
Children from remote areas									
Children aged 0–5 in child care services	0.2	–	1.1	4.1	1.9	0.9	..	21.6	1.0
Children aged 0–5 in the community, 2011	0.6	0.1	3.8	7.9	4.0	2.1	..	48.0	2.7
Children aged 6–12 in child care services	0.1	–	0.8	2.0	0.8	0.7	..	13.6	0.6
Children aged 6–12 in the community, 2011	0.6	0.1	3.5	7.6	4.2	1.9	..	49.0	2.7

(a) Refer to table 3A.13 for complete footnotes.

(b) Excludes children aged 6–12 years attending occasional care services. The number of children aged 6–12 years using occasional care services were too small to be included here.

(c) Data in italics have relative standard errors greater than 25 per cent and need to be used with caution.

.. Not applicable. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: Department of Education (unpublished) *National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census, 2013 (preliminary data)*; administrative data collection, ABS (unpublished) *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia, 2011-12*, Cat. no. 6523.0, *2011 Census of Population and Housing, Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2009*, Cat. no. 4430.0 and *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1991 to 2021 (Series B)*, Cat. no. 3238.0, Canberra.

TABLE 3A.13

Table 3A.13 **Representation of special needs groups attending Australian Government approved child care services, children aged 0–12 (per cent) (a), (b), (c)**

	<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 (d), (e)									
Representation in child care services									
2004	17.4	13.5	6.3	7.9	6.9	3.4	12.1	8.1	11.6
2006	17.0	12.8	5.1	6.4	8.0	2.5	9.7	8.5	10.9
2008-09	18.0	17.2	7.3	9.7	9.3	4.2	10.3	11.5	13.2
2010	19.7	17.2	6.5	9.8	7.8	3.2	13.1	11.0	13.7
2013	21.3	24.8	9.0	13.4	10.4	3.5	16.0	10.6	17.3
Representation in the community, 2011 (e)	23.7	23.4	13.2	18.0	15.7	7.3	19.2	40.0	20.0
Indigenous children (f)									
Representation in child care services									
2012	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
2013	2.8	0.8	4.0	2.6	1.8	5.7	1.4	11.8	2.6
Representation in the community, 2012 (f)	4.5	1.3	6.7	5.8	3.7	7.2	2.5	42.8	4.8
Children from low-income families (g)									
Representation in child care services									
2004	28.0	28.3	33.8	32.6	33.0	31.5	12.4	18.8	29.9
2006	25.2	26.5	28.6	27.6	29.3	29.1	10.4	17.5	26.6
2008-09	24.4	23.7	24.7	22.7	24.6	24.8	9.6	16.2	23.9
2010	24.1	24.0	24.9	22.7	24.1	24.8	8.8	14.4	23.9
2013	24.4	26.2	27.5	22.5	23.6	28.9	7.6	14.4	25.0
Representation in the community, 2011-12 (g)	22.5	20.4	21.4	13.8	21.9	26.9	7.8	22.5	20.7
Children with disability (h)									
Representation in child care services									
2004	2.1	2.0	2.0	1.7	3.5	2.2	2.1	2.4	2.1
2006	3.1	2.4	2.2	2.5	3.8	2.3	1.8	3.7	2.7
2008-09	3.8	2.5	2.6	2.5	5.5	2.7	1.9	3.7	3.2
2010	3.3	2.2	1.9	2.2	3.6	2.0	1.9	2.7	2.6
2013	3.8	2.5	2.4	2.1	4.2	2.4	2.8	4.7	3.0
Representation in the community, 2009 (h)	7.4	5.7	5.8	8.2	5.9	8.4	8.3	5.4	6.6
Children from regional and remote areas (i)									
Regional									
Representation in child care services (j)									
2004	25.9	22.5	38.9	18.2	16.2	99.6	–	74.0	28.8
2006	25.6	25.0	36.6	18.9	17.9	99.4	0.1	77.3	29.0
2008-09	26.3	24.6	32.5	20.5	19.4	99.2	0.1	79.1	28.5
2010	26.0	23.6	32.4	20.6	18.7	100.4	1.1	79.9	28.0
2013	22.3	19.3	29.8	14.5	15.9	100.3	0.1	81.1	24.1
Representation in the community, 2011 (i)	26.0	25.0	36.4	18.3	24.7	97.9	0.2	51.2	28.6

