
14 Children's services

Children's services aim to meet the care, education and developmental needs of children, although the emphasis on these broad objectives may differ across the services. Child care refers to care and supervision of children aged 12 years and younger, by someone other than the child's parents or guardian. Preschool services are provided to children mainly in the year or two before those children commence full time schooling.

This chapter presents performance and descriptive information for government funded and/or delivered child care and preschool services. Unless otherwise stated, the data presented in this chapter relate to services that are provided for children aged 12 years and younger and supported by the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments. Local governments also plan, fund and deliver children's services; however, given data limitations, this chapter records data on local government activities only where Commonwealth, State and Territory 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, and a framework of performance indicators is outlined in section 14.2. The data 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.

Supporting tables

Supporting tables for this chapter are provided on the CD-ROM enclosed with the Report. The files are provided in Microsoft Excel 97 format at `\Publications\Reports\2002\Attach14A.xls` or in Adobe PDF format at `\Publications\Reports\2002\Attach14A.pdf`.

Supporting tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an 'A' suffix (for example, table 14A.3 is table 3 in the electronic files). They may be

subject to revision. The most up-to-date versions of these files can be found on the Review's web page (www.pc.gov.au/service/gsp/). Users without Internet access can contact the Secretariat to obtain up-to-date versions of these tables (see details on the inside front cover of the Report).

14.1 Profile of children's services

Service overview

Children's services include:

- *centre based long day care* — services aimed primarily at 0–5 year olds provided in a centre usually by a mix of qualified and other staff. Educational and recreational programs are provided based on the developmental needs, interests and experience of each child. 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* — services provided in the carer's own 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;¹
- *occasional care* — services usually provided at a centre on an hourly or sessional basis for short periods of time or at irregular intervals specifically 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 qualified staff;
- *preschool* — services usually provided by a qualified teacher on a sessional basis in dedicated preschools. Preschool programs or curriculum 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 except WA where children are 5 years old), although in NSW, Queensland, WA, SA and the ACT younger children may also attend;

¹ All carers providing care in the carer's own home in WA are licensed and supported by the Department for Community Development but those who are not supported by coordination units are not represented in the figures in this chapter. New South Wales licenses home based carers who are not part of a family day care scheme and for whom data are not included in this chapter.

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- *outside school hours care* — 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; and
 - *other services* — government funded services to support children with additional needs or in particular situations (including children from an Indigenous background, children from non-English speaking backgrounds, children with a disability or of parents with a disability, and children living in remote and rural areas).

Roles and responsibilities

The Commonwealth, State and Territory governments have different but complementary roles in supporting children's services. Both levels of government provide funding for services, information and advice to parents and service providers, and help plan, set and maintain operating standards.

The Commonwealth Government's roles and responsibilities for child care include:

- assisting families to participate in the social and economic life of the community through the provision of child care services and payments;
- developing a quality assurance system for outside school hours care;
- planning the location of services in conjunction with other levels of government;
- providing information and advice to parents and providers about the availability of Commonwealth funded and some State and Territory funded services;
- helping to enhance the quality of child care by funding the National Childcare Accreditation Council to administer the Quality Improvement and Accreditation System for long day care centres and Family Day Care Quality Assurance for family day care schemes. These quality systems are mandatory for services eligible for government funding;
- providing information, support and training to service providers through funding to organisations; and
- 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;

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- 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 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; and
 - providing dispute resolution and complaints management processes.

The major differences in the roles of the different levels of government relate to the objectives of each for children's services. The primary focus of the Commonwealth Government is support for families through funding of children's services. The Commonwealth Government aims to provide this support through payments such as the Child Care Benefit. (The Child Care Benefit, which replaced Child Care Assistance and the Child Care Rebate from 1 July 2000, is payable to families using approved services or registered informal carers.)

State and Territory governments place a greater emphasis on providing educational and developmental opportunities for children, and on other forms of family support and service delivery, such as preschool services.

Quality of care

Both levels of government are active in maintaining the quality of care provided by children's services. The mechanisms used to maintain quality are accreditation, licensing, and performance standards and outcomes linked to funding. These are in addition to the provision of curriculum and policy support and advice, and the training and development of management and staff.

Licensing

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

State and Territory governments are responsible for licensing children's services in their jurisdiction. This responsibility involves setting regulatory requirements and monitoring adherence to these standards. State and Territory governments also undertake a range of activities aimed at quality promotion — for example, publishing curriculum materials and other resources, and undertaking consumer education. The types of service covered by legislation vary across States and Territories, as do the standards that apply.

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

Accreditation

In 1994, the Commonwealth Government introduced the Quality Improvement and Accreditation System to improve the quality of Commonwealth funded centre based long day care services. Centre based long day care centres are required to participate in the system to remain as eligible centres for Child Care Benefit purposes (and previously for Child Care Assistance). From 1 July 2001, a quality assurance scheme for family day care was introduced by the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth Government is also developing quality assurance mechanisms for outside school hours care. In addition, SA and Victoria have implemented quality assurance or improvement systems for preschools, while some other jurisdictions are developing such systems.

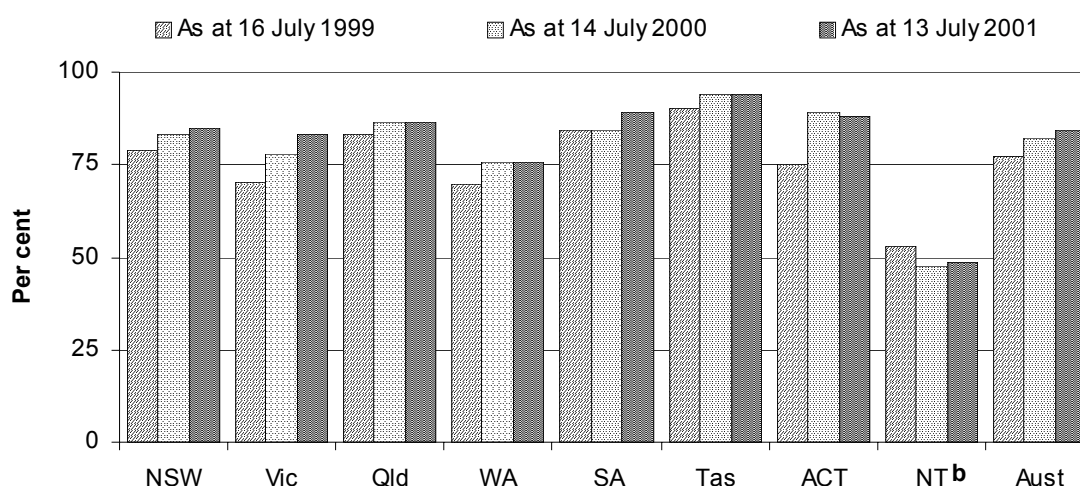
There were 4065 centres participating in the accreditation process in July 2001, holding a current accreditation decision (3751 centres), in self study, review or moderation, or awaiting an accreditation decision (152 centres) or unaccredited (162 centres) (table 14A.2). These represent all centre based long day care services receiving Child Care Benefit and the majority of all centre based long day care services operating in Australia.

Nationally, 80.7 per cent of centres with a current accreditation decision were accredited with three years between reviews as at 13 July 2001. Across jurisdictions, this proportion varied from 93.9 per cent in Tasmania to 46.5 per cent in the NT, and had increased over time in all jurisdictions (except the ACT, which had a small decrease) participating in the process (figure 14.1).

Nationally, a further 4.2 per cent of centres with current accreditation decisions were accredited with two years between reviews, 11.0 per cent were accredited with one year between reviews and 4.1 per cent were unaccredited (table 14A.2). Unaccredited centres must work towards gaining accreditation to retain their eligibility for the Child Care Benefit. The Commonwealth Government funds resource and advisory services across the country to assist centres participating in quality assurance systems.

Changes to the Quality Improvement and Accreditation System are planned for implementation in early 2002. The most significant change to the system will be the phasing out of one-, two- and three-years accreditation and the introduction of a standard period of two and a half years between reviews.

Figure 14.1 Proportion of centres with a current accreditation decision that were accredited with three years between reviews^a



^a Figures may change daily and are updated every six weeks following a Council meeting. ^b Results may be influenced by the relatively small number of services (43 as at 13 July 2001) participating in the process.

Source: table 14A.2.

Funding performance standards and outcomes

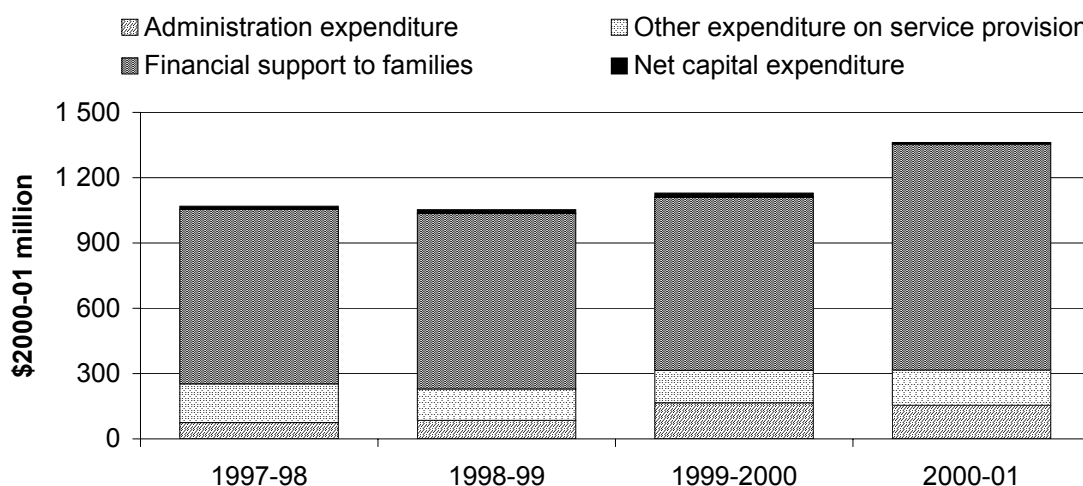
State and Territory governments impose varying requirements for funding children's services. These may include the requirements for the employment of higher qualified staff than required by licensing or minimum standards, self assessment of quality and a demonstration of the delivery of quality educational and recreational programs.

Funding

Commonwealth, State and Territory government expenditure on children's services amounted to approximately \$2.0 billion in 2000-01 (compared with \$1.7 billion in real terms in 1999-2000) (table 14A.4).

Commonwealth Government expenditure in 2000-01 accounted for approximately \$1.4 billion. The major component of this expenditure was financial support to families through assistance with fees, which accounted for 76.3 per cent (\$1039 million). Administration expenditure for national, State and Territory offices accounted for a further 11.3 per cent (\$154 million). Other expenditure on service provision and net capital expenditure accounted for the remaining 11.9 per cent (\$162 million) and 0.5 per cent (\$7 million) respectively (figure 14.2).

Figure 14.2 **Commonwealth Government real expenditure on children's services**



Source: table 14A.4.

State and Territory government expenditure accounted for approximately \$0.6 billion of total government expenditure on children's services in 2000-01. Recurrent expenditure on service provision comprised around 48.5 per cent (\$230.6 million) of State and Territory government expenditure. Administration, financial support to families and net capital expenditure accounted for 38.6 per cent (\$180.7 million), 7.9 per cent (\$36.8 million) and 4.2 per cent (\$19.8 million) respectively (table 14A.4). Expenditure on the provision of preschool services accounted for the largest proportion (around 81.6 per cent, or \$485.0 million, for those jurisdictions for which data are available) of total State and Territory government expenditure across all children's service types (tables 14A.18, 14A.27, 14A.36, 14A.45, 14A.54, 14A.63, 14A.72 and 14A.81).

The Commonwealth Government provides a small amount of funding to Queensland and WA directly for the preschool year (for more information, see AIHW 1997). The Commonwealth also provides supplementary funding for the preschool education of children from Indigenous backgrounds.

