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## 3 Children's services

### CONTENTS

<b>3.1 Profile of children's services</b>	<b>3.2</b>
<b>3.2 Framework of performance indicators</b>	<b>3.13</b>
<b>3.3 Key performance indicator results</b>	<b>3.16</b>
<b>3.4 Future directions in performance reporting</b>	<b>3.66</b>
<b>3.5 Jurisdictions' comments</b>	<b>3.68</b>
<b>3.6 Definitions of key terms and indicators</b>	<b>3.78</b>
<b>3.7 Attachment tables</b>	<b>3.83</b>
<b>3.8 References</b>	<b>3.88</b>

#### **Attachment tables**

Attachment tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an 'A' suffix (for example, table 3A.3). A full list of attachment tables is provided at the end of this chapter, and the attachment tables are available on the CD-ROM enclosed with the Report or from the Review website at [www.pc.gov.au/gsp](http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp).

Children's services aim to meet the care, education and development needs of children. In this chapter, child care services are those provided to children aged 0–12 years, usually by someone other than the child's parents or guardian. Preschool services are services provided to children mainly in the year or two before they begin full time schooling. This chapter is included in the 'Early childhood, education and training' section of the Report because of the important links between children's services and education.

Most of the data in this chapter relate to services that are supported by the Australian, State and Territory governments and provided for children aged 0–12 years. Local governments also plan, fund and deliver children's services. Due

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to data limitations, the only local government data included are where Australian, State and Territory government funding and/or licensing are involved.

The major improvements to reporting on children's services this year include:

- reporting on the age of children enrolled in preschool
- reporting new data from the ABS Childhood Education and Care Survey 2008 (ABS 2009)
- reporting on the level of qualifications of staff employed by Australian Government approved child care services.

The Child Care Management System (CCMS) and the Australian Government Child Care Provider Survey (AGCCPS) have replaced the Australian Government Census of Child Care Services (AGCCCS) and other administrative data as the key source for Australian Government data for this chapter (box 3.1). Box 3.5 contains more information on the AGCCPS.

#### **Box 3.1 Australian Government data**

Data for a number of indicators and measures were previously sourced from the discontinued AGCCCS, which was last conducted in 2006. Data for these indicators and measures for 2008 and 2009 have been sourced from Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) administrative data collected through the CCMS and the Centrelink Operator System, and the 2008-09 AGCCPS. The change in data source has affected the comparability of data for 2008 and 2009 to previous years, and time series data should be used with caution. Refer to the footnotes to figures and attachment tables for specific information on factors influencing the interpretation of these data.

## **3.1 Profile of children's services**

### **Service overview**

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

*Centre-based long day care* — comprises services aimed primarily at 0–5 year olds, provided in a centre, usually by a mix of qualified and other staff. Educational, care and recreational programs are provided based on the developmental needs, interests and experience of each child. In some jurisdictions, primary school children can

also receive care before and after school, and during school vacations. Centres typically operate for at least eight hours per day on normal working days, for a minimum of 48 weeks per year.

*Family day care* — comprises services provided in the carer’s home. The care is largely aimed at 0–5 year olds, but primary school children can 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.

*Occasional care* — comprises services usually provided at a centre on an hourly or sessional basis for short periods or at irregular intervals, for parents who need time to attend appointments, take care of personal matters, undertake casual and part time employment, study or have temporary respite from full time parenting. These services provide developmental activities for children, and are aimed primarily at 0–5 year olds. Centres providing these services usually employ a mix of qualified and other staff.

*Preschool* — comprises services that deliver early childhood education programs provided by a qualified teacher that are aimed at children in the year before they commence full time schooling (that is, when a child is 4 years old), although younger or older children can attend in most jurisdictions. Preschool program names and starting ages vary across jurisdictions, and information on the preschool program for each State and Territory are presented in table 3.1.

**Table 3.1 Preschool programs in Australia**

	<i>Program name</i>	<i>Age of entry</i>
NSW	Preschool	generally 3 and 4 year olds
Victoria	Kindergarten	4 by 30 April
Queensland	Kindergarten and Pre-Preparatory (Pre-Prep)	4 by 30 June
Western Australia	Kindergarten	4 by 30 June
South Australia	Preschool and Kindergarten	entry after 4th birthday
Tasmania	Kindergarten	4 by 1 January
Australian Capital Territory	Preschool	4 by 30 April
Northern Territory	Preschool	4 by 30 June, or 3 for Indigenous children in remote communities

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 3A.1.

*Outside school hours care* — comprises services provided for school aged children (primarily 5–12 year olds) outside school hours during term and vacations. Care can be provided on student free days and when school finishes early.

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*Other services* — comprise government funded services to support children with additional needs or in particular situations (including children from an Indigenous or non-English speaking background, children with disability or of parents with disability, and children living in regional and remote areas).

## **Roles and responsibilities**

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

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

- paying Child Care Benefit (CCB) to families using approved child care services or registered carers
- paying Child Care Rebate (CCR), formerly the Child Care Tax Rebate (CCTR), to eligible families using approved child care services
- providing funding to State and Territory governments to support the achievement of universal access to early childhood education
- funding the National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC) to administer quality assurance systems for child care services
- funding organisations to provide information, support and training to service providers
- providing operational and capital funding to some providers.

State and Territory governments' roles and responsibilities vary across jurisdictions. Generally, State and Territory governments are responsible for funding and/or providing preschool services. Other roles and responsibilities can include:

- providing a legislative framework in which child care services are provided
- licensing and setting standards for children's services providers
- monitoring and resourcing licensed and/or funded children's services providers
- providing operational and capital funding to non-government service providers
- delivering some services directly (especially preschool services)
- developing new child care and preschool services
- providing information, support, training and development opportunities for children's services providers

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- providing curriculum and policy support and advice, as well as training and development for management and staff
  - planning to ensure the appropriate mix of services is available to meet the needs of the community
  - providing information and advice to parents and others about operating standards and the availability of services
  - providing dispute resolution and complaints management processes.

The arrangements for departmental responsibility for early childhood education and care vary across State and Territory governments. There are also differences across states and territories for early childhood education program names and starting ages. To provide some clarity on these arrangements, a matrix showing basic information on child care and preschool education programs, such as agency responsibility, program names and starting ages, has been included in attachment table 3A.1.

The Australian Government and State and Territory governments are working cooperatively to undertake national reforms in the area of early childhood education and care. These reforms are part of the broader *National Early Childhood Development strategy* (box 3.2).

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### Box 3.2 National Early Childhood Development strategy

The *National Early Childhood Development Strategy – Investing in the Early Years*, is a collaboration between Australian, State and Territory Governments. The strategy broadly covers children from before birth to eight years, and aims to improve outcomes for all children and their families, including reducing inequalities in outcomes between groups of children. The strategy was endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) on 2 July 2009.

The strategy builds on the COAG early childhood development reforms in 2008, and includes a range of long term national reform initiatives in the areas of education and care, health, protection, family support and housing that seek to improve early childhood outcomes. The following national reform initiatives are linked specifically to early childhood education and care:

- the *National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education* to achieve universal access to quality early childhood education for all children in the year before school by 2013
- the *National Indigenous Reform Agreement* which includes a target to ensure all Indigenous 4 year olds in remote communities have access to early childhood education by 2013
- the *National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development* to establish 35 new Children and Family Centres
- a national quality agenda for early childhood education and care that includes stronger standards, streamlined regulatory approaches, a rating system and an Early Years Learning Framework
- national workforce initiatives to improve the quality and supply of the early childhood education and care workforce.

Source: COAG (2009).

### Quality of care

Governments seek to ensure that children's services provide a satisfactory quality of care, through:

- licensing, quality assurance, measuring performance against standards, and funding linked to outcomes
- providing curriculum and policy support and advice
- training and development of management and staff.

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### *Licensing*

Providers of children's services must meet legislative and regulatory requirements regarding safety standards, staff qualifications, child/staff ratios, health and safety requirements, and child development to obtain a licence to operate. State and Territory governments set the requirements, monitor performance and administer licences.

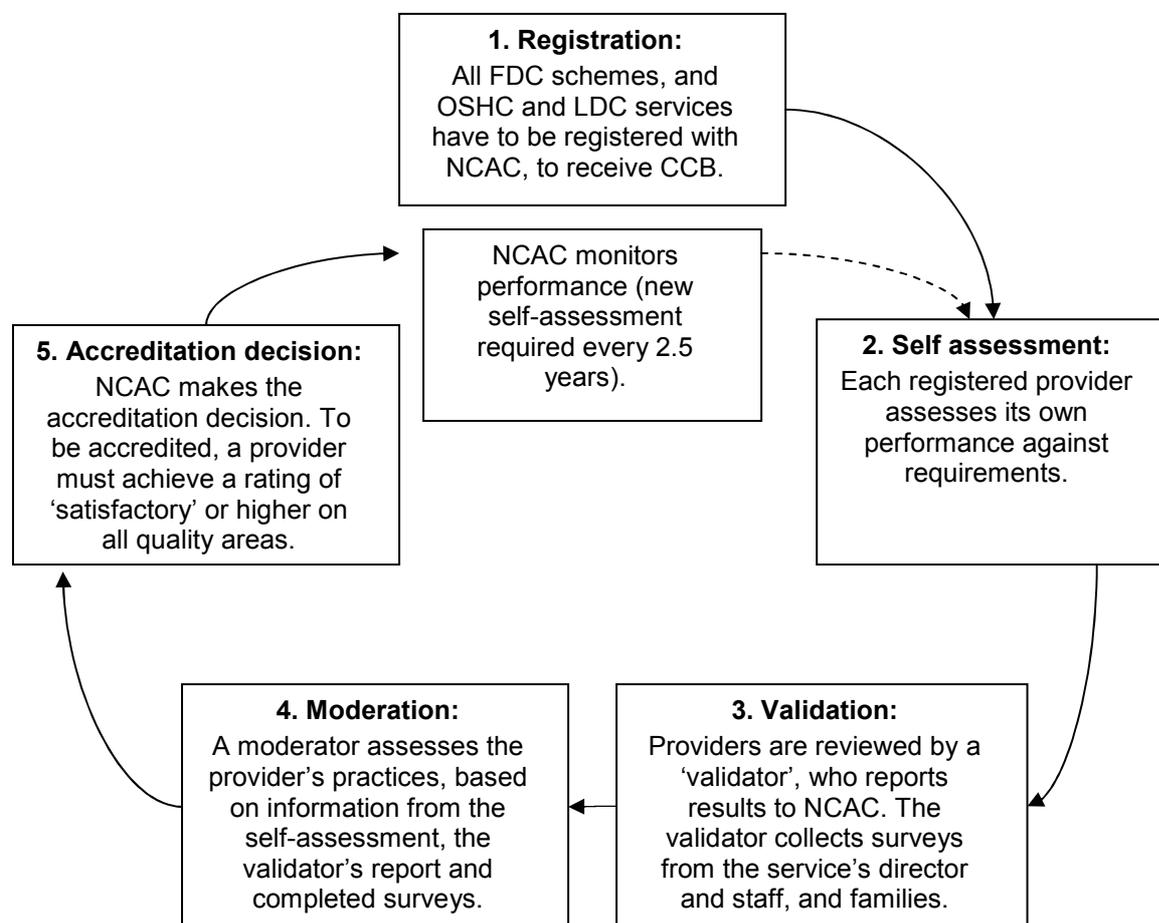
The Australian, State and Territory governments have jointly developed national standards for centre-based long day care, family day care and outside school hours care services. These standards express a national view about the level of care all Australians can expect from the different models of child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

### *Quality assurance*

The Australian Government has implemented quality assurance systems for Australian Government funded centre-based long day care services, family day care services and outside school hours care services. To be eligible to offer CCB as a fee reduction to parents and obtain some funding support, child care services have to register and satisfactorily participate in quality assurance. Quality assurance is designed to build on, and complement, the State and Territory government licensing requirements (where they exist).

The broad objective of the quality assurance systems is to ensure that children in care have stimulating, positive experiences and interactions that nurture all aspects of their development. The quality assurance systems do this by defining quality child care, providing a way to measure the quality of care provided by the service, and identifying areas for ongoing quality improvement. Services participating in the quality assurance system are required to progress through a five step process, outlined in figure 3.1.

**Figure 3.1 Accreditation process under National Childcare Accreditation Council quality assurance systems**



**FDC** Family Day Care schemes. **OSHC** Outside School Hours Care. **LDC** Long Day Care services. **CCB** Child Care Benefit payments.

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

### *Funding performance standards and outcomes*

State and Territory governments impose varying performance requirements for funding children's services. These requirements can include:

- the employment of higher qualified staff than required by licensing or minimum standards
- self assessment of quality
- a demonstration of the delivery of quality educational and recreational programs.

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## Funding

Total Australian, State and Territory government expenditure on children's services was approximately \$4.5 billion in 2008-09, compared with \$3.4 billion (in real terms) in 2007-08. Nationally, real expenditure increased by 51.1 per cent (\$1.5 billion) between 2004-05 and 2008-09 (table 3A.3).

Australian Government expenditure accounted for 83.4 per cent (\$3.8 billion) of total government expenditure on children's services in 2008-09 (table 3A.4). State and Territory government expenditure on children's services in 2008-09 was \$748.6 million (table 3A.5). Total Australian, State and Territory government expenditure on children's services is also available by jurisdiction (tables 3A.3–3A.5, 3A.44, 3A.51, 3A.58, 3A.65, 3A.72, 3A.79, 3A.86 and 3A.93).

In 2008-09, the provision of preschool services accounted for the largest proportion of total State and Territory government expenditure across all children's services models (83.7 per cent, or \$626.8 million) (table 3A.5).

The Australian Government provides supplementary funding to support the participation of Indigenous children in preschool programs. In 2009, an estimated \$9.1 million was provided on a per person and project basis to 1263 preschools. The funding covers 8278 full time equivalent Indigenous preschool enrolments (DEEWR unpublished).

## Size and scope

### *Services by management type*

Children's services are managed by the government (State, Territory and local), community and private sectors. The management structure of services indicates the involvement of these sectors in the direct delivery of children's services. The limited data on the management type of child care services need to be interpreted with care because the scope of data collection varies across jurisdictions. Available data on the management type of preschool services is more complete than that for child care services, and indicate considerable variation across jurisdictions (table 3.2).