TABLE 3A.13

Table 3A.13 **Representation of special needs groups attending Australian Government approved child care services, children aged 0–12 (per cent) (a), (b), (c)**

	<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>
Remote									
Representation in child care services									
2004	0.4	0.1	1.6	5.0	2.0	0.4	..	26.0	1.4
2006	0.3	–	1.3	3.7	2.0	0.6	..	22.7	1.1
2008-09	0.2	–	1.1	3.4	1.7	0.8	..	21.0	1.0
2010	0.2	–	1.2	3.3	1.8	0.6	..	20.2	0.9
2013	0.2	–	1.0	3.5	1.5	0.9	..	19.1	0.9
Representation in the community, 2011 (i)	0.6	0.1	3.6	7.7	4.1	2.0	..	48.5	2.7

- (a) Data in italics have relative standard errors above 25 per cent, and need to be used with caution.
- (b) Data for 2004 and 2006 are drawn from the respective AGCCCS, while data for 2008-09 are drawn from the AGCCPS and DEEWR administrative data. Data from 2008-09 are not comparable to previous years due to the change in the source for data collection.
- (c) Children attending approved services in 2004, 2006, 2010 and 2013 may be counted more than once if attending more than one service during the reference week. In 2008-09, children are counted once for each care type they used.
- (d) Excludes Aboriginal playgroups and enrichment programs and mobile and toy library services, as data from these service types were not available.
- (e) Children from non-English speaking backgrounds in child care services are children who speak, or whose parent/guardian speak a language other than English at home. Data on representation in child care services are from the *2013 National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census*. Data on representation in the community refer to the proportion of children who do not speak English as their main language at home as estimated from the *ABS 2011 Census of Population and Housing*.
- (f) Indigenous children in child care services are children who child care services identified as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin. Data on representation in child care services are from Australian Government administrative data for the March quarter. Due to a change in data source data cannot be compared to data in previous editions. The representation in the community data are from the *ABS Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians*, for 30 June 2012.
- (g) Children from low income families include those families in receipt of the maximum rate of Child Care Benefit (CCB). The maximum CCB rate was \$31 755 in 2003-04, \$33 361 in 2005-06, \$35 478 in 2007-08, \$36 573 in 2008-09, \$37 960 in 2009-10 and \$39 785 in 2011-12. Data on representation in child care services are from Australian Government administrative data for the March quarter. The data showing representation children from low income families in the community are drawn from *ABS Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia, 2011-12*.
- (h) Children with disability in child care services are children who child care services identify as having continuing disability including intellectual, sensory or physical impairment. Data on representation in child care services are from the *2013 National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census*. Data on representation in the community refer to children with any limitation, restriction or impairment, which has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months and restricts everyday activities. These data were obtained from *ABS Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia, 2009*.
- (i) Regional and remote areas are based upon the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) 2011. Regional areas include inner regional and outer regional areas. Remote areas include remote and very remote areas. Children can use care in multiple regions and states and territories, and may be counted in more than one region. Data on representation in child care services are from Australian Government administrative data for the March quarter. Data on representation in the community are estimated from the *ABS 2011 Census of Population and Housing*.

TABLE 3A.13

Table 3A.13 Representation of special needs groups attending Australian Government approved child care services, children aged 0–12 (per cent) (a), (b), (c)

	<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>
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(j) The proportion of children from regional areas in child care services can exceed 100 per cent. This may occur because although the number of children in child care services is a unique count for each state and territory, children can be counted in more than one remoteness area.

.. Not applicable. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: Department of Education (unpublished) *National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census, 2013 (preliminary data)*; administrative data collection, *Australian Government Census of Child Care Services 2006* and *Australian Government Child Care Provider Survey 2007-08*; FaCSIA (unpublished) *Australian Government Census of Child Care Services 2004*; ABS (unpublished) *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia, 2011-12*, Cat. no. 6523.0, *2011 Census of Population and Housing, Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2009*, Cat. no. 4430.0 and *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1991 to 2021 (Series B)*, Cat. no. 3238.0, Canberra.