Size and scope

Child care services

The Commonwealth Government supported 457 800 child care places in 2000-01 providing care for 13.4 per cent of children aged 12 years and younger (tables 14A.1 and 14A.7). The majority of Commonwealth child care places were outside school hours care places (42.1 per cent), followed by centre based long day care places (41.8 per cent), family day care places (14.7 per cent), occasional care places (1.0 per cent) and other care places (0.4 per cent) (table 14A.7). Data on child care places provided by State and Territory governments were not collected for 2000-01, but State and Territory governments supported at least 194 000 preschool places in that year (tables 14A.28, 14A.37, 14A.46, 14A.55, 14A.64 and 14A.73).

Approximately 643 000 children (19 per cent of children aged 12 years and younger) had access to Commonwealth, State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care in 2000-01 (tables 14A.1, 14A.9, 14A.20, 14A.29, 14A.56, 14A.65, 14A.74 and 14A.83). Of these children, at least 428 000 were aged 5 years and younger. Changes to approaches to data collection and the exclusion of certain services funded by some jurisdictions reduce the comparability of these figures across jurisdictions (table 14.1).

Table 14.1 Proportion of children in the population attending Commonwealth, State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care, 2000-01 (per cent)

Age	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA ^a	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
0-5 years	39.6	19.4	28.4	17.1	19.7	25.6	29.7	16.3	28.1
0-12 years	24.8	14.3	19.7	11.5	15.9	17.1	21.4	11.9	18.9

^a Figures do not include attendance in family day care which is regulated and supported by the State but is not attached to Commonwealth funded schemes.

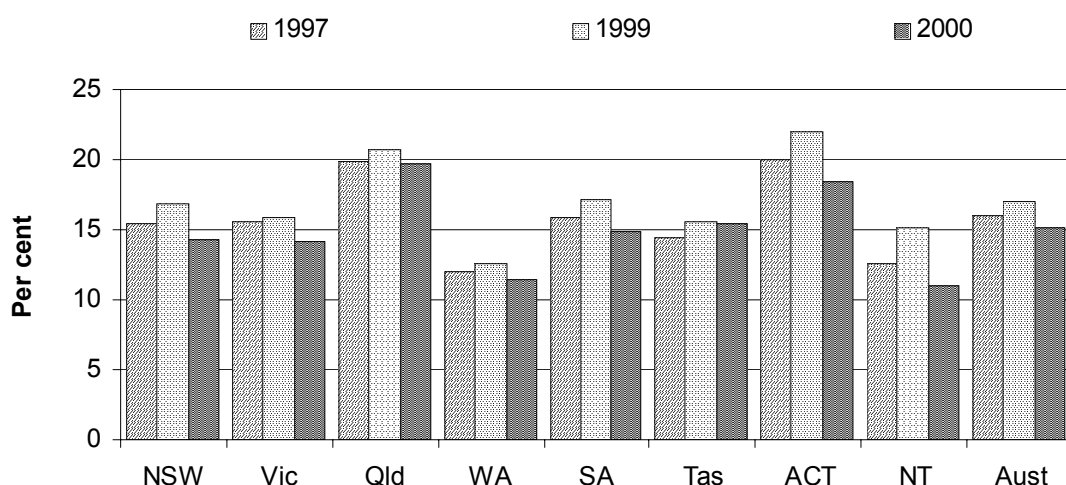
Sources: tables 14A.1, 14A.9, 14A.20, 14A.29, 14A.38, 14A.47, 14A.56, 14A.65, 14A.74 and 14A.83.

Approximately 514 700 Child Care Benefit eligible children aged 12 years and younger (15.1 per cent of all children in this age group) attended Commonwealth Government approved child care in August 2000. Across jurisdictions, the

proportion ranged from 19.7 per cent in Queensland to 10.9 per cent in the NT (figure 14.3). The majority (327 639 or 63.7 per cent) of those children were aged 5 years and younger. Thus, in August 2000, 21.5 per cent of children aged 5 years and younger attended Commonwealth funded and/or provided child care services (table 14A.9).

The average hours of attendance for Child Care Benefit eligible children in Child Care Benefit eligible services in August 2000 varied considerably across jurisdictions, for all service types. In that year, the average attendance per child at centre based long day care centres ranged from 32.8 hours per week in the NT to 16.3 hours per week in Tasmania, while the average attendance per child at occasional care services ranged from 10.4 hours per week in WA to 6.2 hours per week in the NT. The average attendance per child at vacation care ranged from 41.1 hours per week in the NT to 24.5 hours per week in Tasmania (table 14A.8).

Figure 14.3 **Proportion of children aged 0–12 years using Commonwealth approved child care services^{a, b, c, d}**



^a Children are defined as persons aged 12 years and younger. ^b Excludes children cared for in neighbourhood model services. ^c Includes children in other Territories. ^d Note that data for 1997 and 1999 are drawn from the Commonwealth Census of Child Care Services, while data for 2000 are drawn from Centrelink Administrative data. These data are not fully comparable over time and such comparisons need to be treated with care.

Source: table 14A.9.

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 aged 3 years or under (aged 4 years or under in WA). The age from which children may attend

preschools varies across jurisdictions. Children in Victoria, Tasmania, the ACT and the NT are usually funded by government to attend preschool in the year before they commence schooling. Younger children in NSW, Queensland, WA, SA and the ACT may also access government funded preschool services.

Younger Indigenous children living in remote areas also may attend preschools in the NT and Queensland. In SA, a pre-entry program provides one session of preschool per 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, 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 has reduced 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); and
- younger children attending preschool services.

At least 252 964 children attended State and Territory funded and/or provided preschool services in 2000-01. The majority (85.6 per cent, or 216 646 children) were to begin full time schooling the following year.

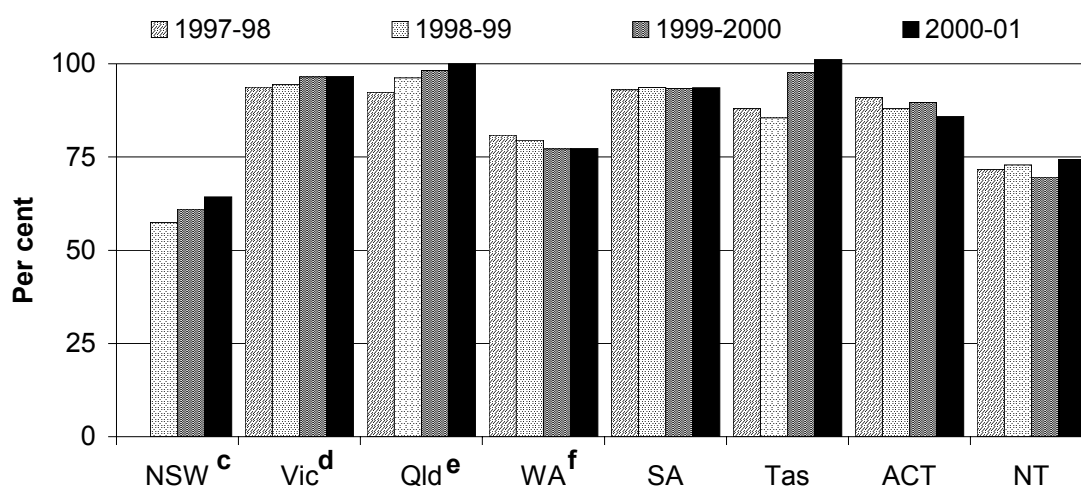
Some jurisdictions differ in their age criterion for access to preschool services; as a result, the following data need to be interpreted with caution. Approximately 83.7 per cent of children of 4 years of age (5 years of age in WA) in 2000-01 attended preschool in the year immediately before they commenced school. Across the jurisdictions for which 2000-01 data were available, this proportion ranged from about 100 per cent in Queensland and Tasmania to 64.3 per cent in NSW. There is some double counting of children in the figures, as evidenced by the results in Queensland and Tasmania (figure 14.4).

Younger children in NSW, Queensland, WA, SA and the ACT were able to attend funded preschool services in 2000-01. Approximately 36 318 younger children attended preschool services in that year, or around 23.2 per cent of children of 3 years of age (4 years of age in WA). The participation rate differed across jurisdictions, reflecting variation in policies on access to funded preschool services. The proportion of children of 3 years of age attending preschool services was 13.6 per cent in NSW, 21.9 per cent in Queensland, 25.5 per cent in SA (where

younger children may attend a pre-entry program for one term in the year before preschool) and 3.8 per cent in the ACT. The proportion of children of 4 years of age attending preschool services in WA was 35.6 per cent (tables 14A.1, 14A.20, 14A.29, 14A.38, 14A.47, 14A.56, 14A.65, 14A.74 and 14A.83).

All jurisdictions except NSW and Victoria supplied data on the average hours of attendance for government funded and/or provided preschool services in 2000-01. The average attendance of children in the year immediately before they commenced full time schooling ranged from 23.6 hours per week in WA to 10.4 hours per week in Tasmania (tables 14A.19, 14A.28, 14A.37, 14A.46, 14A.55, 14A.64, 14A.73 and 14A.82).

Figure 14.4 Proportion of children in the population who attended State and Territory government funded and/or provided preschool services immediately before the commencement of full time schooling^{a, b}



^a The denominator — the population of preschool aged children — is defined as persons aged 4 years in all States and Territories except WA, where preschool aged children are defined as persons aged 5 years. The data are sourced from the ABS. ^b Data for 1997-98 were for the calendar year ending 1997; data for 1998-99 were for the calendar year ending 1998. There is some double counting of children in all jurisdictions except SA and the ACT because they moved in and out of the preschool system throughout the year; as a result, the number of children in preschool exceeds the number of children in the target population. There is no double counting for SA and the ACT because a snapshot is used for each year's data collection (so children appear in only one preschool centre in one year at the time of the snapshot). ^c Data have 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 of child care and preschool. This includes estimates based on the rate of survey return for each year. NSW data are not comparable with data for other States and Territories. Data for 1997-98 are not comparable with data for future years. ^d Includes some children attending preschool services conducted in a centre based long day care centre. ^e Included non-government preschool data for the first time in 1997-98. ^f Excludes children attending non-government preschools.

Sources: tables 14A.1, 14A.20, 14A.29, 14A.38, 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 status of parents is one factor that may influence children's access to services. Those services that were eligible for Child Care Benefit, for example, gave a high priority to children at risk and children of parents with work related child care needs. Occasional care gives priority to parents requiring care to meet other requirements (such as to attend appointments, to take care of personal matters or to have temporary respite from full time parenting).

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Child Care Survey conducted in June 1999 (ABS 2000), 73 per cent of children (defined as children younger than 12 years of age) in child care in Australia in 1999 came from families with both parents in the workforce — down slightly from 74 per cent in 1996. Of those children attending preschools, 49 per cent came from families with both parents in the workforce — the same proportion as in 1996 (table 14A.12).

Across jurisdictions for which reliable data were available, the proportion of children in child care in 1999 with both parents in the workforce ranged from 77 per cent in SA to 69 per cent in NSW. The proportion of children attending preschool services with both parents in the workforce ranged from 54 per cent in Queensland to 40 per cent in SA out of the jurisdictions for which reliable data were available (table 14A.12). (Note, however, that the small sample size of the ABS Child Care Survey reduces the reliability of the estimates and may overstate the differences between jurisdictions.)

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 various sectors in the direct delivery of children's services.

The data on the management type of child care, which are limited, need to be interpreted with care because the scope of the data collection varies across jurisdictions. Data available on the management type of preschool services in 2000-01, although more complete, also 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, 2000-01 (per cent)^a**

	NSW	Vic ^b	Qld	WA	SA	Tas ^c	ACT ^d	NT ^e
Child care								
Community managed ^f	34.8	96.7	30.0	61.7	45.3	55.3	84.4	100.0
Private	65.2	na	65.9	32.4	29.7	22.0	15.6	na
Employer sponsored	–	na	na	–	–	–	na	na
Government managed	–	3.3	4.0	5.8	25.0	22.7	–	na
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Preschool								
Community managed ^f	84.7	63.4	41.1	6.6	4.7	..	8.0	na
Private	15.3	21.7	na	na	–	21.4	–	na
Employer sponsored	na	na	na	na	–	na	na	na
Government managed	na	14.9	58.9	93.4	95.3	78.6	92.0	100.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Excludes Commonwealth services. ^b Community managed services include not-for-profit occasional care provided by parents, churches, government and non-government schools, and private individuals. All government managed preschools in Victoria are managed by local government. ^c Preschools include funded non-government preschools ^d Includes licensed but not funded and/or provided 'other care'. ^e 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. ^f Includes not-for-profit services managed by parents. **na** Not available. **..** Not applicable. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Sources: tables 14A.23, 14A.32, 14A.41, 14A.50, 14A.59, 14A.68, 14A.77 and 14A.86.