**Table 3.2 Proportion of State and Territory licensed and/or registered children's services, by management type, 2008-09 (per cent)<sup>a</sup>**

	NSW	Vic <sup>b</sup>	Qld	WA	SAC <sup>c</sup>	Tas <sup>d</sup>	ACT	NT <sup>e</sup>
<i>Child care</i>								
Community managed <sup>f</sup>	27.2	33.6	34.7	19.4	34.3	50.5	79.4	68.4
Private <sup>g</sup>	70.1	53.9	62.5	77.3	42.3	34.7	20.6	31.6
Government managed	2.6	12.6	2.8	3.3	23.4	14.8	–	–
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>Preschool</i>								
Community managed <sup>f</sup>	79.8	73.8	90.4	na	4.5	na	13.0	na
Private <sup>g</sup>	9.3	7.8	2.5	na	na	25.8	na	3.4
Government managed	10.9	18.3	7.1	100.0	95.5	74.2	87.0	96.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

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

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); tables 3A.49, 3A.56, 3A.63, 3A.70, 3A.77, 3A.84, 3A.91 and 3A.98.

### *Child care services*

It is necessary to distinguish between the number of child care places provided, and the number of children who attend services. Because of the episodic nature of some services (for example, some children attend only for some sessions or some days) it is possible for one place to accommodate more than one child, as many children attend on a part time basis. The lack of a unique identifier for each child means it is difficult to accurately measure how many children access multiple services.

There is no limit to the number of places in Australian Government approved child care services and for most State and Territory government child care services. Data on services should be considered only indicative of service capacity.

The Australian Government supported 711 394 child care places in 2009. The largest proportion of Australian Government supported child care places were centre-based long day care places (44.8 per cent), followed by outside school hours care places (44.5 per cent), family day care places (10.3 per cent) and occasional care places (0.4 per cent) (table 3A.8). Data on the number of child care places

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supported by State and Territory governments are presented in tables 3A.45, 3A.52, 3A.59, 3A.66, 3A.73, 3A.80, 3A.87 and 3A.94.

In the March quarter 2009, approximately 828 381 children aged 12 years or younger attended Australian Government approved child care services (table 3A.9). An additional 112 506 children attended State and Territory funded and/or provided child care services (table 3A.11).<sup>1</sup>

The difference between the number of places and the number of children attending child care is largely due to more than one child being able to fill one place, as many children attend child care services on a part time basis.

### *Preschool services*

Preschools provide a range of educational and developmental programs (generally on a sessional basis) to children in the year immediately before they commence full time schooling and also, in some jurisdictions, to younger children.

The age from which children can attend preschool varies across jurisdictions. Victoria contributes funding towards a preschool program for all 4 year old children, which is the year before they begin schooling. In all other jurisdictions, children can also begin preschool at a younger age in some circumstances (for example, Indigenous children, children with English as a second language, gifted children, and children from vulnerable families).

This disparity in the age from which children can access preschool services reduces the comparability of preschool data across jurisdictions. Data on the age of children enrolled in preschool are presented in this chapter, and to improve comparability, data are also presented for:

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

There is no limit to the number of places in most State and Territory government funded and/or provided preschool services. Data on services should be considered only indicative of service capacity. Data on the number of preschool places are presented in tables 3A.45, 3A.52, 3A.59, 3A.66, 3A.73, 3A.80, 3A.87 and 3A.94.

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<sup>1</sup> NSW does not discriminate between child care and preschool services, and children attending preschool services are included in the count for children attending child care.

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In 2008-09, 208 183 children were enrolled in State and Territory funded and/or provided services (table 3A.13). The majority (89.6 per cent, or 186 562 children) were to begin full time schooling the following year (table 3A.13). Limited data on preschool attendance are available for reporting.

The difference between the number of places and the number of children enrolled in preschool is largely due to more than one child being able to fill one place, as many children attend preschool services on a part time basis.

### *Non-government preschools*

Non-government preschools deliver preschool programs and can be managed by entities from the community sector, private sector or non-government school sector.

Non-government preschool programs can be delivered in stand alone preschools, non-government schools, government schools and child care centres (for example, long day care centres). Non-government preschools are required by State and Territory governments to be licensed and/or registered, and licensing and registration arrangements vary across jurisdictions.

Non-government preschool programs that are government funded are within the scope of this chapter (table 3.3).

**Table 3.3 Characteristics of non-government preschools in receipt of government funding, 2009**

	NSW <sup>a</sup>	Vic	Qld <sup>b</sup>	WA	SA	Tas <sup>c</sup>	ACT <sup>d</sup>	NT <sup>e</sup>
<i>Management type</i>								
Community sector	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x
Private sector	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	x	x
Non-government schools sector	✓	✓	✓	✓	na	✓	x	✓
<i>Service delivery setting</i>								
Stand alone preschools	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x
Non-government schools	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓
Government schools	✓	✓	✓	✓	na	x	x	x
Child care centres	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	x
Registration and licensing requirements	R, L	L	L	R	L	R	L	R

**X** Not government funded. **R** Registered. **L** Licensed.

<sup>a</sup> All preschool services in NSW are required to be licensed by July 2010. <sup>b</sup> In Queensland, privately owned preschools were required to be licensed, but did not receive government funding in 2009. From 2010, private providers will be eligible to receive State government funding to deliver a kindergarten program. <sup>c</sup> In Tasmania, non-government preschools can be located in stand alone settings, however there are none currently in existence. <sup>d</sup> Non-government preschools in the ACT are licensed, but not government funded. <sup>e</sup> In the NT, only 4 Catholic Remote Indigenous Schools receive NT government funding for preschool services. All other non-government preschools are unfunded. **na** not available.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished).

Some data are also included on non-government preschools which are licensed, registered and/or approved by State and Territory governments (box 3.6).

## 3.2 Framework of performance indicators

COAG has agreed six National Agreements to enhance accountability to the public for the outcomes achieved or outputs delivered by a range of government services, (see chapter 1 for more detail on reforms to federal financial relations). The agreements include sets of performance indicators, for which the Steering Committee collates annual performance information for analysis by the COAG Reform Council (CRC).

None of the National Agreements relate specifically to children's services. The *National Indigenous Reform Agreement* (NIRA) establishes specific outcomes for reducing the level of disadvantage experienced by Indigenous Australians, and includes an indicator relating to access to quality early childhood education for Indigenous children. The measurement details of NIRA reporting were under development at the time of preparing this Report. It is anticipated that this indicator will be incorporated into the Children's services chapter for the 2011 Report.

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The framework of performance indicators for children's services is based on common objectives for children's services endorsed by the then Community Services Ministers' Advisory Council (CSMAC), now known as the Community and Disability Services Ministers' Advisory Council (CDSMAC) (box 3.3). The relative emphasis placed on each objective varies across jurisdictions.

**Box 3.3 Objectives for children's services**

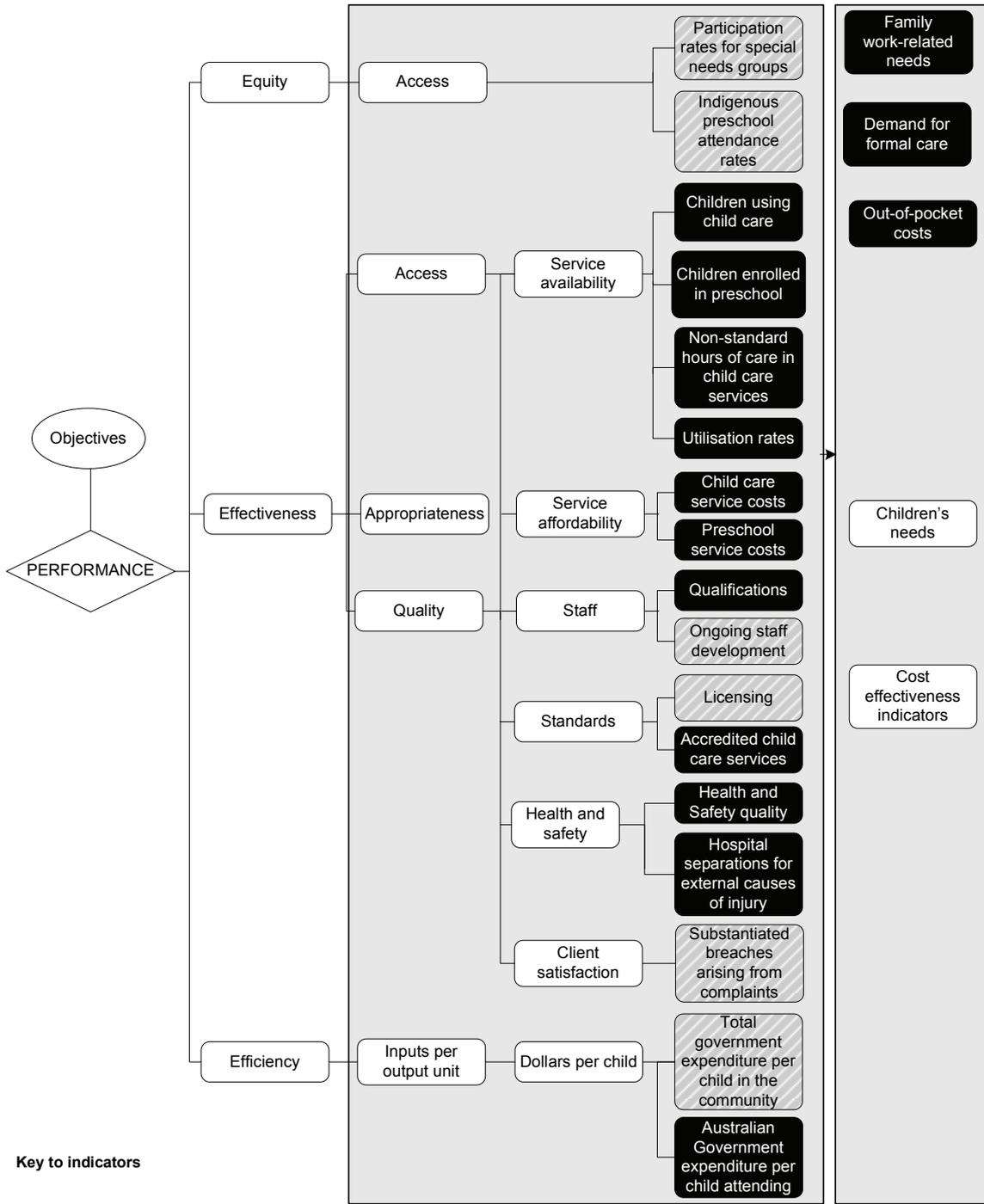
Children's services aim to:

- meet the care and education needs of all children in developmentally appropriate ways, in a safe and nurturing environment
- provide support for families in caring for their children
- provide these services across a range of settings in an equitable and efficient manner.

A performance indicator framework consistent with these objectives is shown in figure 3.2. The framework shows which data are provided on a comparable basis in the 2010 Report. For data that are not deemed directly comparable, the text includes relevant caveats and supporting commentary. Chapter 1 discusses data comparability from a Report-wide perspective (see section 1.6).

The Report's statistical appendix contains data that may assist in interpreting the performance indicators presented in this chapter. These data cover a range of demographic and geographic characteristics, including age profile, geographic distribution of the population, income levels, education levels, tenure of dwellings and cultural heritage (including Indigenous and ethnic status) (appendix A).

Figure 3.2 Performance indicators for children's services



**Key to indicators**

- Text** Data for these indicators comparable, subject to caveats to each chart or table
- Text** Data for these indicators are not complete, or not directly comparable
- Text** These indicators yet to be developed or data not collected for his Report

Outputs

Outcomes

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### 3.3 Key performance indicator results

Different delivery contexts, locations and types of clients can affect the equity, effectiveness and efficiency of children's services. Some of the data available for reporting in this chapter are not comparable across jurisdictions. Appendix A contains contextual information, which can assist in interpreting the performance indicators presented in this chapter. Definitions of key terms and indicators are in section 3.6.

#### Outputs

Outputs are the actual services delivered (while outcomes are the impact of these services on the status of an individual or group) (see chapter 1, section 1.5).

#### *Equity*

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

'Participation rates for special needs groups' is an indicator of governments' objective to ensure that services are provided in an equitable manner to all special needs groups in the community, and that there is consideration of the needs of those groups which can have special difficulty in accessing services (box 3.4).

#### **Box 3.4 Participation rates for special needs groups**

'Participation rates for special needs groups' is defined as the proportion of children using child care and preschool services who are from targeted special needs groups, compared with the representation of these groups in the community. Data are reported separately for child care (for 0–5 and 6–12 year olds) and preschool services (3–5 year olds). Targeted special needs groups include children from a non-English speaking background, Indigenous children, children from low income families, children with disability, and children from regional and remote areas.

If the representation of special needs groups among children's services users is broadly similar to their representation in the community, this can indicate equity of access. Therefore, a higher participation rate is desirable.

Data reported for this indicator are not directly comparable.

Data for participation by special needs groups using Australian Government approved child care services for 2008-09 were drawn from the AGCCPS and

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DEEWR administrative systems. Box 3.5 contains more information on the AGCCPS.

**Box 3.5 Australian Government Child Care Provider Survey**

The Australian Government Child Care Provider Survey (AGCCPS) was conducted for the first time in 2008-09 and replaces the Australian Government Census of Child Care Services (AGCCCS) as the source for data that was not available from Australian Government administrative sources. The AGCCCS was last conducted in 2006 and has been discontinued.

The 2008-09 AGCCPS collected information on children with special needs and staff in Australian Government approved child care services. Data were collected from child care services during a sample week in November 2008 for all service types except vacation care. Data on vacation care services were collected in a sample week during school holidays (which varied across jurisdictions) in June and July 2009.

For consistency, the same information was collected in the AGCCPS as in the AGCCCS. Although data from the AGCCPS and AGCCCS presented in this chapter are weighted for the full population of services, variation in the response rates and different weighting methods affect the comparability of data across the collections.

*Source:* DEEWR (unpublished).