TABLE 3A.14

Table 3A.14 **Representation of children from special needs groups in child care and preschool programs, 2012 (a), (b), (c), (d), (e)**

	<i>Unit</i>	<i>NSW (f)</i>	<i>Vic (g)</i>	<i>Qld (h)</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT (i)</i>	<i>NT (j)</i>	<i>Aust (k)</i>
Children from non-English speaking backgrounds										
Child care services										
Number of children aged 0–12 years	no.	15 045	na	68	na	240	6	na	na	15 359
Representation in child care services	%	12.8	na	5.0	na	8.4	1.5	na	na	12.6
Representation of children aged 0–12 years in the community, 2011	%	23.7	23.4	13.2	18.0	15.7	7.3	19.2	40.0	20.0
Preschool programs										
Number of children aged 3–5 years (l)	no.	8 564	10 229	3 211	na	2 260	183	1 010	na	25 457
Representation in preschool programs	%	12.2	14.1	8.2	na	12.4	2.8	22.6	na	10.2
Number of children in the YBFS	no.	6 226	10 229	2 843	na	na	na	955	na	20 253
Representation in preschool programs in the YBFS	%	11.7	14.2	8.0	na	na	na	22.8	na	9.0
Representation of children aged 3–5 years in the community, 2011	%	23.7	23.4	13.2	17.7	15.4	7.4	19.6	39.3	20.0
Children with disability										
Child care services										
Number of children aged 0–12 years	no.	5 621	na	139	na	20	9	na	na	5 789
Representation in child care services	%	4.8	na	10.3	na	0.7	2.3	na	na	4.7
Representation of children aged 0–12 years in the community, 2009	%	7.4	5.7	5.8	8.2	5.9	8.4	8.3	5.4	6.6
Preschool programs										
Number of children aged 3–5 years (l), (m)	no.	5 222	2 806	1 107	1 110	2 190	67	137	148	12 787
Representation in preschool programs	%	7.4	3.9	2.8	3.1	12.0	1.0	3.1	4.2	5.1
Number of children in the YBFS	no.	3 732	2 806	1 030	1 016	na	na	89	81	8 754
Representation in preschool programs in the YBFS	%	7.0	3.9	2.9	3.1	na	na	2.1	2.5	3.9

TABLE 3A.14

Table 3A.14 **Representation of children from special needs groups in child care and preschool programs, 2012 (a), (b), (c), (d), (e)**

	<i>Unit</i>	<i>NSW (f)</i>	<i>Vic (g)</i>	<i>Qld (h)</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT (i)</i>	<i>NT (j)</i>	<i>Aust (k)</i>
Representation of children aged 3–5 years in the community, 2009	%	7.3	3.9	7.3	6.8	5.5	7.2	7.3	np	6.3
Indigenous children										
Child care services										
Number of children aged 0–12 years	no.	5 913	na	63	na	130	4	na	na	6 110
Representation in child care services	%	5.0	na	4.7	na	4.5	1.0	na	na	5.0
Representation of children aged 0–12 years in the community, 2012	%	4.5	1.3	6.7	5.8	3.7	7.2	2.5	42.8	4.8
Preschool programs										
Number of children aged 3–5 years	no.	4 807	969	2 567	2 274	1 465	521	185	1 428	14 216
Representation in preschool programs	%	4.5	1.2	4.4	6.8	6.1	7.5	3.1	38.4	4.4
Number of children in the YBFS	no.	2 898	883	2 236	2 066	857	512	136	1 165	10 753
Representation in preschool programs in the YBFS	%	4.6	1.2	4.2	6.4	4.5	7.7	2.7	36.2	4.2
Representation of children aged 3–5 years in the community, 2012	%	4.6	1.2	6.7	5.7	3.6	7.0	2.5	40.9	4.8
Children from regional areas										
Child care services										
Number of children aged 0–12 years	no.	28 556	na	733	na	920	389	na	na	30 598
Representation in child care services	%	24.3	na	54.1	na	32.2	100.0	na	na	25.0
Representation of children aged 0–12 years in the community, 2011	%	26.0	25.0	36.4	18.3	24.7	97.9	0.2	51.2	28.6
Preschool programs										
Number of children aged 3–5 years	no.	33 485	18 815	19 450	5 921	5 828	6 800	189	1 925	92 413
Representation in preschool programs	%	31.3	23.3	33.4	17.7	24.3	98.0	3.2	51.7	28.9
Number of children in the YBFS	no.	19 743	np	17 646	7 473	4 698	6 527	148	1 760	57 995