14.2 Framework of performance indicators

The framework of performance indicators is based on common objectives for children's services across Australia (box 14.1). The relative emphasis placed on each objective varies across jurisdictions.

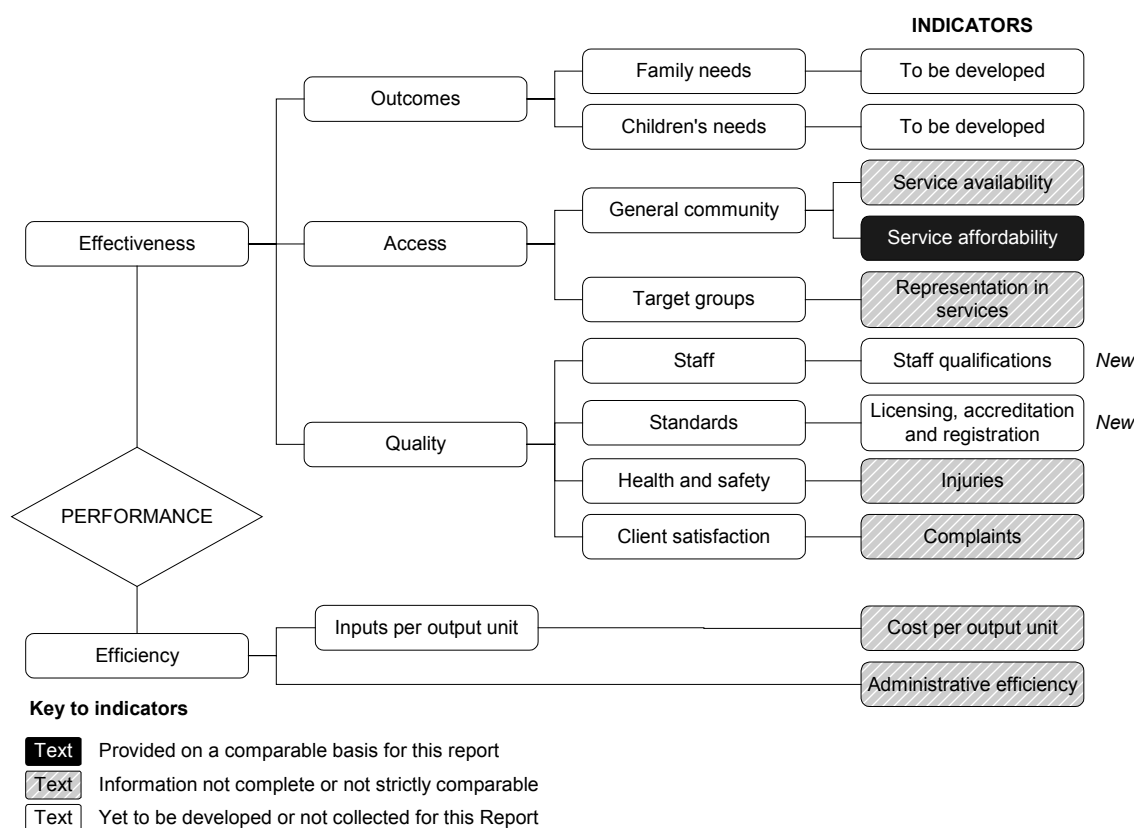
Box 14.1 Objectives for children's services

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; and
- provide these services in an equitable and efficient manner.

A performance indicator framework consistent with these objectives is summarised in figure 14.5.

Figure 14.5 Performance indicators for children’s services



New and refined indicators

The performance indicator framework has been restructured for the 2002 Report to ensure it remains consistent with agreed objectives for children’s services. Other improvements include the addition of two quality indicators — (1) staff qualifications and (2) licensing, accreditation and registration — although no data for these indicators are available for this Report. Further refinement to financial and non-financial data counting rules and the collection process is expected to contribute to improved comparability of data across jurisdictions in future reports.

14.3 Key performance indicator results

Different delivery contexts, locations and types of client may affect the effectiveness and efficiency of children’s services. Most 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.

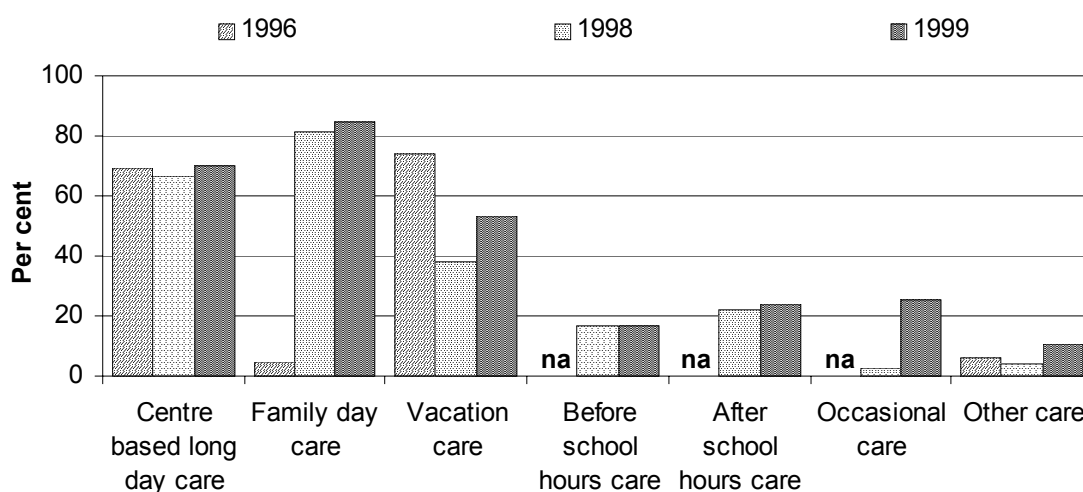
Effectiveness

Access of general community — service availability

An indicator of community access to children's services is the proportion of services offering non-standard hours of care. What constitutes non-standard hours varies across service types and a full explanation can be found in the definitions section in table 14.5.

Nationally, 97.9 per cent of family day care services provided non-standard hours of care in August 2000 (table 14A.13). Data on other services' non-standard hours of care were not available for August 2000; the May 1999 Commonwealth Census of Child Care Services (CCCCS) found, however, that centre based long day care had the next highest proportion at 69.8 per cent. (figure 14.6)

Figure 14.6 Proportion of Commonwealth approved child care services providing non-standard hours of care, by service type



na Not available.

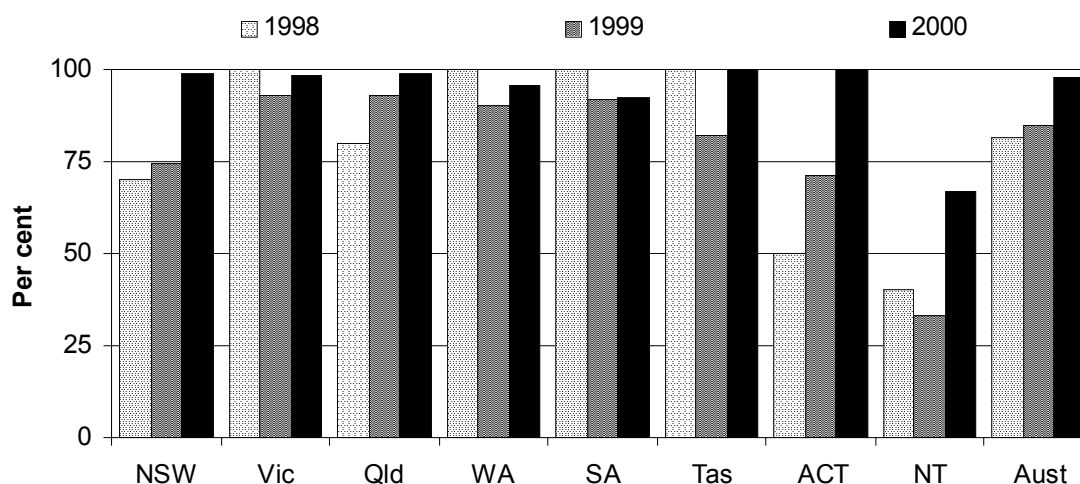
Source: table 14A.13.

Across jurisdictions, the proportion of family day care schemes offering non-standard hours increased between May 1999 and August 2000. More than 90 per cent of family day care schemes in all jurisdictions offered non-standard hours in August 2000 (figure 14.7).

Limited data were available on the proportion of services not included in the CCCCCS that were offering non-standard hours. Three jurisdictions were able to provide data on non-standard hours of preschool for 2000-01. The proportion of preschools offering non-standard hours was 66.4 per cent in SA (table 14A.60) and

60.6 per cent in NSW (table 14A.24). 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 would make it impractical for children to attend preschool more frequently (see footnotes to table 14A.60).

Figure 14.7 Proportion of Commonwealth approved family day care services providing non-standard hours of care



Source: table 14A.13.

Access of general community — service affordability

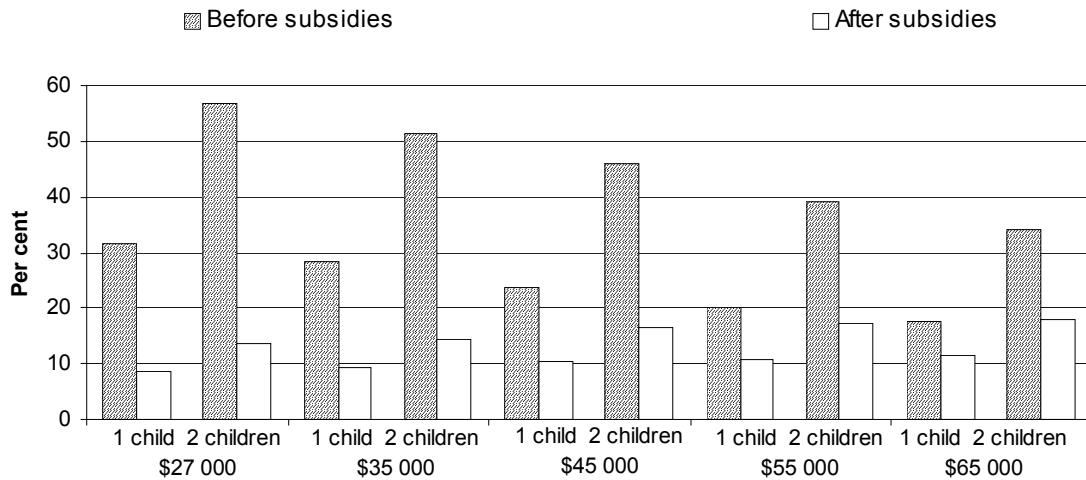
This indicator measures out-of-pocket child care costs as a proportion of weekly disposable income as at July 2001 before and after the payment of child care subsidies. Care need to be exercised when interpreting results because a variety of factors may influence fees.

Out-of-pocket costs are estimated for families with one child in care and families with two children in care, for five indicative levels of gross annual family income. Only data for centre based long day care and family day care services are available, with data for other service types expected to become available over time. The calculation is based on children attending full time care (equal to 50 hours per child per week) in centre based long day care and family day care as at August 2001.

After the payment of child care subsidies, out-of-pocket costs as a proportion of weekly family income increase with gross annual family income. Nationally, families with *one* child in full time centre based long day care at August 2001 and an annual gross family income of \$27 000 spent 8.6 per cent of their weekly disposable income on child care (compared with 31.8 per cent before payment of child care subsidies). By contrast, families with one child with an annual gross

family income of \$65 000 spent 11.4 per cent of their weekly disposable income on child care (compared with 17.4 per cent before payment of child care subsidies) (figure 14.8).