At a national level, patterns for children from special needs groups varied:

- Children from a non-English speaking background aged 0–12 years participated in child care at a lower rate (13.2 per cent) than this group’s representation in the community (18.8 per cent). This was also the case for both the 0–5 age group and the 6–12 age group.
- Indigenous children aged 0–12 years participated in child care at a lower rate (2.3 per cent) than their representation in the community (4.4 per cent). This was also the case for both the 0–5 age group and the 6–12 age group.
- Children aged 0–12 years from low income families participated in child care services at a similar rate (23.9 per cent) to their representation in the community (23.2 per cent). This was also the case for both the 0–5 age group and the 6–12 age group.
- Children aged 0–12 years with disability had a lower representation in child care (3.2 per cent) compared with their representation in the community (7.7 per cent). This was also the case for both the 0–5 age group and the 6–12 age group.
- Children aged 0–12 years from regional areas participated in child care services at a lower rate (28.5 per cent) to their representation in the community

(33.1 per cent). This was also the case for both the 0–5 age group and the 6–12 age group.

- Children aged 0–12 years from remote areas participated in child care at a lower rate (1.0 per cent) to their representation in the community (3.0 per cent). This was also the case for both the 0–5 age group and the 6–12 age group (tables 3.4 and 3A.14).

Data on representation of special needs groups in State and Territory funded and/or provided child care, for children aged 0–12, are presented in table 3A.16.

**Table 3.4 Proportion of children aged 0–12 years from special needs groups attending Australian Government approved child care services, 2008-09 (per cent)<sup>a, b, c, d</sup>**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
<i>Children from non-English speaking backgrounds</i>									
In child care services	18.0	17.2	7.3	9.7	9.3	4.2	10.3	11.5	13.2
In the community, 2006	23.2	21.7	11.9	15.5	13.7	7.2	16.2	36.8	18.8
<i>Indigenous children</i>									
In child care services	2.5	0.9	3.1	2.4	2.1	1.8	1.4	10.6	2.3
In the community, 2006	4.1	1.2	6.2	5.6	3.3	6.5	2.3	39.2	4.4
<i>Children from low income families</i>									
In child care services	24.4	23.7	24.7	22.7	24.6	24.8	9.6	16.2	23.9
In the community, 2007-08	24.5	23.1	20.9	21.0	26.6	33.8	10.8	18.9	23.2
<i>Children with disability</i>									
In child care services	3.8	2.5	2.6	2.5	5.5	2.7	1.9	3.7	3.2
In the community, 2003	8.0	6.8	7.6	8.9	8.8	6.2	7.5	np	7.7
<i>Children from regional areas</i>									
In child care services	26.3	24.6	32.5	20.5	19.4	99.2	0.1	79.1	28.5
In the community, 2006	28.9	28.2	45.9	24.8	26.7	97.9	0.2	51.4	33.1
<i>Children from remote areas</i>									
In child care services	0.2	–	1.1	3.4	1.7	0.8	..	21.0	1.0
In the community, 2006	0.7	0.1	4.4	8.6	4.4	2.0	..	50.7	3.0

<sup>a</sup> Data on children in child care services represent the population of children attending child care in 2008-09. Data on representation in the community are reported for different years due to the availability of data and are sourced from the ABS *Survey of Disability and Housing 2003*, *2006 Census of Population and Housing* and the *Survey of Income and Housing 2007-08*. <sup>b</sup> Data on child care services for 2008-09 are not directly comparable to previous years data (presented in table 3A.15) due to a change in data source. Refer to box 3.1, box 3.5 and table 3A.15 for more information. <sup>c</sup> See source table for complete footnotes and definitions. <sup>d</sup> Data in italics have relative standard errors above 25 per cent, and need to be used with caution. – Nil or rounded to zero. .. Not applicable. np Not published.

Source: DEEWR (unpublished) administrative data collection and *Australian Government Child Care Provider Survey 2008-09*; ABS (unpublished) *Survey of Income and Housing 2007-08*, Cat. no. 6523.0, *2006 Census of Population and Housing*, and *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2003*, Cat no. 4430.0; table 3A.15.

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Data on the representation of special needs groups for children in State and Territory government funded and/or provided preschools are provided in table 3.5. For jurisdictions that were able to provide data, the patterns for children from special needs groups in preschool varied:

- For jurisdictions where data were available (NSW, Victoria, Queensland and SA), the representation of children aged 3–5 years from a non-English speaking background was 12.3 per cent. Nationally, 18.7 per cent of children aged 3–5 years in the community were children from a non-English speaking background.
- Nationally, the representation of Indigenous children aged 3–5 years in preschool (4.9 per cent) was higher than their representation in the community (4.5 per cent) though this varies across jurisdictions.
- For jurisdictions where data were available (all except Tasmania and the ACT), the representation of children with disability aged 3–5 years was 6.1 per cent. Nationally, 8.0 per cent of children aged 3–5 years in the community had a disability.
- Nationally, children aged 3–5 years from regional areas participated in preschool at a lower rate (27.3 per cent) compared with their representation in the community (32.3 per cent) though this varied across jurisdictions.
- Nationally, children aged 3–5 years from remote areas participated in preschool at a similar rate (3.7 per cent) to their representation in the community (4.2 per cent) though this varied across jurisdictions (table 3.5).

Data on the representation of special needs groups in preschool in the year before full time school are presented in table 3A.16.

**Table 3.5 Proportion of children (aged 3–5 years) from special needs groups enrolled in State and Territory funded or provided preschools, 2008-09 (per cent)<sup>a, b, c</sup>**

<i>Representation</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust<sup>d</sup></i>
Children from non-English speaking backgrounds									
In preschool services	10.1	16.9	3.8	na	11.0	na	17.3	na	12.3
In the community, 2006	23.2	21.6	11.6	15.6	13.5	7.2	16.1	38.7	18.7
Indigenous children									
In preschool services	4.0	0.9	8.0	8.9	6.3	4.9	3.0	43.2	4.9
In the community, 2006	4.1	1.2	6.4	5.8	3.5	6.4	2.3	41.8	4.5
Children with disability									
In preschool services <sup>e</sup>	5.4	6.6	2.2	3.0	14.1	na	3.4	5.1	6.1
In the community, 2003	7.7	6.5	8.6	10.2	8.3	7.2	14.3	np	8.0
Children from regional areas									
In preschool services	29.4	24.6	40.8	9.7	26.4	98.6	0.8	46.5	27.3
In the community, 2006	28.0	27.5	45.1	24.5	26.2	97.7	0.1	48.2	32.3
Children from remote areas									
In preschool services	1.0	0.1	7.4	8.5	6.1	1.4	..	53.5	3.7
In the community, 2006	1.0	0.1	6.2	11.8	5.8	2.6	..	68.2	4.2

<sup>a</sup> Data on children in preschool services represent the population of children enrolled in preschool in 2008-09. Data on representation in the community are reported for different years due to the availability of data and are sourced from the ABS *Survey of Disability and Housing 2003*, *2006 Census of Population and Housing* and the *Survey of Income and Housing 2007-08*. <sup>b</sup> See source table for complete footnotes and definitions. <sup>c</sup> Data exclude innovative or flexible services that receive direct funding from the Australian Government and are targeted towards children from these groups. Data on preschool services can include some children aged 3 years or 5 years for all jurisdictions. Preschool data in the NT can include some children aged greater than 5 years in very remote areas. <sup>d</sup> Data for Australia for children from non-English speaking backgrounds and children with disability in preschool are the total of the sum of the states and territories for which data are available, and should not be interpreted as national data. Data for Australia for children from regional and remote areas in preschool, and data on the representation in the community represent all states and territories and can be interpreted as national data. <sup>e</sup> Data on children with disability are not directly comparable because the definition of disability varies across jurisdictions. **na** Not available. **..** Not applicable.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); ABS (unpublished) *2006 Census of Population and Housing* and *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2003*, Cat. no. 4430.0; table 3A.16.

### *Access — Indigenous preschool attendance rates*

‘Indigenous preschool attendance rates’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that services are provided in an equitable manner to all special needs groups in the community, and that there is consideration of the needs of those groups which can have special difficulty in accessing services (box 3.6).

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### **Box 3.6 Indigenous preschool attendance rates**

'Indigenous preschool attendance rates' is defined as the number of Indigenous children absent from non-government preschools, as a proportion of all Indigenous children enrolled in non-government preschools. A child is deemed absent if they missed one or more of the sessions they were enrolled in during the reference week. Attendance rates are measured by absentee rates.

Non-government preschools include preschool programs delivered in government funded, registered, licensed and/or approved services, and these arrangements vary across jurisdictions. Preschool programs operated by commercial providers are excluded (DEEWR 2009).

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

Preschool attendance is not compulsory.

Data on Indigenous preschool attendance rates are limited to Indigenous children enrolled in non-government preschools, as Indigenous children enrolled in government preschools are not available.

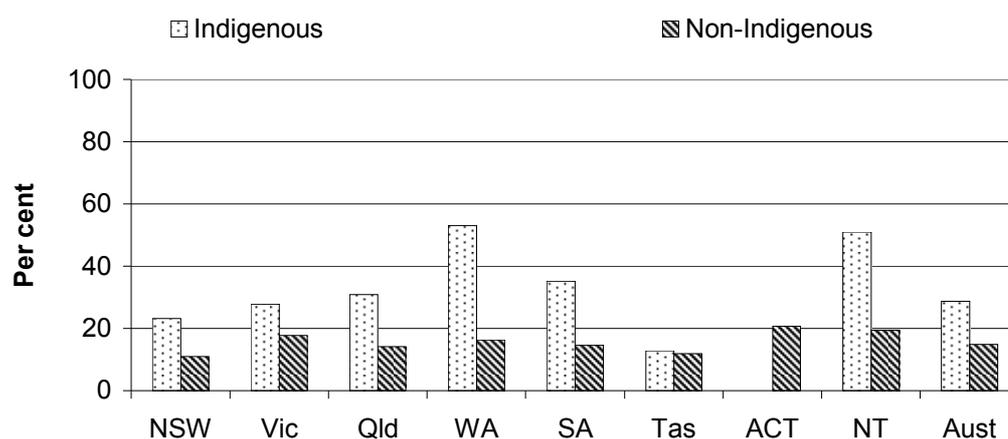
Data reported for this indicator are not complete.

Indigenous preschool enrolments provide a broad indication of access to preschool. Data on Indigenous preschool enrolments were provided for all jurisdictions except the ACT. Nationally in 2008-09, 10 200 Indigenous children were enrolled in State and Territory government funded and/or provided preschool. Of these Indigenous children, at least 4320 were enrolled in preschool in the year before full time school (table 3A.16). Data on Indigenous children's representation in preschool compared with their representation in the community are presented in table 3.5. Data on Indigenous children enrolled in preschool for the period 2004-05 to 2008-09 are presented in 3A.17.

'Indigenous preschool attendance rates' provide a broad indication of the participation of Indigenous children in preschools. These data are sourced from the National Preschool Census (NPC) and relate only to non-government preschools. These data can overlap with the preschools data provided by State and Territory governments and are therefore not directly comparable with other preschool data included in the Report. The NPC collected data from 98 per cent of the 3536 non-government preschools in scope for the 2008 NPC (DEEWR 2009). This represents approximately 68 per cent of all government and non-government preschools, though this proportion varies considerably across jurisdictions (from 7.9 per cent in the NT, to 100.0 per cent in Victoria) (table 3A.18). Data for jurisdictions with few non-government preschools should be interpreted with care.

Nationally in 2008, non-attendance by Indigenous children (28.6 per cent) was higher than non-attendance by non-Indigenous children (14.8 per cent) (figure 3.3).

**Figure 3.3 Enrolled children absent from non-government preschools, 2008<sup>a, b, c, d, e</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Data on attendance are limited to non-government preschools, and exclude government preschools. At the national level, approximately 68 per cent of children are in preschools deemed to be non-government, though this percentage varies across jurisdictions: 90 per cent in NSW, 100 per cent in Victoria, 93 per cent in Queensland, 28 per cent in WA, 22 per cent in SA, 25 per cent in Tasmania, 12 per cent in the ACT, and 8 per cent in the NT. Preschool attendance data for jurisdictions with a small proportion of non-government preschools should be interpreted with care. <sup>b</sup> Preschool attendance is not compulsory. <sup>c</sup> Attendance was measured during the week of 28 July–1 August 2008. Children are counted as absent if they miss one or more of the sessions that they were enrolled in during this week. Absences due to illness can be higher during winter than at other times of the year. <sup>d</sup> Data for non-Indigenous children are derived from data on Indigenous children and all children. <sup>e</sup> There were no Indigenous children enrolled in non-government preschools in the ACT in 2008.

Source: DEEWR (unpublished) *National Preschool Census 2008*; table 3A.18.

## Effectiveness

### *Service availability — children using child care*

‘Children using child care’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that all Australian families have equitable access to child care services (box 3.7).

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**Box 3.7 Children using child care**

'Children using child care' is defined as the proportion of children using child care services in the target age groups.

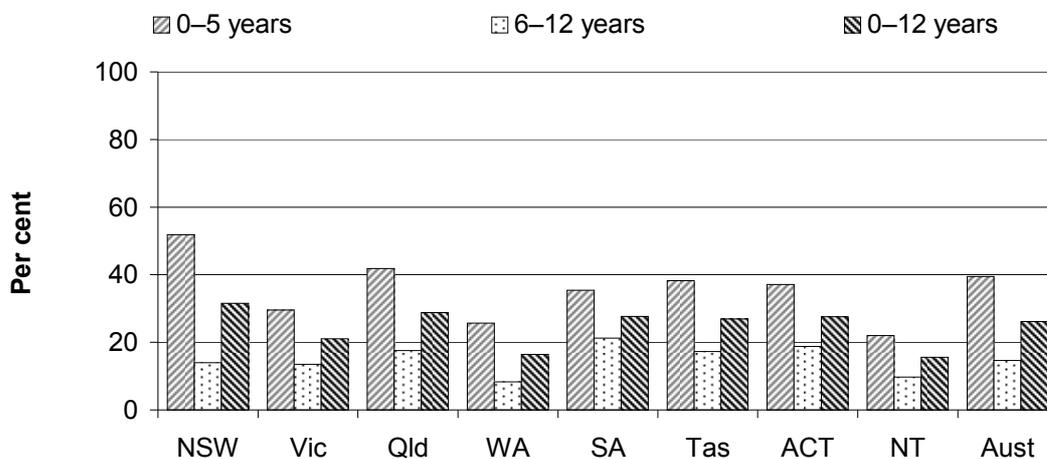
A higher proportion of children using the services can indicate a higher level of service availability. This indicator does not provide information on parental preferences for using child care, or other factors, such as school starting age, which can affect use of care.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

The employment status of parents can influence children's access to services, depending on the service model. Those services eligible for CCB, for example, must follow the Australian Government's 'priority of access' guidelines when filling vacant places. The guidelines give a high priority to children at risk and children of parents with work-related child care needs (see section 3.6 for more detail). Details of the employment status of parents whose children use these services are shown in table 3A.19.