TABLE 3A.14

Table 3A.14 **Representation of children from special needs groups in child care and preschool programs, 2012 (a), (b), (c), (d), (e)**

	Unit	NSW (f)	Vic (g)	Qld (h)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT (i)	NT (j)	Aust (k)
Representation in preschool programs in the YBFS	%	31.5	np	33.4	23.3	24.9	98.2	3.0	54.6	22.7
Representation of children aged 3–5 years in the community, 2011	%	25.5	24.6	36.0	18.0	24.4	97.8	0.2	51.4	28.1
Children from remote areas										
Child care services										
Number of children aged 0–12 years	no.	1 055	na	206	na	320	na	na	na	1 581
Representation in child care services	%	0.9	na	15.2	na	11.2	na	..	na	1.3
Representation of children aged 0–12 years in the community, 2011	%	0.6	0.1	3.6	7.7	4.1	2.0	..	48.5	2.7
Preschool programs										
Number of children aged 3–5 years	no.	795	48	2 006	2 548	956	138	..	1 795	8 286
Representation in preschool programs	%	0.7	0.1	3.4	7.6	4.0	2.0	..	48.3	2.6
Number of children in the YBFS	no.	455	np	1 744	2 439	740	119	..	1 462	6 959
Representation in preschool programs in the YBFS	%	0.7	np	3.3	7.6	3.9	1.8	..	45.4	2.7
Representation of children aged 3–5 years in the community, 2011	%	0.6	0.1	3.8	7.9	3.9	2.0	..	48.2	2.8

YBFS = year before full time schooling.

(a) Preschool data for children from non-English speaking backgrounds and children with disability are from State and Territory governments. Preschool data for Indigenous children and children from regional and remote areas are from the National ECEC Collection published by ABS in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012*. Due to the different data sources for preschool data for special needs groups, caution should be used when making comparisons across special needs groups. All child care data are from State and Territory governments and represent children from special needs groups in State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care.

TABLE 3A.14

Table 3A.14 **Representation of children from special needs groups in child care and preschool programs, 2012 (a), (b), (c), (d), (e)**

	<i>Unit</i>	<i>NSW (f)</i>	<i>Vic (g)</i>	<i>Qld (h)</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT (i)</i>	<i>NT (j)</i>	<i>Aust (k)</i>
(b)	Data for children from non-English speaking backgrounds and children with disability in a preschool program include only State and Territory government funded or provided preschool services. Data on preschool programs for Indigenous children and children from regional and remote areas include preschool programs as defined by the scope of the National ECEC Collection. This means preschool programs are included irrespective of the type of institution that provides it or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Regional and remote areas are based upon the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) 2011.									
(c)	Data on children enrolled in preschool programs represent 2012. All child care data represent 2012-13.									
(d)	Children in preschool programs includes children aged 3–5 years on 1 July 2012. However, some 3 year old children may not be included in the National ECEC Collection and therefore data may represent an under count. Children in preschool in the YBFS include children aged 4 and 5 years on 1 July 2012, but exclude children aged 5 years old who were enrolled in preschool in the previous year as a 4 year old. Children in child care include children aged 0–12 years.									
(e)	Data for representation in the community are estimated from the ABS <i>2011 Census of Population and Housing</i> , except for children with disability and Indigenous children. Data for the representation of children with disability in the community were obtained from ABS <i>Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia, 2009</i> , while Indigenous data are from the ABS <i>Experimental Estimates and Projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population, 1991-2021</i> . Due to the various data sources used in different years caution should be used when making comparisons.									
(f)	Data for children in child care from a non-English speaking background and children with disability were not collected for 2012-13. The data have been estimated based on the drop in funded child care services between 2011-12 and 2012-13. The number of State/Territory funded child care services has fallen slightly due to the closed nature of the funding program since 2010-11. Not all children undertaking a preschool program in a long day care setting in NSW are captured in the relevant data collections, resulting in an undercount for NSW.									
(g)	Victorian data for children from NESB and with disability in preschool programs only include the 3 year old children who have been approved to attend funded 4 year old kindergarten programs, and so do not include children in programs for 3 year olds. Victorian data for children from NESB and with disability are reported as at 30 June 2012.									
(h)	Episode, rather than child level data were used for Queensland Indigenous children and children from regional and remote areas. These data are included in the national total.									
(i)	Indigenous children and children from regional and remote area preschool totals for the ACT exclude data for preschools within independent schools, which were unavailable for 2012.									
(j)	Preschool data for children from non-English speaking backgrounds and children with disability in the NT include some children aged greater than 5 years.									
(k)	Data for Australia for children from non-English speaking backgrounds and children with disability, in preschool, are the total of the sum of the states and territories for which data are available, and should not be interpreted as national data.									
(l)	Data exclude innovative or flexible services that receive direct funding from the Australian Government and are targeted towards children from these groups. Data for Tasmania only include children enrolled in preschool in non-government school settings.									