Figure 14.8 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, 2001^{a, b}



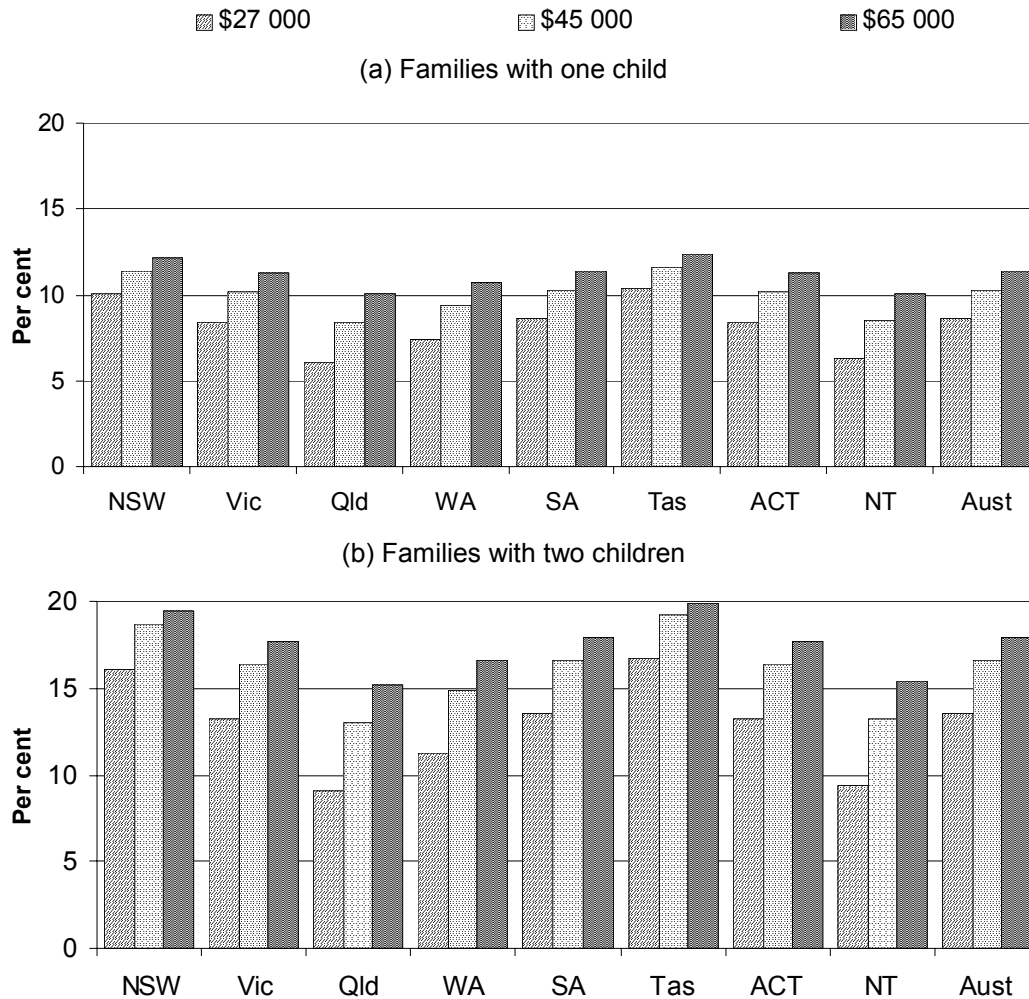
^a Disposable income calculations are based on 1 July 2001 tax and payment parameters. Calculations are modelled on dual-income couple families (60:40 income split) with one or two dependent children aged under 5 years. ^b Out-of-pocket cost calculations are based on August 2001 average fees.

Source: table 14A.14.

For families with *two* children in centre based full time long day care, the proportion of weekly disposable income spent on child care ranged from 17.9 per cent for those on annual incomes of \$65 000 (compared with 34.2 per cent before child care subsidies) to 13.5 per cent for those on annual incomes of \$27 000 (compared with 56.8 per cent before child care subsidies) (figure 14.8).

Across jurisdictions, out-of-pocket costs for centre based long day care for families with gross annual incomes of \$27 000 and *one* child in care ranged from 10.4 per cent of weekly disposable income in Tasmania to 6.1 per cent in Queensland. For families with disposable incomes of \$65 000, the proportion of weekly disposable income spent on child care ranged from 12.4 per cent in Tasmania to 10.0 per cent in Queensland (figure 14.9a).

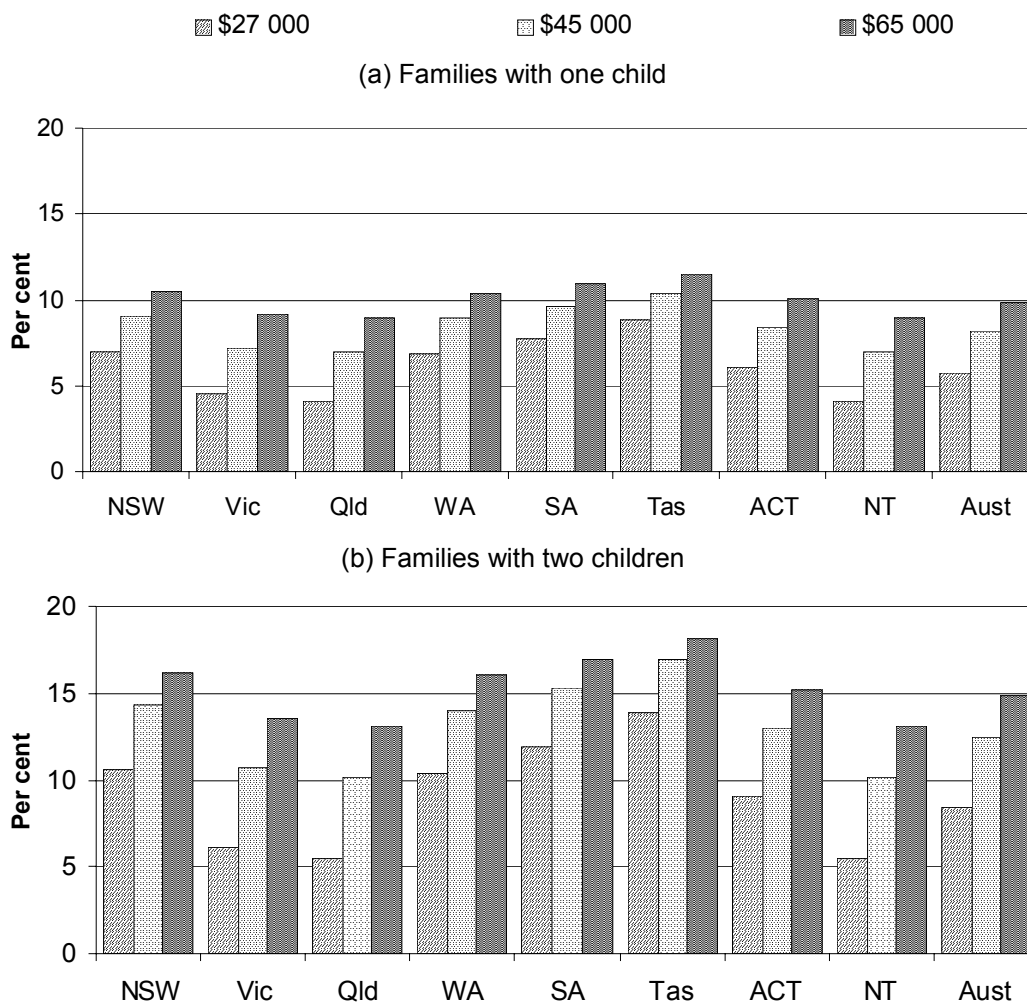
Figure 14.9 Out-of-pocket costs for centre based long day care (net of subsidies), as a proportion of weekly disposable income, by gross annual family income, 2001



Source: table 14A.14

For families with *two* children and an annual income of \$27 000, the out-of-pocket costs for centre based long day care ranged from 16.8 per cent of weekly disposable income in Tasmania to 9.0 per cent in Queensland. For families with two children and an annual income of \$65 000, the proportion of weekly disposable income spent on child care ranged from 19.9 per cent in Tasmania to 15.2 per cent in Queensland (figure 14.9b).

Figure 14.10 **Out-of-pocket costs for family day care (net of subsidies), as a proportion of weekly disposable income, by gross annual family income, 2001^{a, b}**



^a Disposable income calculations are based on 1 July 2001 tax and payment parameters. Calculations are modelled on dual-income couple families (60:40 income split) with one or two dependent children aged under 5 years. ^b Out-of-pocket cost calculations are based on August 2001 average fees.

Source: table 14A.15.

The out-of-pocket costs for family day care (net of subsidies) as a proportion of weekly disposable income for a family with an annual income of \$27 000 and *one* child in full time care in August 2001 ranged from 8.8 per cent in Tasmania to 4.1 per cent in Queensland and the NT. The corresponding proportion for families with *two* children ranged from 13.9 per cent in Tasmania to 5.5 per cent in Queensland and the NT (figure 14.10a).

The proportion of weekly disposable income spent on child care for a family with an annual income of \$65 000 and *one* child in full time family day care ranged from 11.5 per cent in Tasmania to 8.9 per cent in Queensland and the NT, while the

corresponding proportion for a family with the same income and *two* children ranged from 18.1 per cent in Tasmania to 13.1 per cent in Queensland and the NT (figure 14.10b).

Access of target groups — representation in services

Data for the representation of children from some special needs groups in Commonwealth approved child care services are available for 1997 and 1999 from the CCCCS, and for August 2000 from Centrelink administrative data. These two data sources are not directly comparable because there are differences in their collection method.² The variations are particularly distorting for ‘children from Indigenous backgrounds’, and for NT data. In addition, no data were available for ‘children from non-English speaking backgrounds’ or ‘children with a disability’.

The most recent comparable data for ‘children from Indigenous backgrounds’, ‘children from non-English speaking backgrounds’, and ‘children with a disability’ are from the CCCCS and are as at May 1999. The most recent data for ‘children from single parent families’, and ‘children from rural and remote areas’ are Centrelink administrative data, as at August 2000. The available data suggest that the proportion of these children in Commonwealth supported child care is sometimes substantially different across jurisdictions. This variation largely reflects variation in the representation of children from the special needs groups in the community (table 14.3).

The proportion of child care attendees from an Indigenous background in May 1999 ranged from 10.4 per cent in the NT (where the representation of Indigenous children in the population was 35.9 per cent) to 0.6 per cent in Victoria (where the representation in the population was 0.9 per cent). Nationally, the representation of children from Indigenous background among children accessing child care services was lower than this group’s overall representation in the community (table 14.3).

The representation of children from single parent families among attendees of government funded child care in August 2000 ranged from 31.5 per cent in WA (where their representation in the population was 15.4 per cent) to 24.8 per cent in the ACT (where their representation in the population was 15.4 per cent).

² Commonwealth Census of Child Care Services data are collected from Commonwealth approved child care services based on enumeration from services. The CCCCS includes all children attending Commonwealth Government funded services, and there will be double counting where a child attends more than one service. Centrelink administrative data are collected from customers when they claim the Child Care Benefit. As such, the data collection is restricted to customers eligible for the Child Care Benefit and there is no double counting where children attend more than one service because Centrelink’s assigns each child a unique reference number.

Nationally, the representation of children of single parents among children accessing child care was greater than this group's overall representation in the community (table 14.3).