Nationally, 26.2 per cent of children aged 0–12 years attended Australian approved and State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care in 2008-09 (figure 3.4). Nearly all of these children (88.0 per cent) attended Australian Government approved child care services (table 3A.11).

**Figure 3.4 Proportion of children using Australian Government approved plus State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care, 2008-09<sup>a, b</sup>**

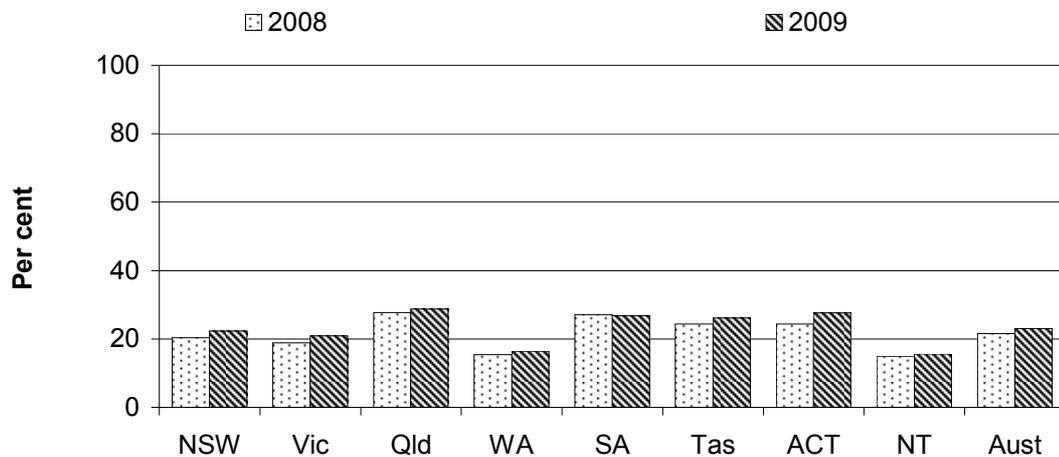


<sup>a</sup> Population measure is the estimated resident population as at 31 December 2008. The Australian total includes children in other territories. <sup>b</sup> As NSW does not differentiate between children in child care and children in preschools, children attending either service are counted in both categories. This overcount means that NSW data are not comparable with data for other states and territories.

Source: DEEWR (unpublished); State and Territory governments (unpublished); ABS (unpublished) *Australian Demographic Statistics*, Cat. no. 3101.0; tables 3A.2 and 3A.11.

Nationally in 2009, 23.1 per cent of all 0–12 year olds attended Australian Government approved child care (figure 3.5). The majority of children attending Australian Government approved child care in 2009 (567 388, or 68.5 per cent) were aged 0–5 years (table 3A.9). In 2009, 44.2 per cent of all 2 year olds, 54.0 per cent of all 3 year olds, and 51.1 per cent of all 4 year olds attended Australian Government approved child care (table 3A.10).

Figure 3.5 Proportion of children aged 0–12 years using Australian Government approved child care<sup>a, b, c, d</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Data from 2008 are not directly comparable to data prior to 2008 (presented in table 3A.9) due to a change in data source. Refer to box 3.1, box 3.5 and table 3A.9 for more information. <sup>b</sup> Each child attending child care is counted once, even if they attend more than one type of care. <sup>c</sup> Attendance is counted as the number of children attending approved care in all services except Vacation Care during the week 23–29 March 2009. The week in which vacation care attendance was measured varied due to different vacation care periods across Australia. <sup>d</sup> Population measure is the estimated resident population as at 31 December.

Source: DEEWR (unpublished); ABS (unpublished) *Australian Demographic Statistics*, Cat. no. 3101.0; tables 3A.2 and 3A.9.

The average hours of attendance in child care in 2009 varied considerably across jurisdictions, for all service models. Nationally, average attendance per child at centre-based long day care centres was 25.8 hours per week, while the average attendance per child at family day care was 19.3 hours per week. Nationally, the average attendance per child at occasional care was 11.5 hours per week, the average attendance per child at outside school hours care was 7.5 hours per week, and the average attendance at vacation care during school holidays was 29.9 hours per week (table 3A.12).

#### *Service availability — children enrolled in preschool*

‘Children enrolled in preschool’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that all Australian families have equitable access to preschool services (box 3.8).

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### **Box 3.8 Children enrolled in preschool**

'Children enrolled in preschool' is defined as the proportion of children enrolled in preschool services in the target age groups. Three measures are reported:

- the proportion of children enrolled in preschool in the year before the commencement of full time schooling (where 'children aged 4 years' is used as a proxy for 'children in the year before full time schooling')
- the proportion of younger children enrolled in preschool
- the proportion of children enrolled in preschool, by age.

A high or increasing proportion of children enrolled in services can indicate a high or increasing level of service availability.

The preschool starting age for children varies across states and territories. A higher proportion of children enrolled at a particular age can reflect the preschool starting age in a particular jurisdiction.

Participation in preschool is not compulsory.

This indicator does not provide information on parental preferences for using preschool, or other factors, such as school starting age, which can affect use of preschool.

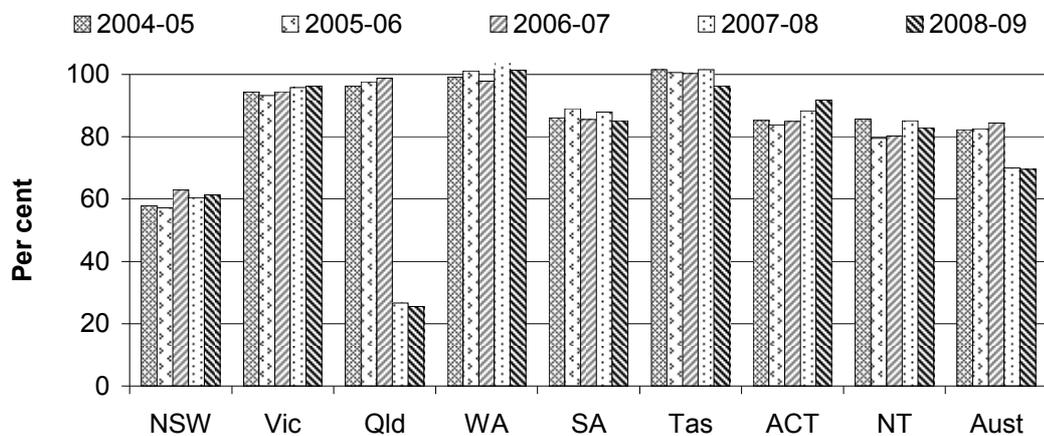
Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

There is some double counting of children enrolled in preschool in several jurisdictions, as well as issues with synchronisation of data collection times for preschool enrolments and population estimates. This can lead to an overestimation of enrolment in some states and territories (for example, where enrolment rates exceed 100 per cent) (figure 3.6).

Data for the proportion of children enrolled in preschool in the year before full time school are based on the number of 4 year old children in the community, even though older or younger children can be enrolled in preschool. This can result in an overestimation of the proportion of children enrolled in preschool in the year before full time school.

Nationally in 2008-09, 69.5 per cent of children enrolled in preschool were in the year immediately before they commenced full time school (figure 3.6). The national total for preschool enrolments from 2007-08 are not directly comparable to earlier years due to the cessation of Queensland government provided preschool and the introduction of a Preparatory Year in Queensland from 2007. The national average for 2007-08 and 2008-09 will therefore be lower than in previous years.

**Figure 3.6 Proportion of children in year before commencement of full time schooling enrolled in State and Territory government funded preschool<sup>a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h</sup>**



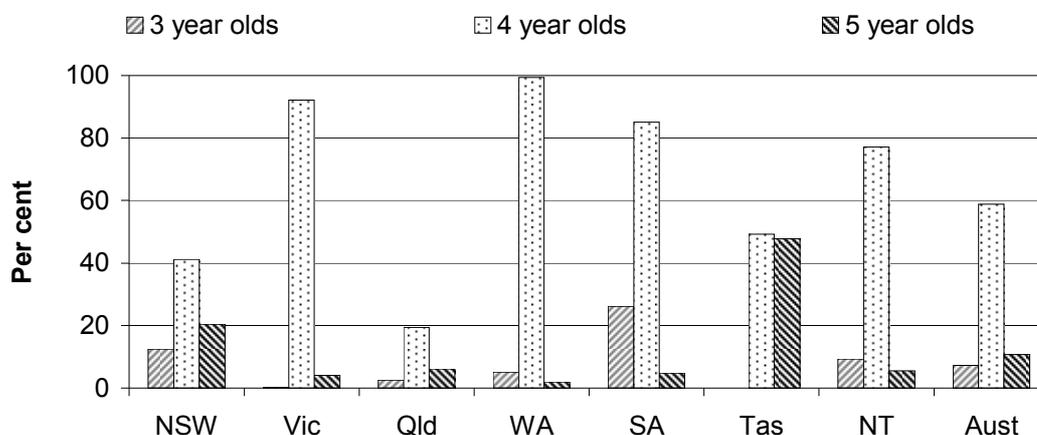
<sup>a</sup> The preschool starting age varies across jurisdictions (table 3.1). Differences in school starting age and years of schooling across jurisdictions can affect the proportion of children in preschool services. <sup>b</sup> Four year old children enrolled in preschool is a proxy for children in the year before full time school. Some children of other ages are included. <sup>c</sup> To calculate the proportions in this figure, enrolment data (from State and Territory governments) are divided by the number of 4 year olds in each jurisdiction (using ABS estimated resident population at 31 December). The enrolment data and population data are estimated at different times of the year. <sup>d</sup> There is some double counting of children in NSW, Queensland (from 2007-08) and WA because some children moved in and out of the preschool system throughout the year and some children accessed more than one sessional program. As a result, the number of children reported in preschool exceeds the number of children in the target population. <sup>e</sup> NSW data include children aged 4 years to 5 years, 11 months enrolled in and attending licensed state funded preschool programs. Children attending unfunded preschools and preschool programs in other licensed children's services in NSW cannot be discretely counted and are excluded. Children in the non-government school sector are also excluded. Data from 2006-07 include preschools managed by the NSW Department of Education and Training. <sup>f</sup> Victorian data for 2008-09 includes 9741 eligible 4 year old children attending funded kindergarten program conducted in centre based long day care services. <sup>g</sup> Queensland data from 2007-08 include Indigenous Community Pre-Preparatory and C&K community kindergarten services. Data for C&K community kindergarten services in 2008-09 are not comparable to data for previous years. Refer to table 3A.13 for more information. <sup>h</sup> NT preschool data from 2006-07 include Catholic Remote Indigenous schools.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); ABS (unpublished) *Australian Demographic Statistics*, Cat. no. 3101.0; tables 3A.2 and 3A.13.

Nationally in 2008-09, 20 731 younger children were enrolled in government funded preschool services. Participation in 2008-09 differed across jurisdictions, in part due to variation in policies on access to funded preschool services (table 3A.13).

All jurisdictions except the ACT were able to provide data on the age of children enrolled in preschool. Although the preschool starting age varies across jurisdictions (table 3.1), the majority of children enrolled in preschool in 2008-09 were 4 years old for each jurisdiction reporting (table 3A.13). Figure 3.7 shows the proportions of all 3 year olds, 4 year olds and 5 year olds enrolled in preschool, and these proportions vary across jurisdictions.

**Figure 3.7 Proportions of 3, 4 and 5 year old children enrolled in State and Territory government funded and/or provided preschool services, by age, 2008-09<sup>a, b, c</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> The starting age for preschool varies across jurisdictions. <sup>b</sup> Data on 3, 4 and 5 year olds enrolled in preschool were not available for the ACT by single year of age. Although 3 year old children can attend preschool in Tasmania, there were no children aged 3 years old at the time of data collection. <sup>c</sup> Data for Australia are the total of the sum of the states and territories for which data are available.

Source: State and Territory Governments (unpublished); table 3A.13.

All jurisdictions except NSW and Victoria provided data on the average hours of attendance for government funded and/or provided preschool services in 2008-09. For those jurisdictions that provided data for 2008-09, the average attendance of children in the year immediately before they commenced full time schooling was between 11 and 13 hours per week (tables 3A.59, 3A.66, 3A.73, 3A.80, 3A.87 and 3A.94).

#### *Service availability — non-standard hours of care in child care services*

‘Non-standard hours of care in child care services’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure government funded and/or provided child care services meet the needs of all users (box 3.9).

**Box 3.9 Non-standard hours of care in child care services**

‘Non-standard hours of care in child care services’ is defined as the number of child care services providing non-standard hours of care divided by the total number of services. Data are reported by service model. Definitions of ‘standard hours’ and ‘non-standard hours’ are presented in section 3.6 ‘Definitions of key terms’.

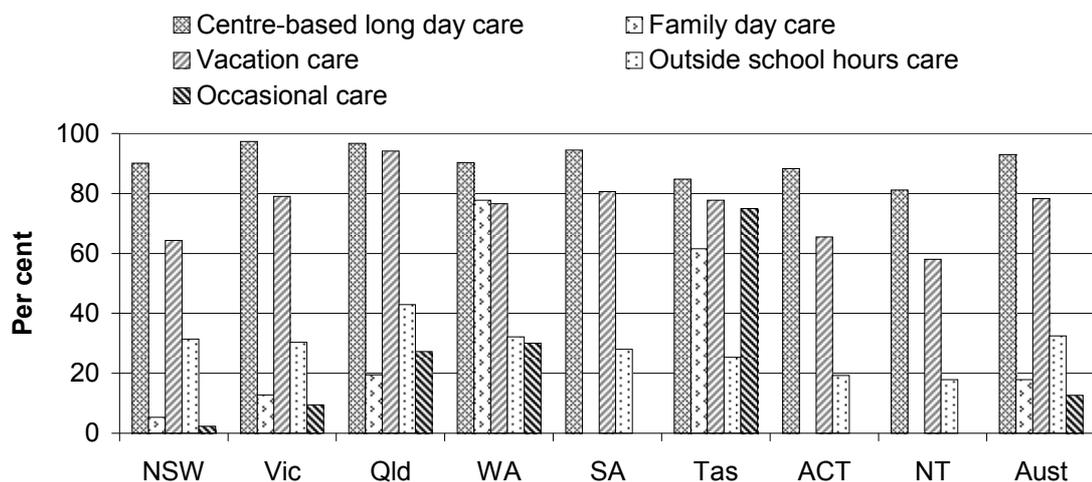
A high or increasing proportion of services providing non-standard hours of care can suggest a greater flexibility of services to meet the needs of families.