TABLE 3A.14

Table 3A.14 **Representation of children from special needs groups in child care and preschool programs, 2012 (a), (b), (c), (d), (e)**

	<i>Unit</i>	<i>NSW (f)</i>	<i>Vic (g)</i>	<i>Qld (h)</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT (i)</i>	<i>NT (j)</i>	<i>Aust (k)</i>
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(m) Data on children with a disability are not directly comparable because the definition of disability varies across jurisdictions.

na Not available. .. Not applicable. **np** Not published.

Source: ABS (unpublished) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012*, Cat. no. 4240.0; *2011 Census of Population and Housing; Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2009*, Cat. no. 4430.0, and *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1991 to 2021 (Series B)*, Cat. no. 3238.0, Canberra; State and Territory governments (unpublished).

TABLE 3A.18

Table 3A.18 **Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling, by remoteness area, national only, 2012 (a), (b), (c)**

	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Major cities</i>	<i>Inner/outer regional areas</i>	<i>Remote/very remote areas</i>
Number of Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years as at 1 July 2012, who are enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS	no.	3 146	4 953	2 666
Projected number of Indigenous children aged 4 years (d)	no.	4 501	6 246	3 016
Proportion of Indigenous children who are enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS	%	69.9	79.3	88.4

YBFS = year before full time schooling.

- (a) Year before full time schooling data include children aged 4 or 5 years on 1 July, except children aged 5 years old who were enrolled in preschool in the previous year as a 4 year old.
- (b) Currently, not all records in the National ECEC Collection are produced at the unique child level. This means that there is a risk of duplicate counts across services and sectors for these records. It is also possible for a child to be enrolled in preschool for more than 1 year, meaning that duplication may also occur across time.
- (c) Remoteness area is based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Australian Statistical Geography Classification (ASGC) 2006. Where a child's geography was unavailable the geography of the service provider was used to determine remoteness area.
- (d) ABS Indigenous ERP by age and remoteness area is based on (unpublished) *2006 Census of Population and Housing* projections.

Source: ABS (unpublished) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (Cat. no. 4240.0); *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1991 to 2021* (Cat. no. 3238.0).

TABLE 3A.19

Table 3A.19 Indigenous children enrolled in a preschool program, 2012 (a)

	<i>Unit</i>	<i>NSW (b)</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld (c)</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT (d)</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust (e)</i>
Number of Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program, by sector										
Government preschool	no.	590	145	501	1 779	669	421	88	1 134	5 327
Non-government preschool	no.	1 724	532	821	271	12	77	–	82	3 519
Total preschool (f)	no.	2 379	676	1 322	2 050	693	502	119	1 227	8 968
Long day care with a preschool program (g)	no.	835	268	914	28	175	13	24	12	2 269
Total	no.	3 214	944	2 236	2 078	868	515	143	1 239	11 237
Number of Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program, by remoteness area (h)										
Major cities of Australia	no.	1 068	354	548	728	419	..	129	..	3 246
Inner/outer regional Australia	no.	1 908	567	1 009	575	310	499	14	318	5 200
Remote/very remote Australia	no.	238	–	679	775	139	16	..	921	2 768
Total (i)	no.	3 214	944	2 236	2 078	868	515	143	1 239	11 237
Number of Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling, by remoteness area (h), (j)										
Major cities of Australia	no.	975	354	548	728	416	..	125	..	3 146
Inner/outer regional Australia	no.	1 703	539	1 009	574	310	496	11	311	4 953
Remote/very remote Australia	no.	220	–	679	765	132	16	..	854	2 666
Total (k)	no.	2 898	883	2 236	2 066	857	512	136	1 165	10 753

(a) Data include Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years on 1 July 2012.

(b) Not all children undertaking a preschool program in a long day care setting in NSW are captured in the collection, resulting in an undercount for NSW.