Table 14.3 Proportion of children from special needs groups attending Commonwealth approved child care services (per cent)^a

<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>Australia</i>	
									<i>1999</i>	<i>2000</i>
Children from non-English speaking backgrounds (1999 data) ^{b, c}										
Representation:										
• in the services	15.3	12.2	6.2	7.7	6.0	2.2	10.6	7.5	10.7	na
• in the community ^d	11.5	11.0	4.0	4.7	6.1	0.9	9.5	5.7	8.5	8.5
Children from Indigenous backgrounds (1999 data)										
Representation:										
• in services	1.4	0.6	2.1	2.1	1.2	0.7	0.8	10.4	1.5	np
• in the community ^e	3.3	0.9	5.5	5.3	2.8	5.4	1.9	35.9	3.7	3.7
Children from a single parent family (2000 data) ^{f, g}										
Representation:										
• in services	26.1	27.9	30.0	31.5	29.1	26.9	24.8	np	18.9	28.2
• in the community ^e	15.9	14.4	16.7	15.4	16.9	16.9	15.4	18.9	15.7	15.7
Children with a disability (1999 data)										
Representation:										
• in services	2.3	2.2	1.9	1.9	3.9	2.2	1.6	1.5	2.3	na
• in the community ^h	6.6	6.6	8.3	10.3	9.6	7.1	na ⁱ	na ⁱ	7.6	7.6
From rural and remote areas (2000 data) ^{e, j}										
Representation:										
• in services	23.8	22.3	24.0	19.2	18.1	25.8	–	np	21.2	22.4
• in the community ^e	29.0	28.0	36.9	30.6	30.2	39.9	0.2	59.8	30.7	30.7

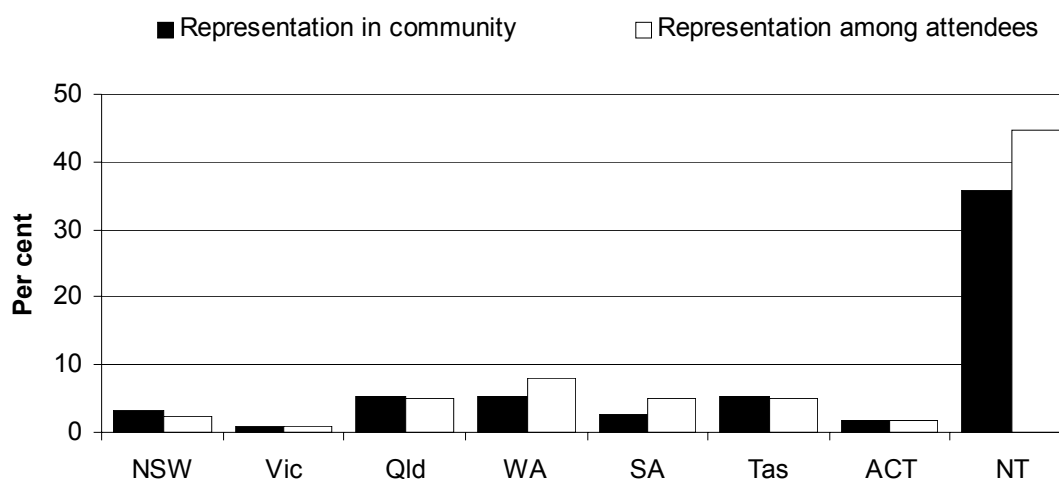
^a Data for 'children from Indigenous backgrounds', 'children from non-English speaking backgrounds', and 'children with a disability' are as at May 1999. Data for 'children from a single parent families', and 'children from rural and remote areas' are as at August 2000. ^b Includes vacation care, which overlapped outside school hours care. ^c Data collected from May 1999 Commonwealth Census of Child Care Services based on response by services. ^d Data relate to children aged 0–14 years and were obtained from the ABS 1999 Child Care Australia survey. Caution needs to be exercised in interpreting State and Territory results because they are subject to sampling errors (with that for Tasmania at 25–50 per cent). ^e Data relate to children aged 0–14 years at June 1996, and were obtained from the ABS 1996 Census of Population and Housing. ^f Data are as at August 2000 and were collected from Centrelink administrative data based on responses by parents. ^g No information on the number of children from single parent families was available for mobiles, occasional care neighbourhood models, occasional care, Aboriginal playgroups and vacation care. ^h Data relate to children aged 0–14 years at June 1998 and were obtained from the ABS 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers. ⁱ Data on children with a disability were not available for publication. ^j Excludes occasional care neighbourhood models for which data were not available. – Nil or rounded to zero. na Not available. np Not published.

Source: table 14A.16.

The proportion of child care attendees from rural and remote areas in August 2000 ranged from 25.8 per cent in Tasmania (where their representation in the population was 39.9 per cent) to 18.1 per cent in SA (where their representation in the population was 30.2 per cent). The ACT does not have child care attendees from rural and remote areas. Across all jurisdictions, the representation of children from rural and remote areas among children accessing child care was lower than their overall representation in the community (table 14.3).

Data on the proportion of preschool attendees from the specified special needs groups are less extensive for all jurisdictions. All jurisdictions could provide data on Indigenous children attending preschools in 2000-01. Across all jurisdictions, the proportion of Indigenous children attending preschools in 2000-01 was broadly similar to their representation in the community. The proportion ranged from 44.6 per cent in the NT (where the representation of Indigenous children in the community was 35.9 per cent) to 0.8 per cent in Victoria (where their representation in the community was 0.9 per cent) (figure 14.11). The proportion of preschool attendees from Indigenous backgrounds varied across jurisdictions, but has been relatively constant within jurisdictions over time (figure 14.12).

Figure 14.11 Proportion of preschool attendees from Indigenous backgrounds, 2000-01^{a, b, c}



^a Comparisons between the representation of Indigenous children among attendees of preschool services and their representation in the community need to be treated with caution because there are definitional differences and differences in the base population. ^b Data were obtained from the 1996 ABS Census of Population and Housing. ^c Excludes younger children attending preschool and all children attending non-government preschools.

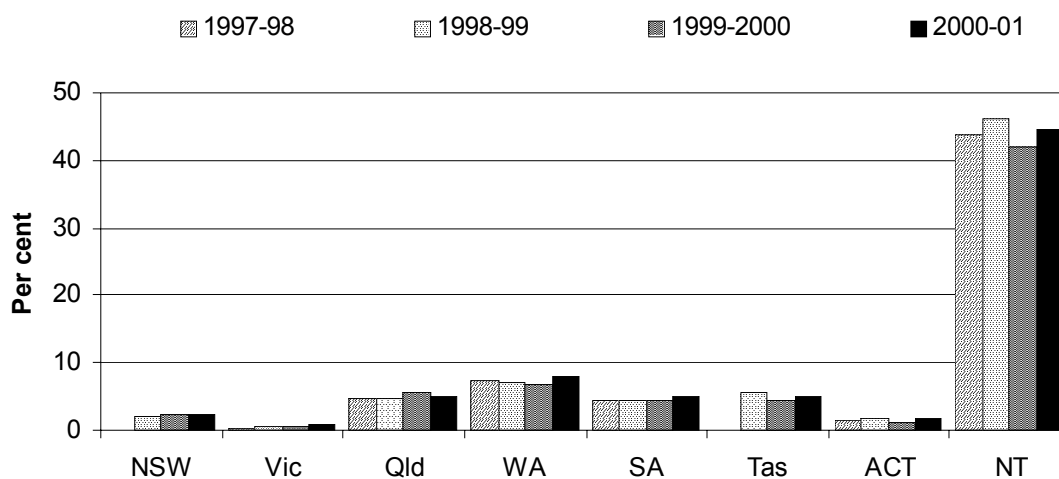
Sources: tables 14A.24, 14A.33, 14A.42, 14A.51, 14A.60, 14A.69, 14A.78 and 14A.87.

Data on the representation of other special needs groups among government funded preschool attendees are limited for 2000-01.

- Children from non-English speaking backgrounds represented 12.6 per cent of children attending preschool in Victoria, 9.2 per cent in the ACT, 8.9 per cent in SA and 5.2 per cent in NSW (tables 14A.24, 14A.33, 14A.60 and 14A.78).
- The proportion of preschool attendees from single parent families was 15.5 per cent in SA, 11.9 per cent in Victoria and 6.9 per cent in NSW (tables 14A.24, 14A.33 and 14A.60).
- Children with a disability represented 16.2 per cent of preschool attendees in SA, 5.9 per cent in the ACT, 5.6 per cent in NSW, 3.7 per cent in Victoria, 2.3 per cent in WA and 1.1 per cent in Queensland (tables 14A.24, 14A.33, 14A.42, 14A.51, 14A.60, 14A.69, 14A.78 and 14A.87).
- The proportion of preschool attendees from rural and remote areas was 61.2 per cent in Tasmania, 58.8 per cent in the NT, 34.0 per cent in WA, 32.7 per cent in SA, 32.4 per cent in Queensland, 22.7 per cent in NSW and 0.4 per cent in the ACT (tables 14A.24, 14A.33, 14A.42, 14A.51, 14A.60, 14A.69, 14A.78 and 14A.87).

The representation of these special target groups in the general community is provided in table 14.3.

Figure 14.12 **Proportion of preschool attendees from Indigenous backgrounds^{a, b}**



^a Excludes younger children attending preschool and children attending non-government preschools.

^b Queensland data for 1997-98 and 1998-99 relate to children attending community kindergartens and preschools associated with the Creche and Kindergarten Association.

Sources: tables 14A.24, 14A.33, 14A.42, 14A.51, 14A.60, 14A.69, 14A.78 and 14A.87.

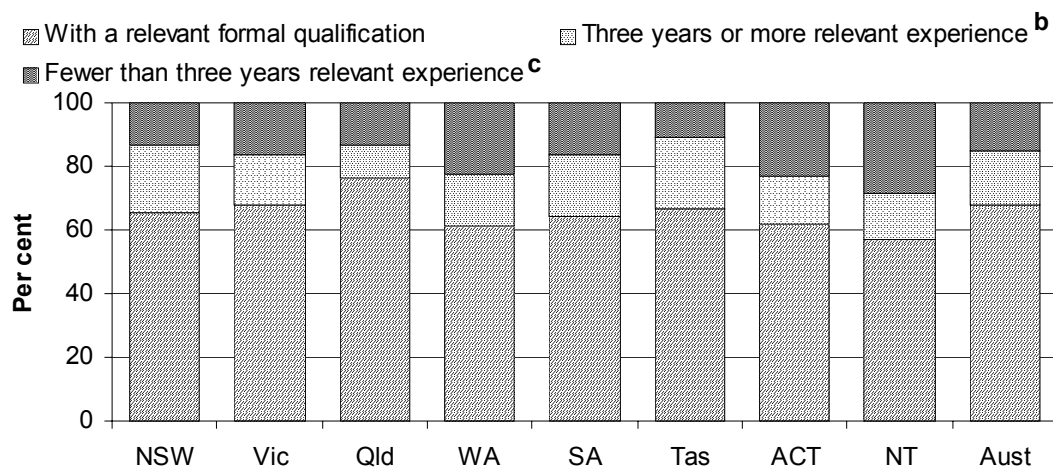
Quality

An important focus of Commonwealth, 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 staff qualifications, the number of serious injuries, and the number of substantiated complaints per registered or licensed service, by service type. These data need to be treated with caution because there are differences in reporting among jurisdictions.

Staff — staff qualifications

The most recent data on the proportion of staff with formal qualifications (including those studying for qualifications) in Commonwealth funded and/or provided child care are provided by the May 1999 CCCCS. Nationally, 67.9 per cent of staff had formal qualifications in 1999. A further 16.9 per cent had no formal qualifications but three or more years of relevant experience. The remaining 15.2 per cent had no formal qualifications and less than three years full time experience. The proportion of staff with formal qualifications varied across jurisdictions, ranging from 76.1 per cent in Queensland to 57.1 per cent in the NT (figure 14.13). The number of staff with formal qualifications increased between 1997 and 1999 in all jurisdictions (table 14A.11).