This indicator does not provide information on the demand for non-standard hours of care. Further, it provides no information on how non-standard hours services meet the needs of users.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Provision of non-standard hours of care can be influenced by a range of factors, such as costs to services and parents, demand for care, availability of carers, and compliance with occupational and health and safety requirements. Figure 3.8 shows the proportion of services that provided non-standard hours of care by service model.

**Figure 3.8 Australian Government approved child care services providing non-standard hours of care, by service model, 2009**



Source: Centrelink (unpublished); table 3A.20.

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Limited data are available on State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care services that offer non-standard hours of care (see table 3A.21). NSW, Queensland and SA provided data on the proportion of preschools that offered non-standard hours of care in 2008-09 (table 3A.21).

*Service availability — utilisation rates*

‘Utilisation rates’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure all Australian families have equitable and adequate access to children’s services (box 3.10).

**Box 3.10 Utilisation rates**

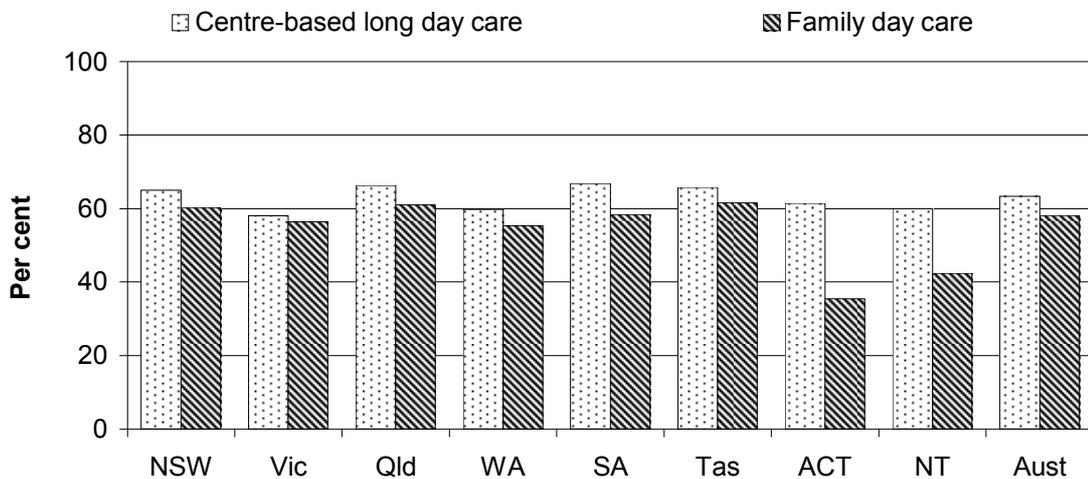
‘Utilisation rates’ is defined as the total child hours paid for as a percentage of total available hours, for centre-based long day care and family day care. Utilisation refers to the level of usage of a service and can be measured in a number of ways, including vacancy levels and capacity to provide more hours of care. Utilisation rates can also measure how efficiently existing assets are being used. Although governments do not always directly own or operate children’s services, the level of utilisation can be relevant where governments provide targeted capital or operational funding to establish or maintain services.

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

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

The utilisation rates in Australian Government approved centre-based long day care and family day care services across jurisdictions are shown in figure 3.9. Nationally, utilisation rates were higher for centre-based long day care (63.4 per cent) than for family day care (58.2 per cent) in 2009.

Figure 3.9 **Utilisation rates, Australian Government approved centre-based long day care and family day care, 2009 (per cent)<sup>a, b</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Data on utilisation rates presented in the 2009 and 2010 Reports are not comparable to data presented in earlier Reports, due to a change in data source. See box 3.1 and table 3A.23 for more information. <sup>b</sup> It is assumed that family day care services were open for 35 hours per week and centre-based long day care services open for 50 hours per week.

Source: DEEWR (unpublished); table 3A.22.

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

‘Child care service costs’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure all Australian families have equitable access to children’s services irrespective of their financial circumstances (box 3.11).

#### **Box 3.11 Child care service costs**

‘Child care service costs’ is defined as the median weekly fees for 50 hours of care by service model. Median fees represent the middle value of the range of fees.

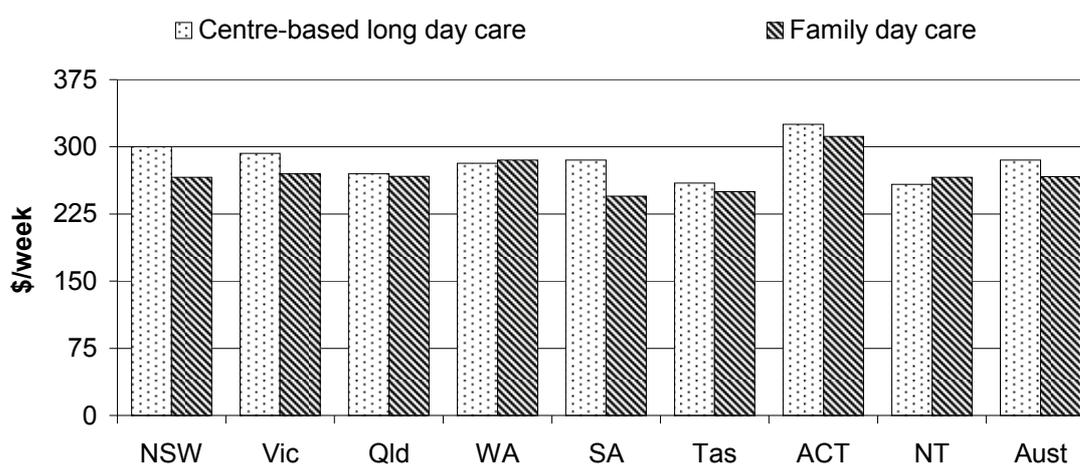
Provided the service quality is held constant, lower service costs are desirable.

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

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Nationally, median weekly fees for 50 hours of care in 2009 were higher for centre-based long day care (\$285) than for family day care (\$267) (figure 3.10).

**Figure 3.10 Median fees charged by Australian Government approved child care services, 2009 (\$/week)<sup>a, b, c</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Median fees are based on 50 hours of care in the reference week. <sup>b</sup> Family day care data exclude in-home care. <sup>c</sup> Family day care fee includes parent levy.

Source: DEEWR (unpublished); table 3A.23.

Median weekly fees charged by Australian Government approved long day care services, by remoteness area are presented in table 3A.24. Nationally in 2009, the median weekly cost of long day care in major cities and inner regional areas was higher than in more remote areas (\$286 and \$263 respectively). The median weekly fees varied across jurisdictions.

### *Service affordability — preschool service costs*

‘Preschool service costs’ is an indicator of governments’ objective that all Australian families have equitable access to children’s services regardless of their financial circumstances (box 3.12).

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### Box 3.12 **Preschool service costs**

'Preschool service costs' is defined as the weekly cost of preschool per child, after subsidies received by families. Data are reported as the median weekly cost per child. Median costs represent the middle value of the range of costs.

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

Various factors influence preschool costs and care needs to be exercised when interpreting results, as:

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

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Data for preschool service costs for 2008 were obtained from the ABS 2008 *Childhood Education and Care Survey*. The *Childhood Education and Care Survey* is a household survey, with parents responding to questions about use of child care and preschool services. Some children attend a preschool program within a child care setting, for example in a long day care service, where the costs would generally be higher than in preschool. It is expected that in most of these cases, the parent would report the service model as (for example) a long day care centre, rather than preschool, but the parent might report the service model as preschool. In addition to issues around self-reporting, some services included in the survey are not necessarily funded by governments. Box 3.13 includes further information about the 2008 *Childhood Education and Care Survey*.

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### **Box 3.13 ABS Childhood Education and Care Survey**

The ABS Childhood Education and Care Survey (CEACS) was conducted for the first time in June 2008, as a supplement to the Labour Force Survey, and integrated the ABS Child Care Survey (last conducted in 2005) with a new topic on Early Years Learning. The CEACS collected information on 3.5 million children aged 0–12 years living in a sample of private dwellings (ABS 2009).

Consistent with the earlier ABS child care surveys, the CEACS collected information on families' requirements for formal care (or additional formal care) for their children, but some changes were introduced for the CEACS. The CEACS focused on families' current requirements for formal care (rather than requirements for formal care in the previous four weeks), collected in the child care surveys, collected more information on the steps taken to obtain formal care, whether the families would have used formal care if it became available, and the types of alternative care arrangements families have made.

Estimates from the surveys are subject to sampling variability. They can differ from estimates that would have been produced by a census. Estimates for the smaller jurisdictions are based on small sample sizes and, consequently, are subject to higher sampling error. Data for Tasmania, the ACT and the NT, in particular, need to be interpreted with caution.

Aggregated survey data also need to be interpreted with care generally, because oversupply and undersupply of child care places can be specific to particular areas, including small and remote communities.

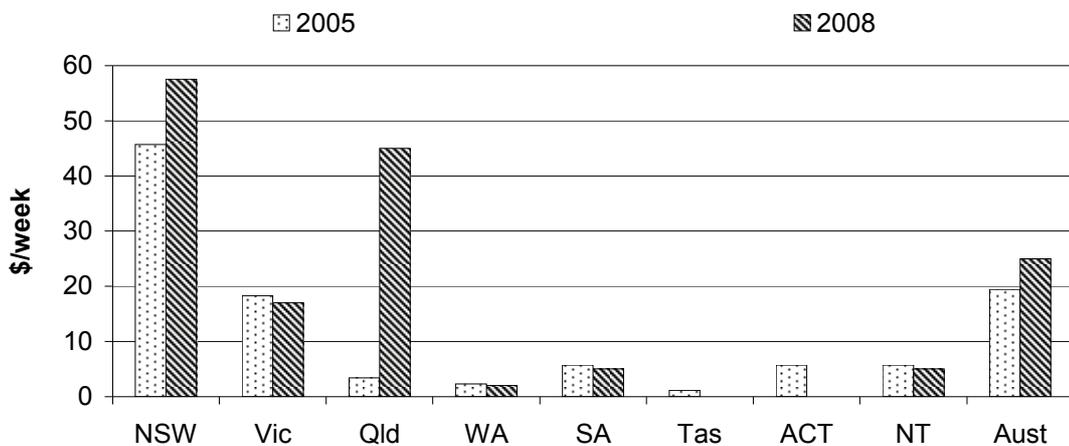
Further detail about the mix of providers of preschool (community, private and government) is provided in tables 3A.49, 3A.56, 3A.63, 3A.70, 3A.77, 3A.84, 3A.91 and 3A.98.

Preschool service costs per child can also depend on the time spent in preschool. Of the 268 000 children usually attending preschool in 2008:

- 30 per cent attended for less than 10 hours per week
- 47 per cent attended for between 10 and 14 hours per week
- 23 per cent attended for 15 hours or more per week (ABS 2009).

Nationally, the median cost of preschool per child in 2008 was \$25 per week (after subsidies). After adjusting for inflation, the median cost for 2005 (in 2007-08 dollars) was \$19 per week (figure 3.11). Additional information on the preschool service costs for children by cost range are presented in table 3A.25.

Figure 3.11 Children who attended preschool, real median weekly cost per child (after subsidies) (2007-08 dollars)<sup>a, b, c, d</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Data for Tasmania and the ACT for 2008 are not published. <sup>b</sup> The 2005 *Child Care Survey* collected data based on preschool arrangements in the previous 4 weeks. The 2008 *Childhood Education and Care Survey* collected data based on usual preschool arrangements. Data for 2005 and 2008 are not directly comparable, and care should be taken in interpreting these data. <sup>c</sup> There can be differences between jurisdictions in the number of hours and sessions attended by children each week. Preschool services are provided by a different mix of providers (community, private and government). Differences in charging practices, including fees, can be due to commercial or cost recovery decisions made by individual services. Fee variation can also occur as a result of charges for additional services such as meals and materials. <sup>d</sup> The increase in costs in Queensland is largely due to the cessation of State provided preschool and the introduction of a Preparatory Year in Queensland from 2007.

Source: ABS (unpublished) *Child Care Survey 2005* and *Childhood Education and Care Survey 2008*; Cat. no. 4402.0; table 3A.26.

Data on the median weekly cost of preschool by remoteness area are presented in table 3A.27. Nationally in 2009, the median weekly cost of preschool in major cities and inner regional areas was \$27 (after subsidies). These median weekly costs varied across jurisdictions.

### Quality

An important focus of Australian, State and Territory governments is to set and maintain appropriate quality standards in child care and preschool services. Indicators of the quality of children's services are:

- the proportion of qualified staff
- the rate of ongoing staff development
- the extent of licensing of services
- the proportion of services that have achieved quality accreditation
- the number of injuries requiring hospitalisation suffered while in care

- 
- child care services' performance against the NCAC's quality principles related to health and safety
  - the number of substantiated breaches arising from complaints.

These data need to be treated with caution because there are differences in reporting across jurisdictions.

### *Staff— qualifications*

'Qualifications' in children's services is an indicator of governments' objective to ensure staff in government funded or provided children's services are able to provide services which meet the needs of children. In particular, this means ensuring staff have the training and experience to provide a safe and nurturing environment that fulfils the educational and development needs of children (box 3.14).

#### **Box 3.14 Qualifications**

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

Some studies and research (for example, OECD 2006) have shown a link between a higher proportion of qualified and experienced primary contact staff and a higher quality service, suggesting that this is desirable.