(c) Child level enrolment data for Queensland are not available. Episode of enrolment data were used instead for Queensland. Only one episode of enrolment count is available so data are the same for both all 4 and 5 year old children and children in the year before full time schooling, by remoteness area. An episode is a record of enrolment at a preschool program. Children may be enrolled in more than one preschool program so will be counted more than once in episode counts where they are enrolled in more than one preschool program. These data are included in the national total.

(d) Totals for the ACT exclude data for preschools within independent schools, which were unavailable in 2012.

(e) Data for Australia are the total of the sum of the states and territories for which data are available.

(f) Total preschool may not equal the sum of the components due to the inclusion of multiple preschools (except for Queensland) and use of next best available (episode level) data where cells are not published by ABS (affects government preschool for Victoria and non-government preschool for WA and Tasmania).

(g) Includes long day care with a preschool and long day care with a preschool program and preschool.

Table 3A.19 **Indigenous children enrolled in a preschool program, 2012 (a)**

	<i>Unit</i>	<i>NSW (b)</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld (c)</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT (d)</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust (e)</i>
(h)	Remoteness area is based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Australian Statistical Geography Classification (ASGC) 2006. Where a child's geography was unavailable the geography of the service provider was used to determine remoteness area.									
(i)	Total data will not equal the sum of components for Victoria and Australia because some cells have used the next best available (year before full time schooling level) data where they were not published by ABS.									
(j)	Year before full time schooling data include children aged 4 or 5 years on 1 July, except children aged 5 years old who were enrolled in preschool in the previous year as a 4 year old.									
(k)	Total data will not equal the sum of components for Victoria, WA, SA and Australia because some cells have used unpublished or next best available (child or episode level) where data were not published by ABS.									
	.. Not applicable. – Nil or rounded to zero.									

Source: ABS (unpublished) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012*, Cat. no. 4240.0, Canberra.

TABLE 3A.25

Table 3A.25 **Children absent from non-government preschools, 2012 (a), (b), (c)**

	<i>Unit</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>
Number of children enrolled										
Indigenous children	no.	3 349	1 174	946	256	271	82	20	123	6 221
Non-Indigenous children (d)	no.	52 426	83 573	18 495	8 765	3 808	1 544	690	155	169 456
All children	no.	55 775	84 747	19 441	9 021	4 079	1 626	710	278	175 677
Number of children absent										
Indigenous children	no.	878	367	299	110	102	14	10	74	1 854
Non-Indigenous children (d)	no.	7 569	15 377	3 008	1 627	732	287	87	57	28 744
All children	no.	8 447	15 744	3 307	1 737	834	301	97	131	30 598
Proportion of children absent										
Indigenous children	%	26.2	31.3	31.6	43.0	37.6	17.1	50.0	60.2	29.8
Non-Indigenous children (d)	%	14.4	18.4	16.3	18.6	19.2	18.6	12.6	36.8	17.0
All children	%	15.1	18.6	17.0	19.3	20.4	18.5	13.7	47.1	17.4
Non-government preschools										
Number of non-government preschools	no.	864	1 706	417	242	72	54	14	10	3 379
Proportion of all preschools (e)	%	89.7	100.0	94.1	27.5	16.4	25.2	14.7	7.4	69.3

(a) Data on attendance are limited to non-government preschools, and exclude government preschools.

(b) Attendance measured during the census week of 30 July to 3 August 2012. Children are counted as absent if they miss one or more of the sessions that they were enrolled in during this week. Absences due to illness may be higher during winter than at other times of the year.

(c) Preschool attendance is not compulsory.

(d) Data for non-Indigenous children are derived from data on Indigenous children and all children.

(e) Non-government preschools as a proportion of all preschools (which includes government and non-government preschools) approached in the National Preschool Census. Preschool attendance data for jurisdictions with a small proportion of non-government preschools should be interpreted with care.

Source: Department of Education (unpublished) *National Preschool Census 2012*.

TABLE 3A.26

Table 3A.26 **Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling, by remoteness area, national only, 2012 (a), (b), (c)**

	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Major cities</i>	<i>Inner/outer regional areas</i>	<i>Remote/very remote areas</i>
Number of Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years as at 1 July 2012, who are attending a preschool program in the YBFS	no.	3 031	4 643	2 337
Projected number of Indigenous children aged 4 years (d)	no.	4 501	6 246	3 016
Proportion of Indigenous children who are attending a preschool program in the YBFS	%	67.3	74.3	77.5

YBFS = year before full time schooling.