Figure 14.13 **Paid primary contact staff employed by Commonwealth approved child care services, by qualification, May 1999^a**

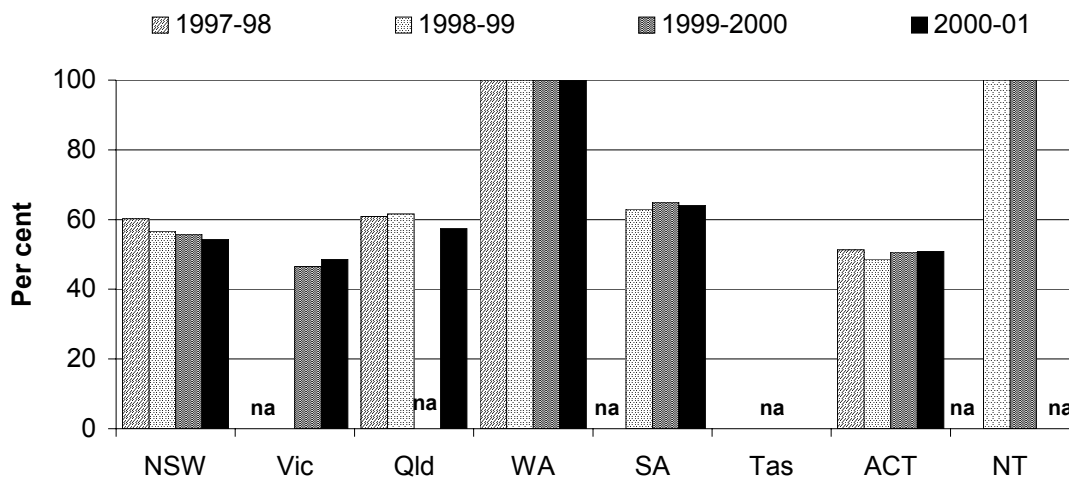


^a Excludes family day care, Aboriginal play groups and the occasional care neighbourhood model for which data are not available. ^b No relevant formal qualification but with the equivalent of three or more years of relevant experience. ^c No relevant formal qualification and fewer than three years relevant experience. Includes staff training for a qualification.

Source: table 14A.11.

Some data are available for preschool services receiving funding from State and Territory governments only. Across those jurisdictions for which 2000-01 data are available, the proportion of staff with formal qualifications in preschool services ranged from 64.1 per cent in SA to 48.6 per cent in Victoria (figure 14.14).

Figure 14.14 Proportion of paid primary contact staff employed by State/Territory funded and/or managed preschool service providers with a relevant formal qualification^a



^a All funded preschool services in Victoria, Queensland and WA must have at least two staff, one of whom must have a relevant formal qualification.

Sources: tables 14A.22, 14A.31, 14A.40, 14A.49, 14A.58, 14A.67, 14A.76 and 14A.85.

Health and safety — injuries

Data on the number of serious injuries and the number of serious injuries per registered or licensed service provider were limited for 2000-01. Although most jurisdictions were able to provide some information, the small numbers of incidents involved and differences in the data collection approaches by jurisdictions mean direct comparisons are problematic. Tables 14A.25, 14A.34, 14A.43, 14A.52, 14A.61, 14A.70, 14A.79 and 14A.88 provide a breakdown of the available information for each jurisdiction.

Client satisfaction — complaints

All jurisdictions except NSW³ provided data on the number of substantiated complaints and alleged breaches of regulations made to the State and Territory government regulatory bodies for 2000-01 (tables 14A.26, 14A.35, 14A.44, 14A.53, 14A.62, 14A.71, 14A.80 and 14A.89). The results for the substantiated complaints indicator need to be interpreted with caution. The limitations of this indicator include:

- the priority that some jurisdictions give to developing well-informed client groups as part of improving their service delivery (a limitation in that well-informed clients may be more likely to make a complaint than clients without access to this information);
- differences in the number of approved care providers or parent users per service in each service across States and Territories; and
- variation in complaints management systems across jurisdictions. In SA, for example, the department is the sole sponsor of family day care and deals with all complaints that otherwise may be managed at a scheme level in other States and Territories and, as such, may not be reported.

Efficiency

Differences in counting and reporting rules for financial data and in reported expenditure, partly due to different treatment of various expenditure items, may be reflected in differences in the indicator results across jurisdictions. Some information on the extent of the comparability of the expenditure is shown in table 14A.5.

Cost per output unit

A proxy indicator of efficiency is the level of government inputs per unit of output (unit cost). The indicator used here is government expenditure per hour of service. Data were sought from all governments on their expenditures 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.

³ NSW is developing a new information system in line with its new legislation. Data on substantiated complaints are expected to be available for future reports.

The most recent data available on Commonwealth Government recurrent expenditure by service type are for 1999-2000 and were provided in the 2001 Report (table 14.4). These data are available for each jurisdiction and are comparable across jurisdictions. Commonwealth Government recurrent expenditure per hour for centre based long day care services in 1999-2000 ranged from \$2.25 per hour in Queensland to \$1.31 per hour in the ACT. For family day care, such expenditure was higher in all jurisdictions except the NT compared with 1997-98 levels. Funding per hour of outside school hours care was lower in 1999-2000 than in 1997-98 in all jurisdictions. Commonwealth Government recurrent funding per hour of occasional care was not available for 1999-2000.

Table 14.4 Commonwealth Government real recurrent expenditure per hour of service (1999-2000 dollars)^a

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>
Centre based long day care								
1997-98	1.91	1.92	2.23	2.00	2.09	1.95	1.42	1.95
1999-2000	1.78	1.99	2.25	2.09	2.00	1.84	1.31	1.79
Family day care								
1997-98	2.35	2.55	2.57	2.84	2.98	2.72	2.39	2.37
1999-2000	2.57	2.79	2.79	3.12	3.89	2.94	2.49	1.82
Outside school hours care ^b								
1997-98	1.83	1.49	1.68	1.87	1.63	2.11	1.69	1.68
1999-2000	1.04	1.22	1.41	1.36	1.29	1.42	0.96	1.26
Occasional care								
1997-98	3.92	1.57	2.25	3.84	4.31	2.28	2.10	11.00
1999-2000	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na

^a Excludes administration expenditure. ^b Data for 1999-2000, includes vacation care. For 1997-98, data have been revised to provide a consistent series and, therefore, are not comparable with figures reported in the 2000 Report.

Source: table 14A.17.

Administrative efficiency

Another measure of efficiency is administration and regulation expenditure as a proportion of total expenditure. This expenditure can include the costs of activities relating to the planning, policy development, resource management, quality assurance and regulation of children's services. The extent to which these costs are included in the data varies, and allocations of the costs of departmental overheads may also differ across jurisdictions. Thus, comparisons across jurisdictions and over time need to be made with caution.

Estimated administration costs accounted for 11.3 per cent of total Commonwealth Government expenditure on children's services in 2000-01 (table 14A.3). As discussed earlier, the roles of the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments differ in relation to the funding and delivery of children's services. In particular, State and Territory governments have an important role in licensing services and monitoring standards. For this reason, it is inappropriate to compare the administration and regulation costs of the Commonwealth Government with those of the State and Territory governments. Differences in State and Territory government licensing arrangements also limit the comparability of administration and regulation costs across States and Territories.

All jurisdictions provided some information on administrative expenditure. The definition of administrative expenditure varies across jurisdictions (see the footnote to the source tables). All jurisdictions except Victoria provided data on administration and regulation expenditure as a proportion of total government expenditure on child care in 2000-01.

- In NSW, administration and regulation costs represented 26.9 per cent of the total expenditure on child care (table 14A.18).
- In Queensland, administration and regulation costs (including administration expenditure for the outside school hours care activities for young people program which targets children of 13–15 years of age) represented 45.8 per cent of the total expenditure on child care (table 14A.36).
- In WA, administration and regulation costs represented 86.8 per cent of the total expenditure on child care. This figure includes expenditure on regulation and monitoring of providers (including non-scheme family day carers,); the provision of support, advice and training; planning; and the provision of information and advice to parents (table 14A.45).
- In SA, administration and regulation costs represented 3.4 per cent of the total expenditure on child care (table 14A.54).
- In Tasmania, administration and regulation costs (including umbrella departmental costs) represented 39.8 per cent of the total expenditure on child care (table 14A.63).
- In the ACT, administration and regulation costs represented 50.8 per cent of the total expenditure on child care (table 14A.72).
- In the NT, administration and regulation costs represented 31.8 per cent of the total expenditure on child care (table 14A.81). This figure includes expenditure on planning, research and policy development, the provision of support and advice, and regulation and monitoring of child care centres.

All jurisdictions except Victoria and Queensland also provided data on administration and regulation expenditure as a proportion of total government expenditure on preschool services in 2000-01.

- In NSW, administration and regulation costs represented 3.5 per cent of the total expenditure on preschools (table 14A.18).
- In WA, administration and regulation costs represented 92.7 per cent of the total expenditure on preschools (table 14A.45).
- In SA, administration and regulation costs represented 9.0 per cent of the total expenditure on preschools (table 14A.54).
- In Tasmania, administration and regulation costs represented 100.0 per cent of the total expenditure on preschools (table 14A.63). Tasmanian administration and regulation expenditure includes all salaries related to teachers, teacher aides and other direct support staff.
- In the ACT, administration and regulation costs represented 96.3 per cent of the total expenditure on preschools (table 14A.72). The ACT administration costs include all teachers' and assistants' salaries. In previous reports, these costs have been reported as 'other expenditure'.
- In the NT, administration and regulation costs represented 4.9 per cent of the total expenditure on preschools (table 14A.81).

All jurisdictions except Queensland provided data on administration and regulation expenditure as a proportion of total government expenditure on both child care and preschool services in 2000-01.

- In NSW, administration and regulation costs represented 10.7 per cent of total government expenditure (table 14A.18).
- In Victoria, administration and regulation costs represented 4.9 per cent of total government expenditure (table 14A.27).
- In WA, administration and regulation costs represented 92.5 per cent of total government expenditure (table 14A.45).
- In SA, administration and regulation costs represented 6.8 per cent of total government expenditure (table 14A.54).
- In Tasmania, administration and regulation costs represented 95.0 per cent of total government expenditure (table 14A.63). This expenditure includes all salaries related to teachers, teacher aides and other direct support staff for preschools.
- In the ACT, administration and regulation costs represented 86.6 per cent of total government expenditure (table 14A.72). The ACT administration costs include

all teachers' and assistants' salaries. In previous reports, these costs have been reported as 'other expenditure'.

- In the NT, administration and regulation costs represented 8.8 per cent of total government expenditure (table 14A.81).

14.4 Future directions in performance reporting

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

Future indicator development

The Children's Services Working Group will continue to improve the appropriateness and completeness of the performance indicators framework. Indicator development beyond the 2002 Report will focus on developing:

- indicators to measure the extent to which family needs are met by children's services;
- indicators to measure the extent to which children's needs are met by children's services; and
- a more appropriate indicator of service affordability.

Options for reporting on service appropriateness in future Reports will also be investigated. While these areas have been identified as requiring further work, the improvements to the chapter and progress on performance reporting will not be limited to these indicators.

Improving reporting of existing indicators

Processes for refining definitions, estimating methods and counting rules are continuing. Further work is planned to improve the consistency and comparability of performance information across jurisdictions. Revisions of some data reduce data comparability across years. Similarly, changes in the children's services industry have required jurisdictions to revise collection methods, and these revisions also reduce data comparability across years and jurisdictions. It will take some time before all improvements are reflected in the chapter. The Working Group will also continue to explore options for reporting against the two quality indicators introduced in the 2002 Report.

Improving the completeness and comparability of data

National minimum data set

The National Community Services Information Management Group's (NCSIMG) Children's Services Data Working Group, under the auspices of the Community Services Ministers' Council, is developing a national minimum data set for children's services. When completed, this will provide a framework for the collection of a minimum set of nationally comparable data and assist the development of measurable performance indicators and descriptors.

The first stage of the national minimum data set is well advanced. The national minimum data set manual was submitted to the NCSIMG for information in November 2001. The next stage involves pilot testing of the framework, which is planned for early 2002.

Data collection

Consistency in the data collected by State and Territory governments is an important goal in terms of data comparability. The objective is to collect data in a sample week which is representative of a typical standard week in each State and Territory and does not include any public holidays. Although some State and Territory governments collect data on this basis, there is still scope for improving the comparability of data.

Data availability

The CCCCS is the most complete data set on child care and, as such, indicates the relative participation in child care across jurisdictions. The CCCCS is conducted biennially by the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services to collect information on the characteristics of users and providers of Commonwealth funded child care services. State and Territory governments may also support many of these services.