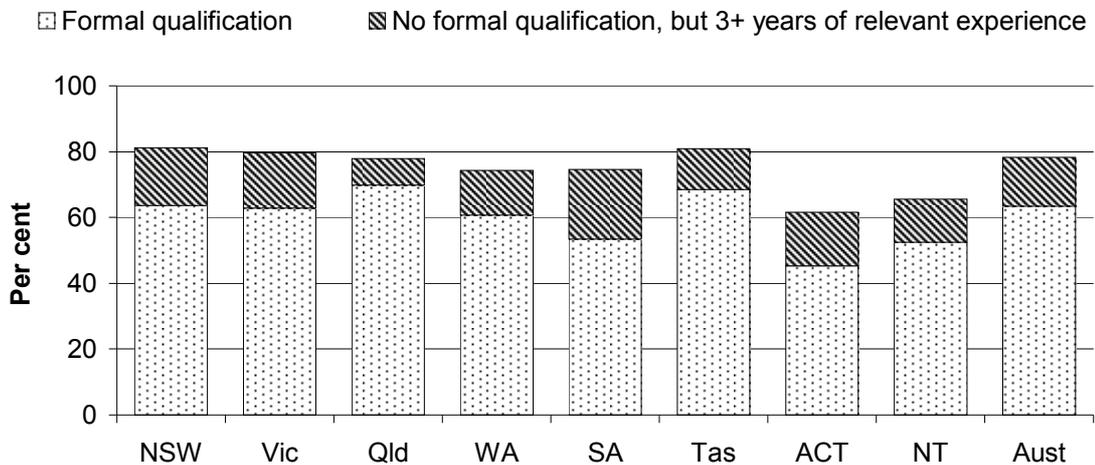
Staff qualifications are a proxy indicator of staff quality.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Data on full time equivalent staff, family day carers and unpaid staff employed by Australian Government approved child care services are presented in table 3A.28.

Nationally, there were 96 170 primary contact staff employed by Australian Government approved child care services in 2008-09 (table 3A.29). The proportion of primary contact staff with formal qualifications or 3 or more years of relevant experience across jurisdictions in 2008-09 is reported in figure 3.12.

**Figure 3.12 Paid primary contact staff employed by Australian Government approved child care services, by qualification, 2008-09<sup>a</sup>**



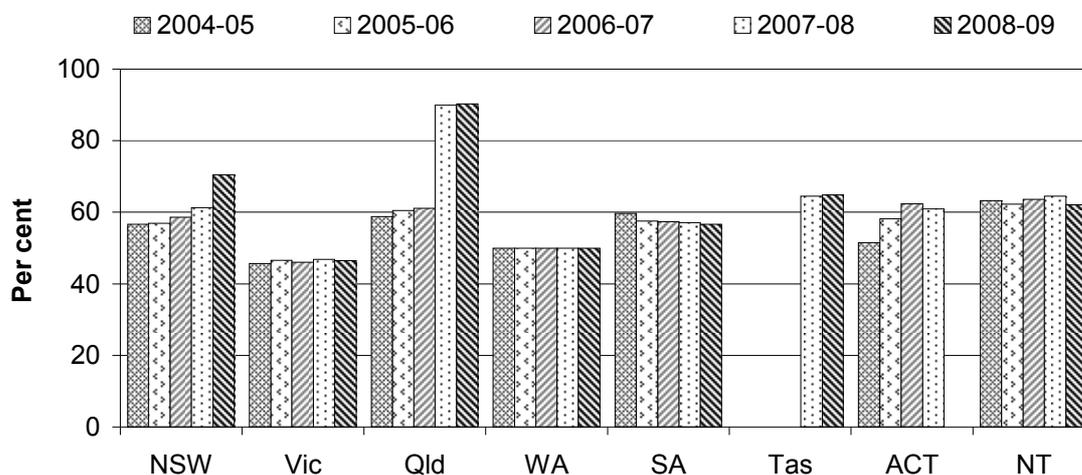
<sup>a</sup> Data for 2008-09 were drawn from the AGCCPS and are not directly comparable to data for previous years (presented in table 3A.29) due to a change in data source. Refer to box 3.1, box 3.5 and table 3A.29 for more information.

Source: DEEWR (unpublished) *Australian Government Child Care Provider Survey 2008-09*; table 3A.29.

Nationally, the majority of paid primary contact staff with formal qualifications in approved Australian Government child care services held a Certificate III or IV or a Diploma or Advanced Diploma (42.1 per cent and 41.8 per cent, respectively) (table 3A.30). Of the 9860 (or 16.2 per cent) paid primary contact staff with a bachelor degree or above, 78.1 per cent held university qualifications in the field of early childhood education (table 3A.30).

Some data are available on the qualifications of staff employed by preschool services that received funding from State and Territory governments. The proportion of preschool primary contact staff with a formal qualification is reported in figure 3.13.

**Figure 3.13 Paid primary contact staff with a formal qualification employed by State and Territory funded and/or managed preschools<sup>a, b, c, d, e</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> All preschool services in NSW, Queensland, SA and the ACT must have at least two staff, of whom one must have a formal qualification. <sup>b</sup> In Victoria, all preschool services must have at least two staff, of whom one must have a relevant early childhood teaching qualification. The proportion of qualified teachers is less than 50 per cent because a teacher can deliver a funded kindergarten program at more than one location. <sup>c</sup> Queensland data from 2007-08 relate to staff with formal qualifications in Indigenous Community Pre-Preparatory schools and C&K community kindergarten services. Data for 2008-09 C&K community kindergarten services are not comparable to data for previous years, as these data include only staff working during the census week. Data for previous years related to employed staff and included staff who were on leave or absent in the census week. The 2008-09 census had a response rate of 93.6 per cent for preschools, and data for 2008-09 are potentially under-reported. <sup>d</sup> In WA, all preschool teachers must have a formal qualification. The data assume that every teacher has an aide. Qualifications of aides are unknown and were reported as not applicable and are assumed to be zero in the calculation of the proportion. <sup>e</sup> Data prior to 2007-08 for Tasmania and data for 2008-09 for the ACT were not available.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); tables 3A.48, 3A.55, 3A.62, 3A.69, 3A.76, 3A.83, 3A.90 and 3A.97.

### *Ongoing staff development*

‘Ongoing staff development’ in children’s services is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure staff in government funded or provided children’s services are able to provide services that meet the needs of children. In particular, this means ensuring staff have the training and experience to provide a safe and nurturing environment that fulfils the educational and development needs of children. Ongoing development of the skills and competencies of child care and preschool staff is another proxy indicator of staff quality (box 3.15).

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### Box 3.15 Ongoing staff development

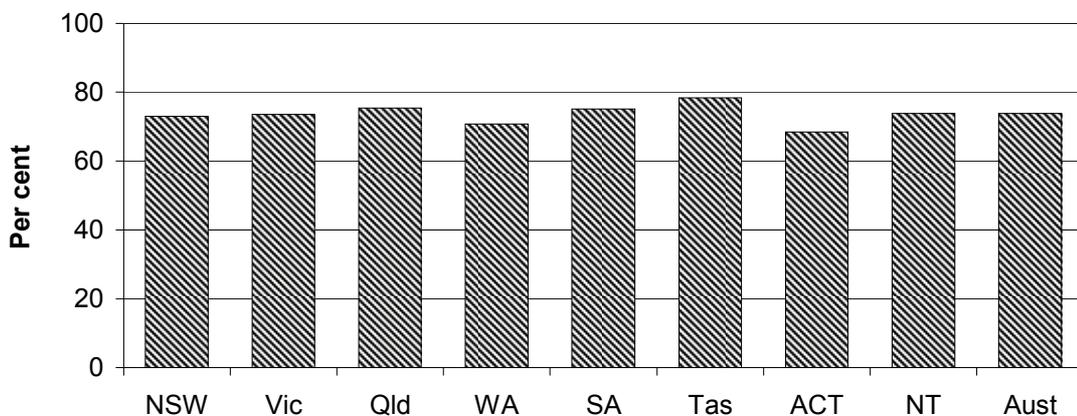
'Ongoing staff development' is defined as the proportion of staff who undertook relevant in-service training in the previous 12 months.

A high or increasing rate of in-service training suggests a relatively high or increasing quality of service. This indicator does not provide information on whether the development undertaken by staff is adequate or sufficiently applicable to child care or preschool to improve the quality of the service provided.

Data for this indicator are not directly comparable.

Nationally in 2008-09, 73.8 per cent of paid primary contact staff in Australian Government approved child care services undertook relevant in-service training in the previous 12 months (figure 3.14).

Figure 3.14 **Proportion of paid primary contact staff in Australian Government approved child care services who undertook relevant in-service training in previous 12 months, 2008-09<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Data for 2008-09 were drawn from the AGCCPS and are not directly comparable to data for previous years (presented in table 3A.31) due to a change in data source. Refer to box 3.1, box 3.5 and table 3A.31 for more information.

Source: DEEWR (unpublished) *Australian Government Child Care Provider Survey 2008-09*; table 3A.31.

NSW, Victoria, Queensland and the ACT also provided data on the proportion of preschool staff undertaking training in 2008-09 (tables 3A.48, 3A.55, 3A.62 and 3A.90).

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## *Standards*

The Australian Government and the State and Territory governments support the quality of care provided by children's services through:

- accreditation and licensing
- provision of curriculum and policy support and advice
- training and development of management and staff.

### *Standards — licensing*

'Licensing' is an indicator of governments' objective to ensure government funded or provided children's services meet the minimum standards deemed necessary to provide a safe and nurturing environment, and to meet the educational and development needs of children. State and Territory governments are responsible for licensing children's services in their jurisdictions (box 3.16).

#### **Box 3.16 Licensing**

'Licensing' has been identified for development and reporting in future. Descriptive information is reported for some jurisdictions as an interim measure. This information includes the number of licensed services, where licensing is indicative of regulatory control over services.

A high or increasing proportion of licensed services suggests the potential for a higher quality of services.

This indicator does not provide information on the degree to which licensing translates into higher quality service outcomes above the minimum standards of care. State and Territory governments also undertake other activities aimed at the promotion of quality, such as publishing curriculum materials and other resources, and undertaking consumer education.

Data for this indicator were not available for the 2010 Report.

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

Licensed children's services can include centre-based long day care, occasional care, preschools, family day care services and outside school hours care. Australian, State and Territory governments have developed national standards for centre-based

long day care, family day care services and outside school hours care. The extent of implementation of these standards varies across jurisdictions.

The service models covered by legislation vary across jurisdictions (table 3.6).

**Table 3.6 State and Territory licensing of children's services, 2009<sup>a</sup>**

<i>Service model</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic<sup>b</sup></i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA<sup>c</sup></i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT<sup>d</sup></i>
Centre-based long day care	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Occasional care	L	L	L	L	G/L	L	L	L
Family day care schemes/agencies	L	L	L	X	G/L	L	L	X
Family day care carers	R	X	R	L	R	R	X	X
Outside school-hours care	R	L	L	L	R	L	L	X
Home-based care	L	X	X	X	L	L	X	X
Other care <sup>e</sup>	X	X	X	X	L	L	L	X
Preschool/kindergarten <sup>f</sup>	L/G	L	L/G	G	G	G/R	L/G	G/R

**L** = Services require a licence to operate. **R** = Services require registration or approval to operate. **G** = Services are provided by State/Territory governments. **X** = Services do not require licence, registration or approval to operate, but can be required to meet regulatory standards. <sup>a</sup> Children's services are regulated in accordance with the requirements of the relevant legislation in each jurisdiction. <sup>b</sup> From 25 May 2009 Victoria has the legislative powers to licence Outside School Hours Care and Family Day Care Services. <sup>c</sup> WA licenses individual carers, regardless of whether they belong to a scheme, but schemes are not licensed. <sup>d</sup> In the NT, Family Day Care Schemes will be required to be licensed by 31 March 2011, Home based carers and Short term or one off care will be required to be registered by 31 December 2011, and OSHC services will be required to be licensed by 31 December 2013. <sup>e</sup> Other care refers to all other government regulated care, for example, nannies, playschools and in-home care. Jurisdictions can licence some, but not all, types of 'other care' services. <sup>f</sup> NSW is progressively introducing regulation of school-based services. The NSW Department of Education and Training provides preschools in 100 government schools. In Tasmania, kindergartens not in government schools are registered with the Schools Registration Board.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished).

State and Territory governments also engage in monitoring and inspecting children's services. All states and territories monitor performance against the standards set for children's services, in order to ensure that high quality services are delivered to the community. Table 3.7 provides an overview of the monitoring and inspection regimes that operate across jurisdictions.

There are broad commonalities in the monitoring and inspection regimes across jurisdictions. However, there is variability in the recording of breaches and a variety of penalties applied for breaches. This has hindered reporting of comparable data across jurisdictions for monitoring and inspection.

**Table 3.7 State and Territory monitoring and inspection regimes, for licensed children's services, 2008-09**

<i>Monitoring activities</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>
<i>Proactive monitoring<sup>a</sup></i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Required frequency of inspections <sup>b</sup>		Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	At least once a year	Quarter	Quarter	Biannual
Estimated share announced visits <sup>c</sup>	%	75	6	47	33	na	93	60	80
Estimated share unannounced inspections <sup>d</sup>	%	25	94	53	67	na	7	40	20
<i>Reactive monitoring<sup>e</sup></i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Data provided on substantiated breaches arising from complaints <sup>f</sup>		x	✓	x	✓	x	✓	✓	✓
<i>Sanctions for breaches<sup>g</sup></i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Under-performing services incur follow-up or more frequent inspections		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Number of prosecutions initiated against services during 2008-09 <sup>h</sup>	no.	2	1	–	5	–	–	–	–

<sup>a</sup> Proactive monitoring refers to the ongoing program of visits/inspections to services that are determined by legislation and/or the monitoring policies in each jurisdiction. <sup>b</sup> In WA, from July 2007, licensed services receive an annual visit. During the first two years of the licence period, the majority of these visits are unannounced. The licence renewal visit in the third year is an announced visit. In SA, the required frequency of inspections is dependent on the type of licensed service. <sup>c</sup> Announced visits are scheduled with the service provider including but not limited to consultative and advisory meetings. <sup>d</sup> Unannounced inspections of services are used to assess performance against licence conditions including but not limited to investigations of complaints. Unannounced inspections allow the operation of the service to be monitored under normal operational circumstances. <sup>e</sup> A reactive monitoring regime can be triggered by either a complaint or a service's failure to comply with legislative requirements. <sup>f</sup> See detailed data in attachment tables 3A.50, 3A.57, 3A.64, 3A.71, 3A.78, 3A.85, 3A.92 and 3A.99. <sup>g</sup> Jurisdictions can apply a wide range of actions to underperforming services. These actions can include administrative and/or statutory sanctions including prosecution. Not all sanctions are included. <sup>h</sup> Prosecutions refer to all prosecutions against services that are brought under the relevant children's services Act in each jurisdiction. – Nil or rounded to zero. na Not applicable.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished).