- (a) Year before full time schooling data include children aged 4 or 5 years on 1 July, except children aged 5 years old who attended preschool in the previous year as a 4 year old.
- (b) Currently, not all records in the National ECEC Collection are produced at the unique child level. This means that there is a risk of duplicate counts across services and sectors for these records. It is also possible for a child to be attending preschool for more than 1 year, meaning that duplication may also occur across time.
- (c) Remoteness area is based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Australian Statistical Geography Classification (ASGC) 2006. Where a child's geography was unavailable the geography of the service provider was used to determine remoteness area.
- (d) ABS Indigenous ERP by age and remoteness area is based on (unpublished) *2006 Census of Population and Housing* projections.

Source: ABS (unpublished) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (Cat. no. 4240.0); *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1991 to 2021* (Cat. no. 3238.0).

TABLE 3A.27

Table 3A.27 Indigenous children attending a preschool program, 2012 (a)

	Unit	NSW (b)	Vic	Qld (c)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT (d)	NT	Aust (e)
Number of Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years attending a preschool program, by sector										
Government preschool	no.	np	np	434	1 779	642	412	84	890	4 241
Non-government preschool	no.	1 621	467	772	np	12	np	–	76	2 948
Total preschool (f)	no.	2 217	599	1 206	2 050	666	np	115	972	7 825
Long day care with a preschool program	no.	816	253	828	28	169	np	24	12	2 130
Total (g)	no.	3 033	852	2 034	2 078	835	505	139	984	10 460
Number of Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years attending a preschool program, by remoteness area (h)										
Major cities of Australia	no.	1 020	353	512	728	409	..	125	..	3 147
Inner/outer regional Australia	no.	1 799	499	934	575	294	486	14	288	4 889
Remote/very remote Australia	no.	214	–	588	775	132	16	..	696	2 421
Total (g)	no.	3 033	852	2 034	2 078	835	505	139	984	10 460
Number of Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling, by remoteness area (h), (i)										
Major cities of Australia	no.	930	335	512	727	406	..	121	..	3 031
Inner/outer regional Australia	no.	1 602	461	934	574	294	486	11	281	4 643
Remote/very remote Australia	no.	198	–	588	765	126	16	..	644	2 337
Total (j)	no.	2 730	796	2 034	2 066	825	502	132	925	10 010

(a) Data include Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years on 1 July 2012.

(b) Not all children undertaking a preschool program in a long day care setting in NSW are captured in the collection, resulting in an undercount for NSW.

(c) Child level attendance data for Queensland are not available and episode of attendance data were used instead. Only one episode of attendance count is available by remoteness area so data for all 4 and 5 year old children and children in the year before full time schooling will be identical. An episode is a record of attendance at a preschool program. Children may attend more than one preschool program so will be counted more than once in episode counts where they attend more than one preschool program. These data are included in the national total.

(d) Totals for the ACT exclude data for preschools within independent schools, which was unavailable in 2012.

(e) Data for Australia are the total of the sum of the states and territories for which data are available.

(f) Total preschool includes multiple preschools. Not applicable for episode data used for Queensland.

(g) Total data will not equal the sum of the components where there are np's. Total data will not equal the sum of components by remoteness area for Tasmania and Australia because some inner/outer regional Australia and remote/very remote Australia cells have used the next best available (year before full time schooling level) data where they were not published by ABS.

Table 3A.27 **Indigenous children attending a preschool program, 2012 (a)**

	<i>Unit</i>	<i>NSW (b)</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld (c)</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT (d)</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust (e)</i>
(h)	Remoteness area is based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Australian Statistical Geography Classification (ASGC) 2006. Where a child's geography was unavailable the geography of the service provider was used to determine remoteness area.									
(i)	Year before full time schooling data include children aged 4 or 5 years on 1 July, except children aged 5 years old who attended preschool in the previous year as a 4 year old.									
(j)	Total data may not equal the sum of components for SA, Tasmania and Australia due to unpublished data being used for inner/outer regional Australia and remote/very remote Australia.									
	.. Not applicable. – Nil or rounded to zero. np Not published.									

Source: ABS (unpublished) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012*, Cat. no. 4240.0, Canberra.