Prior to the 2001 census, information was collected on all Commonwealth funded services. The 2001 census was limited to a survey of family day care services and does not cover long day care, outside school hours care, vacation care and occasional care services. Further improvement in the reporting of comparable and appropriateness indicators of children's services performance is constrained by the lack of, and poor comparability of, data. The Commonwealth is committed to

providing comparable data for the 2003 Report and will be conducting a full census in May 2002.

14.5 Jurisdictions' comments

This section provides comments from each jurisdiction on the services covered in this chapter and attachment 14A on the CD-ROM. Appendix A contains detailed statistics and short profiles on each State and Territory, which may assist in interpreting the performance indicators presented in this chapter. The information covers aspects such as age profile, geographic distribution of the population, income levels, education levels, tenure of dwellings and cultural heritage (such as Indigenous and ethnic status).

Commonwealth Government comments

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The introduction of Child Care Benefit on 1 July 2000 significantly improved the affordability of child care for families and made assistance easier to access.

The implementation of Child Care Benefit, however, presented considerable challenges and this impacted on the capacity of the Department of Family and Community Services to provide comparable data. The department had intended to conduct a full census in May 2001. However, the introduction of Child Care Benefit placed considerable administrative demands on long day care, outside school hours care, vacation care and occasional care services and as a result a full census would have placed an unacceptable load on these services. The reduced census focused on fully automated family day care services (approximately 90 per cent of family day care services), and those services receiving direct funding from the Commonwealth eg. multifunctional children's services, mobiles and toy libraries, and Aboriginal playgroups and enrichment programs. The decision to reduce the number of services included in the 2001 census was supported by the child care sector.

As a result, 2001 data were predominantly sourced from Centrelink administrative data and this affects comparability of many items with data provided in previous years. In particular, data comparability is affected by the narrower scope of Centrelink administrative data, and different enumeration sources and collection processes when compared to Census data.

The department is intending to conduct a full census of Commonwealth approved child care services in May 2002. FaCS shares the concerns expressed by others that we need high quality data on child care and other early childhood services with better comparability of the data across all jurisdictions. Longer term data collection strategies will be examined early next year and will focus on addressing these concerns.

The Commonwealth is also continuing to work with all jurisdictions on developing a national minimum data set for children's services for the National Community Services Information Management Group. Pilot testing of the first stage of the data collection manual is expected to proceed early in 2002.

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New South Wales Government comments

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During Children's Week in October 2000, the NSW Minister for Community Services released the NSW Government's Early Childhood Services Policy.

The policy provides the directions for the NSW Government's involvement in children's services. The aim of the policy is to provide a 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 in the context of their families and the communities in which they live. This policy approach is based on the principles of quality and responsiveness and is founded on sound research evidence.

NSW does not view care (child care) and education (pre-school) as separate functions but as having a dynamic interrelationship that is not separable: children are continually learning and are simultaneously cared for. NSW licensing regulations require the employment of appropriately qualified teaching staff and all licensed early childhood centres are required to provide an education program tailored to each child's intellectual, physical, social and emotional development.

This approach means that the way children's services is described in this State is moving to a greater focus on activity and outcomes as child and family centres inter-linked with related health and child and family support systems, and away from the more traditional service type nomenclature that is used in other jurisdictions. As a result, comparison of performance information between NSW and other States is problematic. Mindful of this we continue to work within the processes of this collection so that the chapter can be more meaningful in terms of the Review's objectives.

Also during the year, the Minister for Community Services along with the Minister for Education and Training, launched the well acclaimed 'Literacies, communities and under 5's' resource for use by service staff and families. This resource was produced in partnership by the Departments of Community Services and Education and Training and the Universities of Western Sydney, Newcastle and Macquarie.

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Victorian Government comments

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Strong family and community networks nurture children, care for those in need and help people take up opportunities in economic and community life. Social health, social justice, encouraging active citizenship and the development of social capital are all linked to the capacity to access quality children's services.

The Victorian Government is committed to supporting families in caring for their children in their early years by ensuring access to local, high quality children's services. It is acknowledged that there are a variety of mechanisms, including regulatory frameworks, application of best practice standards and use of accreditation processes to improve the quality of care and provision of services for children and families.

The Department of Human Services (DHS) regulates and/or funds centre based children's services. In 2001, work has commenced to determine the best way to establish and monitor core standards for family day care and out of school hours care utilising the National Standards. In addition a process is underway to enhance the *Children's Services Act 1996* to provide for an explicit statement regarding the rights of the child.

Of the 2774 licensed children's services, approximately 2065 locations receive State Government funding to provide children's services, including preschool, occasional care and TAFE long day care services.

In order to assist community based long day care and outside school hours care services to provide quality child care programs in a safe and stimulating environment, the Victorian Government has also funded grants to undertake premises maintenance, purchase program equipment or fund professional development of staff. Additional funds have also been directed to community based long day care and occasional care services to meet upgraded premises requirements defined in the transition provision of the legislation.

During 2000-01 financial year a 'Review of Issues that Impact on the Delivery of Preschool Services to Children and Their Families in Victoria' was undertaken by an independent panel chaired by Mr Peter Kirby. The Victorian Government is considering the broad ranging recommendations and agrees that reform of preschool services in Victoria will take three to five years. In 2000-01 over \$20 million has been injected into the preschool program, with \$4 million to improve affordability for families, \$4 million to provide specific subsidies to families on low incomes and \$12 million to improve early childhood teacher salaries.

Victoria notes the substantial difficulties faced by the Productivity Commission in preparing this national report on children's services with dated or incomplete data sets. There is considerable expectation that implementation of a national minimum data set will enhance the integrity and comparability of data for future reports.

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Queensland Government comments

“ Through the implementation of the *Queensland Child Care Strategic Plan 2000–2005*, the Queensland Government continues to demonstrate its commitment to ensuring that Queensland children and families have access to a responsive, high quality and sustainable child care system.

A key initiative introduced in the 2000-01 financial year was the introduction of minimum safety requirements for ‘back yard’ care, where children are cared for on a regular basis in a home for reward (other than as part of a family day care scheme). In addition, consultations were undertaken with the child care sector to inform the development of a new regulatory framework to support the provision of sustainable, high quality child care services that are sufficiently flexible to respond to the diverse and changing needs of families.

In recognition of the value of qualified staff in child care services, the Queensland Government has negotiated a State-wide Training Strategy to improve the overall skill level of child care workers by providing a range of affordable and accessible training options for workers in child care services. In addition, an information technology CD-ROM training package has been developed to support access to training and enhance the use of technology. This training package, to be distributed to approximately 2000 child care services in Queensland, was developed in consultation with child care services and offers self paced beginner and intermediate IT training to child care workers.

The Child Care and Family Support Hub Strategy has been implemented in Queensland through the provision of funding to establish 12 hubs in a variety of locations throughout the State. This funding will assist services to deliver integrated child care and family support services in their communities and enhance access to existing and new services for families.

In addition, funding was provided for two child care and family support hubs in the Indigenous communities of Doomadgee and Aurukun. These hubs will offer a range of child care and family support services such as long day care, playgroup, family support, parent education, health and other specialist services and child protection services as well as providing a community meeting venue. The Aurukun service will be co-located with a State preschool, and also provide outside school hours care and vacation care.

The Queensland Government has also worked collaboratively with the sector to develop a draft Industry Plan that aims to strengthen the sector, improve service delivery and promote a positive image of both child care services and workers. A key strategy in the plan relates to promoting and undertaking research to map trends and inform the planning, development and implementation of policies, programs and services. This supports the commitment of the Queensland Government to use data and research to monitor performance and inform planning and decision making processes. This commitment includes collaborating with other jurisdictions to address the inconsistencies in current reporting arrangements and enhance the availability, integrity and comparability of data for future reports.

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Western Australian Government comments

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The new Department for Community Development (formerly Family and Children's Services) was established in 1 July 2001. The new department's structure is currently under consideration.

The Department for Community Development will have an increased focus on community development and strengthening families. It will continue to be responsible for ensuring compliance to the Community Services (Child Care) Regulations 1988 for children 0–6 years and the new Regulations for Outside School Hours care once enacted.

The most recent amendments to the current Regulations were enacted in February 2001 and the Child Care Licensing Unit has been working with the sector to ensure there is an understanding of the changes.

The recommendations of the recent Review of the Child Care Licensing Unit have been implemented and the unit has been allocated additional resources including an increase in staffing levels.

From the beginning of 2001, the Department of Education provides four half days of kindergarten for all children who turn 4 by 30 June. This has resulted in a half cohort of children being unable to attend kindergarten until one year later. There has resulted in an increasing trend for self funded occasional child care services to be established around the State in response to demand from affected parents.

The expansion of the jointly funded Commonwealth State occasional child care services continues with a focus on remote Aboriginal communities using a community development framework.

Since the introduction of Child Care Benefit in July 2000, long day care centres have been experiencing increased demand, particularly for babies. Services throughout the State are fully utilised and waiting lists are being to emerge.

There is minimal interest from commercial operators in establishing services outside the metropolitan areas. Viability of services in small rural and remote communities continues to be problematic and the department continues to work with Family and Community Services to develop flexible models in the central wheatbelt.

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South Australian Government comments

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The Department for Education Training and Employment is responsible for children's services and schooling in South Australia. DETE operates government preschools that accommodate over 90 per cent of children in the year before school, sponsors an extensive State-wide family day care system, licenses and supports child care centres and provides occasional care on more than 60 preschool sites. DETE schools manage more than 70 per cent of all out of school hours and vacation care programs in the State. The South Australian *Children's Services Act* gives the Minister responsibility for broad functions including planning and coordination of children's services and informing parents. The Act makes the interests of the child the paramount consideration. Consultation on a new draft Bill that combines this Act with a new *Education Act* was finalised during this period.

The implementation of a new curriculum framework (the South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability Framework) for children from birth to 18 provides a new foundation for establishing and sustaining continuity across children's services and schooling. DETE has taken an inclusive approach to implementation of the new curriculum. Explicit strategies will underpin participation by child care centres and family day care providers as well as preschool and school staff who are employed by the department.

Integration of children's services and schooling across the birth to 8 ranges is a key policy direction for the department. The South Australian local management initiative — Partnerships 21 — has delivered greater flexibility and capacity to local preschools and schools which have volunteered to participate in the initiative. This has engendered a new range of leadership and management possibilities across schools and preschools and child care, including partnerships with child care centres and family day care providers.

Long term commitments to addressing child care needs in small country communities has continued. Child care needs and service delivery options are being explored in up to 18 small rural communities. A number of these new services will begin in 2002.

Anecdotal evidence indicates that demand for all forms of child care has grown during the reporting period, while out-of-pocket expenses for child care users have remained at national average levels. This expansion in demand has accentuated a shortage of trained child care staff as well as experienced unqualified workers. The state continues to provide operational support for a number of out of school hours services in disadvantaged metropolitan areas.

Participation rates by some special needs groups in Commonwealth approved child care services are lower than their proportion in the wider community. Participation rates in State operated services are superior, but there is scope for improvement across the full range of children's services.

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Tasmanian Government comments

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Tasmania continues to be committed to the ongoing development of a child care sector which provides quality affordable. The Department of Education is currently responsible for 130 licensed services and 11 family day care schemes across the State. The Department of Education also directly provides all government preschools/kindergartens across the State and registers and funds non-government schools.

Two significant policy changes will see the number of licensed services more than double over the next few years. The first is the implementation of the new *Child Care Act 2001* which has received Royal Assent and will be proclaimed as soon as the accompanying documentation is ready. The new Act has extended licensing to encompass outside school hours care services and approved registration bodies such as nanny agencies. The second major policy change is the Government's requirement that children must be 4 years of age by 1 January for entry into kindergarten. This will apply to both government and non-government schools. Any school providing programs for children under 4 years of age will now be required to meet child care centre based licensing standards.

The Department of Education is continuing its commitment to the professionalism of staff in the child care industry through both a Mentorship and a Scholarship Program. The Mentorship Program provides funding for experienced, qualified staff to work closely with services particularly in areas of programming and financial management. The Scholarship Program provides scholarships to carers in the industry from both the centre based and home based sectors who wish to gain or further their formal qualifications. This has now been operating for three years and has proven to be very successful.