### *Standards — accredited child care services*

'Accredited child care services' is an indicator of the Australian Government's objective to ensure government funded or provided child care services meet the standards deemed necessary to provide a safe and nurturing environment, and to

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meet the educational and development needs of children. Accredited services have been independently evaluated against a series of national quality standards for the specific child care service model. The NCAC administers quality assurance systems for centre-based long day care, family day care schemes and outside school hours care services across Australia (box 3.17).

**Box 3.17 Accredited child care services**

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

A high or increasing proportion of services that have been accredited is desirable.

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

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

To become accredited under NCAC quality assurance systems, service providers are required to achieve and maintain the quality standards set out for each service model. NCAC has developed the following standards:

- the Quality Improvement and Accreditation System (QIAS) for centre-based long day care
- Family Day Care Quality Assurance (FDCQA) for family day care schemes
- Outside School Hours Care Quality Assurance (OSHCQA) for outside school hours care services.

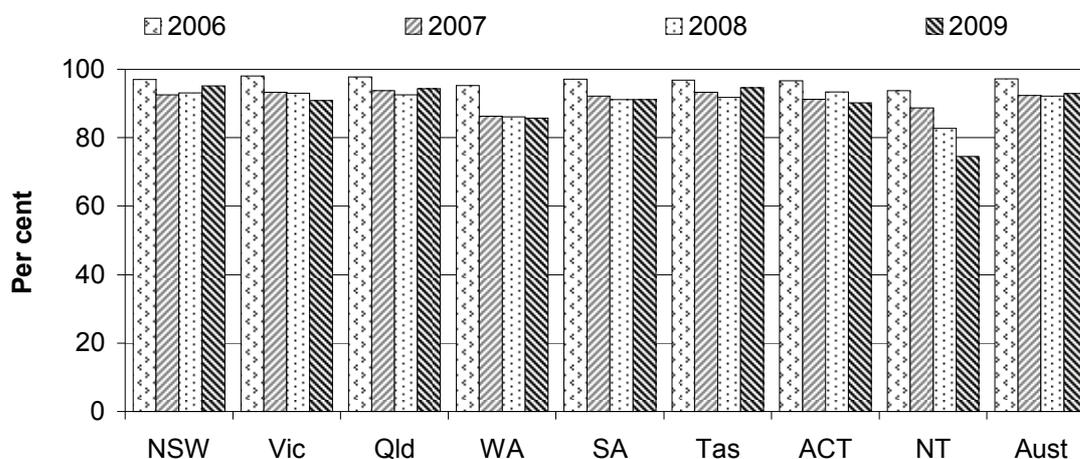
The standards include the expected performance against a variety of ‘quality areas’, depending on the service model. For example, the QIAS details centre-based long day care performance against the following seven ‘quality areas’:

- staff relationships with children and peers
- partnerships with families
- programming and evaluation
- children’s experiences and learning
- protective care and safety
- health, nutrition and wellbeing
- managing to support quality.

The NCAC accreditation systems are Australian Government initiatives where successful participation is required to allow child care services to offer CCB fee reduction to parents. All centre-based long day child care services are required to participate in the QIAS to be eligible for approval for CCB purposes, and the majority of centre-based long day child care services participate.

Nationally, of the 5735 centres registered to participate in the QIAS at 30 June 2009, 4828 centres had received an accreditation decision (table 3A.32). Of the centres assessed, 92.9 per cent (4485 centres) were successful in achieving accreditation (figure 3.15). The centres that do not meet accreditation standards (343 centres) are required to submit another self study report to NCAC within six months of the date of NCAC's accreditation decision. At 30 June 2009, a further 907 centres (15.8 per cent of those registered to participate in QIAS) were in self-study, review or moderation, or awaiting an accreditation decision (table 3A.32).

**Figure 3.15 Accredited centres as a proportion of centres fully assessed under the Quality Improvement and Accreditation System<sup>a, b</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Data at 30 June in each year. Figures can fluctuate during the course of the year. <sup>b</sup> Results for Tasmania, the ACT and the NT can be influenced by the relatively small number of services (107, 105 and 67 respectively at 30 June 2009) participating in the process.

Source: NCAC (unpublished); table 3A.32.

Nationally, 327 family day care schemes were registered with NCAC at 30 June 2009. Of these, 297 schemes had received an accreditation decision. Of the schemes assessed, 85.2 per cent (253 services) were accredited. At 30 June 2009, 44 schemes were not accredited and 30 were in self-study, validation or moderation, or awaiting an accreditation decision (table 3A.32).

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At 30 June 2009, there were 3478 outside school hours care services registered to participate in OSHCQA (table 3A.32). Of the 2962 services that had received an accreditation decision at 30 June 2009, 94.6 per cent (2801 services) were successful in achieving accreditation. A further 516 services were in self-study, validation or moderation, or awaiting an accreditation decision (table 3A.32).

*Health and safety — health and safety quality*

‘Health and safety quality’ in children’s services is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure children’s services meet the care, educational and development needs of children in a safe and nurturing environment (box 3.18).

**Box 3.18 Health and safety quality**

‘Health and safety quality’ is defined by three measures.

One measure for family day care is the proportion of family day care schemes that achieved satisfactory or above ratings for the NCAC health, hygiene, nutrition, safety and wellbeing quality area.

Two measures for long day care are:

- the proportion of long day care centres that achieved satisfactory or above ratings for the NCAC protective care and safety quality area
- the proportion of long day care centres that achieved satisfactory or above ratings for the NCAC health, nutrition and wellbeing quality area.

A lower proportion of centres receiving satisfactory or above ratings does not provide information on the actual health and safety of children in these centres. All else being equal, a higher proportion for the above measures can indicate that children’s services are meeting the needs of children in a safe and nurturing environment.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Data for this indicator were obtained from the NCAC. The following points should be noted in interpreting health and safety quality, whereby:

- data presented cover family day care schemes and long day care centres
- data do not include preschool/kindergarten services, as NCAC assessments are limited to child care services
- data are only presented for those services that have undergone accreditation in the 12 month reporting period (services are only accredited once during any 2.5 year period).

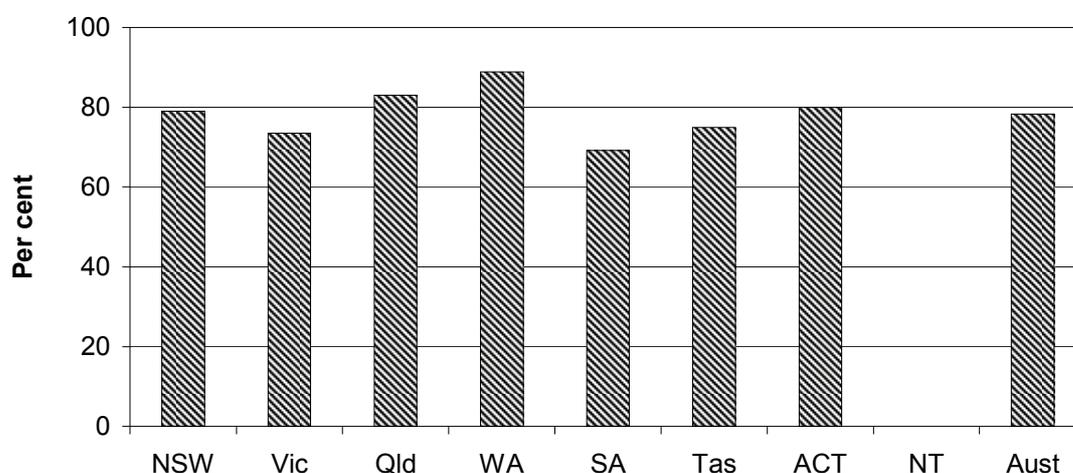
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For family day care, the quality area ‘health, hygiene, nutrition, safety and wellbeing’ includes the principles for which an assessment is made. These are:

- the environments provided for children are safe
- food and drink are nutritious and culturally appropriate
- the health and safety of all children are protected
- nappy changing, toileting and bathing are positive experiences for children
- children’s needs for rest, sleep and comfort are supported
- current State or Territory legislation relating to child protection and wellbeing is implemented consistently.

Nationally, in 2008-09, 78.3 per cent of family day care schemes achieved satisfactory or above ratings for the health, hygiene, nutrition, safety and wellbeing quality area (figure 3.16).

**Figure 3.16 Proportion of family day care schemes that achieved satisfactory or above ratings for NCAC health, hygiene, nutrition, safety and wellbeing quality area, 2008-09<sup>a, b</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Data are only presented for those services that have undergone accreditation in the 12 month reporting period (services are only accredited once during any 2.5 year period). <sup>b</sup> No family day care schemes in the NT were assessed during the period 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009.

Source: NCAC (unpublished); table 3A.33.

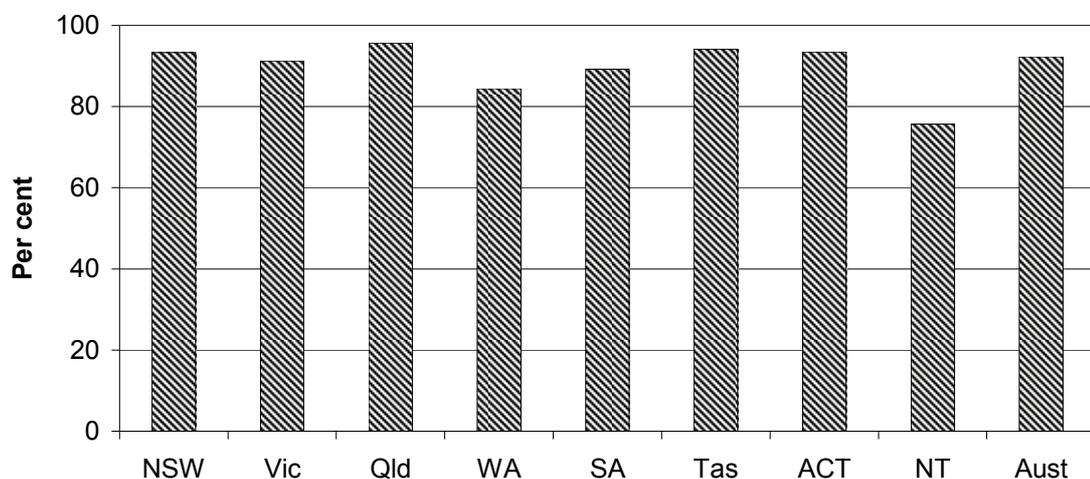
For long day care, the quality area ‘protective care and safety’ includes principles for which an assessment is made. These are:

- staff act to protect each child
- staff supervise children at all times

- staff ensure that potentially dangerous products, plants and objects are inaccessible to children
- the centre ensures that buildings and equipment are safe
- the centre promotes occupational health and safety.

Nationally, in 2008-09, 92.3 per cent of long day care centres achieved satisfactory or above ratings for the protective care and safety quality area (figure 3.17).

**Figure 3.17 Proportion of long day care centres that achieved satisfactory or above ratings for NCAC protective care and safety quality area, 2008-09<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Data are only presented for those services that have undergone accreditation in the 12 month reporting period (services are only accredited once during any 2.5 year period).

Source: NCAC (unpublished); table 3A.33.

For long day care, the quality area health, nutrition and wellbeing includes principles for which an assessment is made. These are:

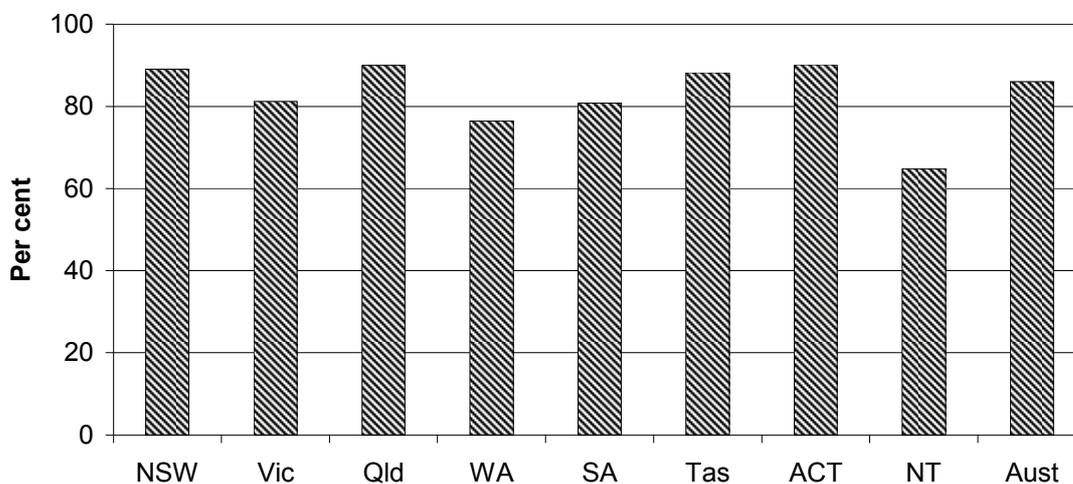
- staff promote healthy eating habits
- staff implement effective and current food safety and hygiene practices
- staff encourage children to follow simple rules of hygiene
- staff ensure toileting and nappy changing procedures are positive experiences
- staff support each child's needs for rest, sleep and comfort
- the centre acts to control the spread of infectious diseases and maintains records of immunisations.

Nationally, in 2008-09, 86.1 per cent of long day care centres achieved satisfactory or above ratings for the health, nutrition and wellbeing quality area (figure 3.18).