The Department of Education also remains committed to the rural sector through the provision of funding for the upgrading of buildings to meet licensing standards and in ensuring that staff have access to training programs through the Mentorship and Scholarship programs.

A new curriculum framework is being developed through extensive consultation with the school and child care sector. For the first time it will include a learning framework for the 'prior to school' years redefining the curriculum provided by government schools and colleges in Tasmania. Although not mandatory for the child care sector, the potential for a coordinated and integrated continuum of services from birth to school years, underpinned by consistent beliefs and approaches, has been well received.

Tasmania recognises that there are still a number of issues to resolve before comparability of performance is achieved between jurisdictions and remains committed to working with the Productivity Commission to produce data that is relevant, accurate and comparable.

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Australian Capital Territory Government comments

“ The provision of quality children’s services is an investment in the future, providing the foundation for children’s learning and development. The ACT Government, through the Department of Education and Community Services, supports children’s services to deliver quality programs that enhance children’s development and cater for their diverse needs.

The Department of Education and Community Services, in partnership with parent communities is responsible for providing preschool services for all eligible children in the year immediately before their entry to school. The department is also responsible for licensing and monitoring children’s services in the ACT to ensure that they meet the requirements of the *Children and Young People Act 1999*. These services include centre based children’s services, school age care, family day care, independent preschools and playschools. Funding is also provided to assist with the provision of a range of children’s services programs.

Major achievements during 2001 included the release of the *ACT Government Preschools Strategic Plan 2001–2003*, the release of the discussion paper, *Contours of Learning: A Guide for Children’s Learning in the Early Years*, and the revision and publication of the *Conditions for Approvals in Principle and Licences* for centre based children’s services, school age care and family day care.

The *ACT Government Preschools Strategic Plan 2001–2003* was developed following extensive community consultation. It seeks to build on the strengths of the ACT Government preschool system while taking into account the changes occurring for children and families in the ACT community. The four goals of the plan are to introduce a continuous quality improvement program, improve outcomes for all children attending government preschools, improve transitions between early childhood settings — home, child care and school — and develop a sustainable early childhood system.

Contours of Learning: A Guide for Children’s Learning in the Early Years provides a platform to stimulate reflection, discussion and planning for early childhood educators working with children from birth to 8 years. The document aims to build a common language and shared understandings about what is significant in children’s learning during the early years, with a focus on socialisation, literacy and numeracy, and the important family and community partnerships that are essential for children’s learning in the early years.

With the introduction of the *Children and Young People Act 1999* in May 2000, the ACT centre based children’s services, school age care and family day care *Conditions for Approvals in Principle and Licences* were fully revised and reprinted. The documents have also been published on the department’s web site to ensure families and members of the community have full access to them. ”

Northern Territory Government comments

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Children’s services in the Northern Territory aim to support families in caring for their young children, as a fundamental component in the range of activities and services that enhance the capacity of individuals, families and communities to improve their wellbeing.

The Territory has a small (195 500) and young population dispersed across one-sixth of the national landmass. About 36 per cent of the 0–12 population are Indigenous children, some 75 per cent of whom live in small remote communities and townships. Diseconomies of scale, an environment ranging from desert to tropical climates, and the particular interests and needs of the population have resulted in unique approaches to providing children’s services in the Northern Territory. Due to this, comparability for reporting purposes continues to be difficult. For example, this report indicates 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, playgroups and informal care services, preferred service models in a number of communities.

The NT continues to sustain relative affordability for centre based child care services across all income brackets. This is in part due to payment of an indexed operational subsidy of (currently) \$12.57 per child per week over 2 years of age and \$19.61 per child per week under 2 years of age.

The NT has the longest average hours of attendance at child care centre, occasional care and vacation care services, due in part to high full time employment levels in the NT relative to other jurisdictions. A low proportion of services offering non-standard hours of operation may be due to reduced travel to work times in the major urban areas. NT funding to family day care has improved non-standard hours access in this service type over the last 12 months.

In 2000-01, the focus of the program was on continuing to expand access to appropriate children’s services in remote Indigenous communities and tailoring services to better meet family needs. Program development activities included improving the supply of appropriately qualified staff, and strengthening collaboration and service delivery coordination among children’s education, health, disability and care services. This focus will continue over the next 12 months.

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14.6 Definitions

Table 14.5 Terms

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Administration expenditure	All expenditure by the departments responsible for the provision of 'licensing', 'advice', 'policy development', 'grants administration' and 'training' services. Responsible departments include those departments that are responsible for administering policy, funding and licensing/accreditation of child care and preschool services in each jurisdiction.
Approved preschool care	Preschool care that meets State and Territory government licensing requirements (where such requirements exist).
Centre based long day care	Care for children (usually aged 0–5 years) in a licensed child care centre that is open for a minimum of eight hours per day, five days per week, 48 weeks per year. These centres provide quality all day or part-time care for working families and the general community. Some centres provide care for limited numbers of primary school children before and after school, and during school holidays.
Child care	Care provided to a child 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 hour care (vacation, before/after school hours and 'pupil free days' care), occasional care and other care.
Children	All resident male and female Australians aged 12 years and younger as at 30 June of each year.
Children from Indigenous backgrounds	Children of Indigenous descent who identify as being Indigenous and are accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives.
Children from non-English speaking backgrounds	Children living in situations where the main language spoken is not English.
Children from single parent families	Dependent children who are resident in households of lone parent (either father or mother) families.
Children's services	All government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services (unless otherwise stated).
Counting rules	Prescribed standards, definitions and mathematical methods for determining descriptors and performance indicators for monitoring government services.
Expenditure on assets	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.
Disability related care	Care of children who have a developmental delay or disability (including intellectual, sensory or physical impairment) or parent(s) with a disability.

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Table 14.5 (Continued)

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Family day care	A network of experienced carers who provide care and developmental activities in their own homes for other people's children. A coordinating unit oversees each family day care scheme, which covers a number of carers in an area. The unit provides support and resources to the carers. Care is flexible and can be tailored to suit each family's needs, including outside normal working hours and, if needed, overnight care. The number of children per carer is restricted in some States by State licensing requirements.
Financial support to families	Any form of fee relief paid by governments to the users of children's services (for example, the Child Care Benefit).
Formal child care	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).
Formal qualifications	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.
Full time equivalent staff numbers	A measure of the total level of staff resources used. A full time staff member is employed full-time and engaged solely on 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.
Government funded or/and provided	All government financed services — that is, services that receive government contributions towards providing a specified service (including private services eligible for the Child Care Benefit) and/or services for which the government has primary responsibility for delivery.
Informal child care	Child care arrangements provided privately (for example, by friends, relatives, nannies) for which no government assistance (other than the Child Care Benefit) is provided. Such care is unregulated in most States and Territories.
Licensed services	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.
Metropolitan areas	Defined as per the 1994 Human Services and Health and Department of Primary Industry and Energy publication <i>Rural, Remote and Metropolitan Areas Classification 1991 Census Edition</i> . In this publication, metropolitan areas are defined as areas that have an urban centre of 100 000 people or more. Jurisdictions were provided with a table indicating the classification assigned to 1996 statistical local areas. Jurisdictions used this table to establish the total number of rural and remote places receiving government funding.

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Table 14.5 (Continued)

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Non-standard hours of care	<p>Non-standard hours of care by service type are defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • centre based long day care — services providing service for more than 10 hours per day on Monday to Friday and/or providing service on weekends; • preschool — services providing service for more than six hours per day; • family day care — services providing service for more than 10 hours per day on Monday to Friday and/or providing service overnight and/or on weekends; • vacation care — services providing service for more than 10 hours per day; • before school hours care — services providing service for more than 2 hours before school; • after school care — services providing service for more than three hours after school; • occasional care — services providing service for more than eight hours per day; and • other — services providing service for more than 10 hours per day.
Occasional care	<p>Services for parents who need short periods of care for children under school age. They can be used regularly or irregularly while parents shop or attend appointments, for respite from full time parenting, and to provide developmental opportunities for children. Some occasional care services also provide for casual or part time workers.</p>
Operational place	<p>A licensed place (where a licensing system exists, or in receipt of government funding where not licensed) able to accept children as at 30 June each year.</p>
Other care	<p>Child care designed to meet the needs of children in particular situations (including children from an Indigenous background, children from non-English speaking backgrounds, children with a disability or whose parents have a disability, and children living in remote and rural areas). These services include multifunctional services; multifunctional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's services; mobiles; and toy libraries.</p>
Other expenditure on service provision	<p>All recurrent expenditure on government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services. It also includes one-off, non-capital payments to peak agencies who support child care and preschool service providers.</p>
Outside school hours care	<p>Outside school hours care provides care for primary school children before and/or after school and, in some services, on 'pupil free days', during the school term. Some outside school hours care services also provide school holiday care or are linked to vacation care services, and provide for primary school children all year. These services are generally located on or near primary schools and offer recreational programs and activities along with time for rest and homework.</p>
Preschools	<p>Educational and developmental programs for children in the year or two before they begin full time school. Traditional preschool services are generally provided on a sessional basis (two to five sessions of 2.5–3 hours in length per week) in dedicated preschools during school terms only. Preschool programs can also be provided in a long day care centre by a qualified early childhood teacher.</p>

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Table 14.5 (Continued)

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Primary contact staff	Staff whose primary function is to provide care and/or preschool services to children.
Program support activities	Administration expenditure associated with the licensing of services that do not receive government funding.
Real expenditure	Actual expenditure adjusted for changes in prices. Adjustments were made using the GDP (E) price deflator, and expressed in terms of final year prices.
Recurrent expenditure	Expenditure that does not result in the creation or acquisition of fixed assets (new or secondhand). It consists mainly of expenditure on wages, salaries and supplements, purchases of goods and services, and the consumption of fixed capital (depreciation).
Rural and remote areas	Areas defined as per the 1994 Human Services and Health and Department of Primary Industry and Energy publication <i>Rural, Remote and Metropolitan Areas Classification 1991 Census Edition</i> . This publication assigned a measure of remoteness to each statistical local area in Australia. Jurisdictions were provided with a table showing the classification assigned to each statistical local area. Jurisdictions used this table to establish the total number of rural and remote places receiving government funding.
Serious injury	Injury requiring a visit to (or by) a doctor or hospitalisation.
Service	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.
Service type	The categories for which data were collected, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • long day care; • family day care; • vacation care; • before/after school care; • occasional care; • 'other' care; and • preschool services.
Substantiated complaint	An expression of concern about a child care or preschool service, made orally, in writing or in person, 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.
Vacation care	Care and developmental activities provided for school age children during school vacation periods.

Table 14.6 Indicators

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Proportion of services providing non-standard hours of care	The number of services providing non-standard hours of care divided by the total number of services, by service type.

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Table 14.6 (Continued)

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Proportion of special needs groups using services relative to their population proportions	The number of children from special needs groups using children's services divided by the total number of children using children's services. Results are presented separately for child care and preschool services, with special needs groups divided into children from a non-English speaking background, children from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background, children from single parent families, children with a disability, and children from remote or rural areas. These results were compared with these groups representation in the community.
Serious injuries sustained per registered or licensed service	The total number of serious injuries sustained by children divided by the total number of registered or licensed services.
Substantiated complaints per registered or licensed service	The number of substantiated complaints divided by the total number of registered or licensed services. Results are presented separately by service type. The proportion of substantiated complaints against which action was taken is also reported.
Out-of-pocket costs relative to family income for children's services	Modelling undertaken by the Department of Family and Community Services for families with one child and two children respectively in full time care (defined as 50 hours per week for each child) for a range of indicative annual incomes. Out-of-pocket costs are based on the average weekly fee for one child and two children in full time care, and are calculated as a proportion of weekly disposable income, after the payment of child care subsidies. The annual income levels used are: \$27 000, \$35 000, \$45 000, \$55 000 and \$65 000.
Government recurrent expenditure per hour of service	Total government recurrent funding on children's services divided by the total hours of care provided by services receiving government funding.
Administrative expenditure as a proportion of total government expenditure	Total government administrative expenditure divided by total government expenditure.