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**Figure 3.18 Proportion of long day care centres that achieved satisfactory or above ratings for NCAC health, nutrition and wellbeing quality area, 2008-09<sup>a</sup>**

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<sup>a</sup> Data are only presented for those services that have undergone accreditation in the 12 month reporting period (services are only accredited once during any 2.5 year period).

Source: NCAC (unpublished); table 3A.33.

### *Health and safety — hospital separations for external causes of injury*

‘Hospital separations for external causes of injury’ (occurring in children’s services) is a proxy indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that children’s services meet the care, educational and developmental needs of children in a safe and nurturing environment (box 3.19).

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**Box 3.19 Hospital separations for external causes of injury**

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

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

All hospital separation data need to be interpreted with care. Nationally, no place of occurrence was reported for 32.5 per cent of hospitalisations of children aged 0–4 years in 2007-08 (table 3A.34). As a result, this indicator should be interpreted as the minimum number of hospital separations for an external cause of injury that occurred in children's services.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

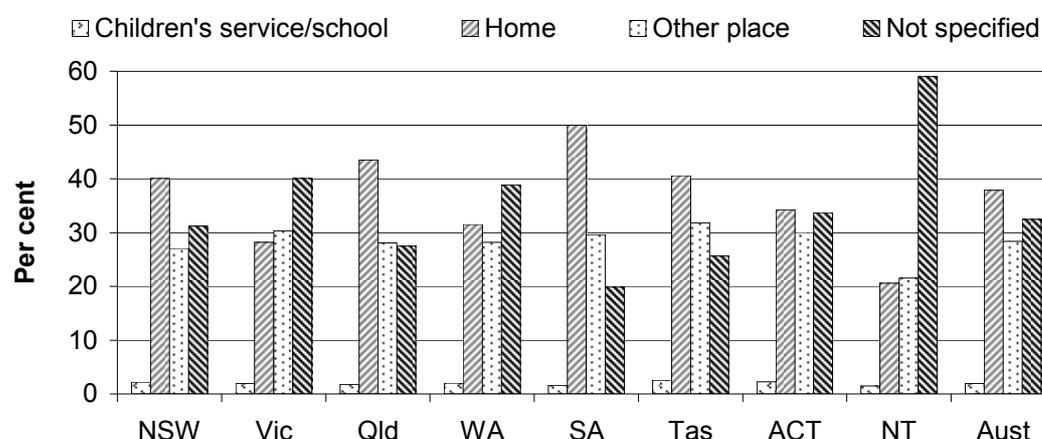
Limiting the data to children aged 0–4 years reduces the likelihood that the 'school' place of occurrence includes children in full time compulsory schooling, which children generally attend when they are 5 years old or more. For children in the older age group it is not possible to separate injuries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

For children aged 0–4 years, the term 'school' incorporates a range of formal children's services settings including kindergarten, preschool and centre-based child care services. The data can capture children who were injured at these services without necessarily attending them. Family day care services, which are typically provided in the carer's home, are not likely to be covered under 'schools'. External cause refers to the environmental event, circumstance or condition that causes the injury. People admitted to hospital as a result of a pre-existing illness or condition (such as asthma), are excluded.

In 2007-08, there were 30 512 injuries to children aged 0–4 years that resulted in a hospital admission in Australia (table 3A.34). Males accounted for approximately 58.6 per cent of these admissions. In total, the most common causes of injury to children aged 0–4 years were falls (27.6 per cent), complications of medical and surgical care (21.6 per cent) and exposure to mechanical forces (19.8 per cent) (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) unpublished). Males and females generally experienced similar causes of injury.

Nationally, in 2007-08, 37.9 per cent of injuries requiring hospitalisation occurred in the child's home. This reflects that children in this age group spend the majority of their time in the home and about half do not attend formal care. Across available jurisdictions, on average 2.0 per cent of injuries were reported as occurring at a 'school' (which includes day nursery, centre-based child care, and public or private kindergartens and preschools) (figure 3.19).

**Figure 3.19 Hospital separations for external causes of injury for children aged 0–4 years, proportion by place of occurrence, 2007-08<sup>a, b, c, d</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> External cause refers to the environmental event, circumstance or condition that causes the injury. People admitted to hospital as a result of a pre-existing illness or condition, such as asthma, are excluded. <sup>b</sup> A hospital separation is an episode of care for a person admitted to a hospital. <sup>c</sup> Separations without an external cause and those for which care type was reported as newborn with no qualified days, and records for hospital boarders or posthumous organ procurement are excluded. <sup>d</sup> Due to the high levels of non-reporting for place of occurrence, all hospital separations data need to be interpreted with care.

Source: AIHW (unpublished) *Australian Hospital Statistics 2007-08*; table 3A.34.

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

'Substantiated breaches arising from complaints' is an indicator of governments' objective to ensure government funded or provided children's services meet the needs and expectations of users (box 3.20).

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### **Box 3.20 Substantiated breaches arising from complaints**

'Substantiated breaches arising from complaints' is defined as the number of substantiated breaches arising from complaints divided by the total number of registered or licensed services. Results are presented by service model. Data on the proportion of substantiated breaches arising from complaints against which action was taken are also reported. One complaint can include multiple breaches. Breaches identified as a result of normal monitoring and inspection visits are excluded from these data.

All else being equal, a lower or decreasing rate of breaches arising from complaints can suggest a higher quality service. A high or increasing rate of complaints does not provide information on whether a jurisdiction has lower service safety and quality, or a more effective reporting and monitoring regime.

Complaints data need to be interpreted with care, because:

- clients who are well informed can be more likely to make a complaint than are clients without access to this information. Some jurisdictions give priority to developing client groups who are well informed, as part of improving their service delivery
- the number of approved care providers or parent users per service differs in each service across states and territories
- complaints management systems vary across jurisdictions.

Data reported for this indicator are neither directly comparable nor complete.

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

Victoria, WA, Tasmania, the ACT and the NT provided data on the number of substantiated breaches arising from complaints and allegations of regulation breaches made to the State and Territory government regulatory bodies in 2008-09 (tables 3A.57, 3A.71, 3A.85, 3A.92 and 3A.99).

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## *Efficiency*

Differences in reported efficiency results across jurisdictions can reflect differences in counting and reporting rules for financial data and in reported expenditure (which are partly due to different treatments of various expenditure items). Information on the comparability of expenditure is shown in table 3A.6 and information on the treatment of assets is shown in table 3A.7.

### *Inputs per output unit — total government expenditure per child in the community*

‘Total government expenditure per child in the community’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to maximise the availability and quality of services through the efficient use of taxpayer resources (box 3.21).

#### **Box 3.21 Total government expenditure per child in the community**

‘Total government expenditure per child in the community’ is defined as Australian Government expenditure and State and Territory government expenditure on children’s services per child in the community aged 0–12 years. Data are presented as dollars per child in the community. All Australian Government expenditure reported for this indicator is provided for child care services, whereas State and Territory government expenditure covers both child care and preschool services.

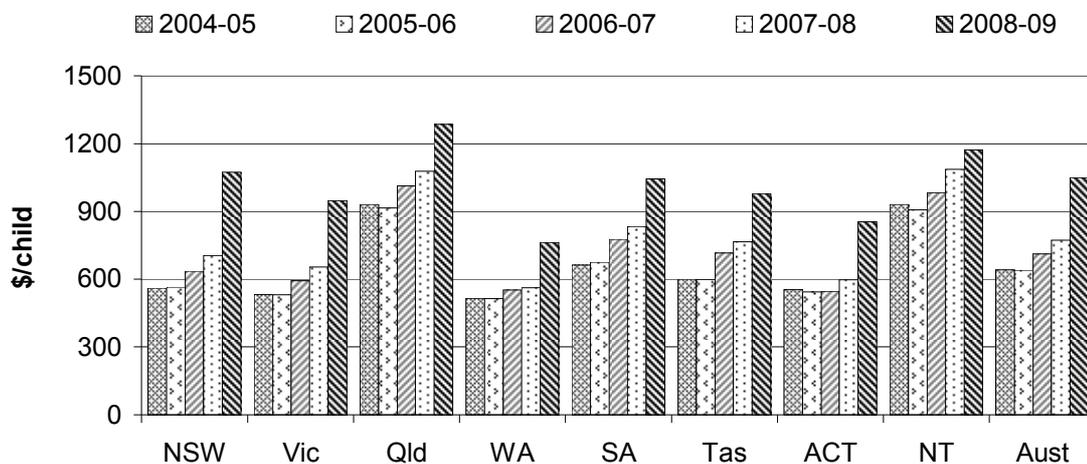
All efficiency data need to be interpreted with care. Changes in expenditure per child could represent changes in government funding policy. While high or increasing unit costs can reflect deteriorating efficiency, they can also reflect increases in the quality or quantity of service provided. Similarly,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

Data reported for this indicator are not complete and not directly comparable.

Expenditure data per child are reported separately for the Australian Government and State and Territory government, as well as a combined expenditure figure per child.

After adjusting for inflation to calculate the ‘real’ value of expenditure in previous years, Australian Government expenditure on children’s services per child in the community at a national level increased by 63.4 per cent between 2004-05 and 2008-09, from \$642 to \$1049 (figure 3.20).

**Figure 3.20 Australian Government real expenditure on children's services per child in the community aged 0–12 (2008-09 dollars)<sup>a, b, c, d</sup>**



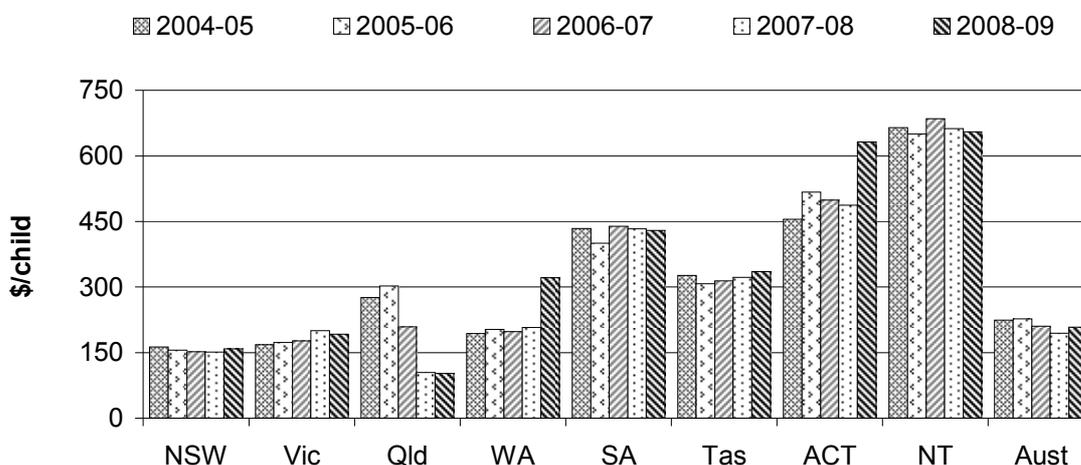
**a** Includes administration expenditure, other expenditure on service provision, financial support to families and net capital expenditure on child care services. **b** The Australian total includes a component of expenditure that cannot be disaggregated by State and Territory. **c** Expenditure for 2006-07, 2007-08 and 2008-09 includes payment of CCTR. Prior to 2006-07, CCTR was paid as a rebate through the tax system. **d** Estimated resident population as at 31 December. The Australian total includes children in other territories.

Source: DEEWR (unpublished); ABS (unpublished) *Australian Demographic Statistics*, Cat. no. 3101.0; tables 3A.2 and 3A.35.

Data were sought from all State and Territory governments on their expenditure by service model. Incomplete data, differing collection methods and changes to policies 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.

Figure 3.21 shows State and Territory government expenditure on children's services per child between 2004-05 and 2008-09. Nationally in 2008-09, State and Territory government expenditure was \$209 per child (figure 3.21). The apparent reduction in Queensland expenditure per child between 2005-06 and 2006-07 is due to only 6 months' data on State preschools being included in 2006-07. The reduction in 2007-08 Queensland expenditure data is due to the cessation of Queensland government preschools in December 2006 and the introduction of the Preparatory Year in schools from January 2007.

**Figure 3.21 State and Territory government real expenditure on children's services per child in the community aged 0–12 years (2008-09 dollars)<sup>a, b</sup>**

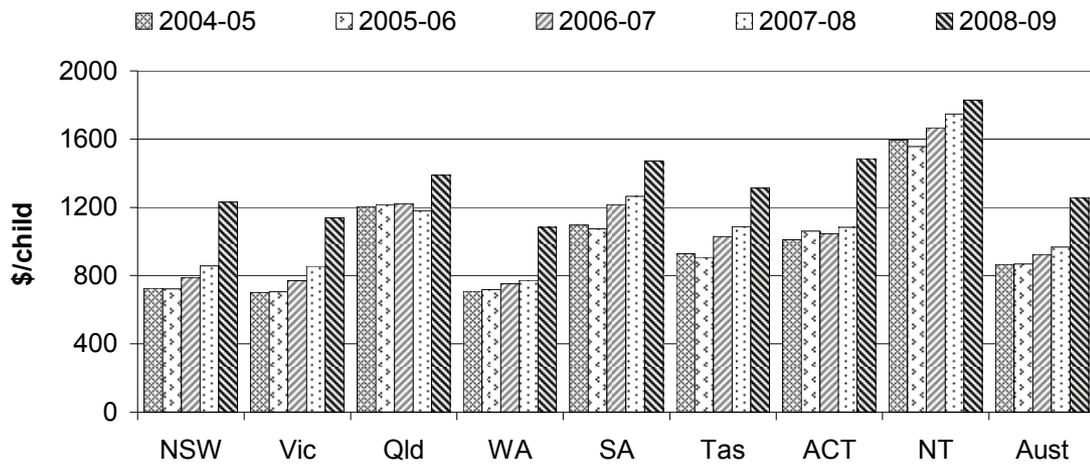


<sup>a</sup> Includes administration expenditure, other expenditure on service provision, financial support to families, and net capital expenditure on child care and preschool services. <sup>b</sup> The apparent reduction in Queensland expenditure per child between 2005-06 and 2006-07 is due to only 6 months' data on State preschools being included in 2006-07. The reduction in 2007-08 Queensland expenditure data is due to the cessation of State preschools in December 2006 and the introduction of the Preparatory Year in schools from January 2007. Preparatory Year data is included in data on school children in 2007-08.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); ABS (unpublished) *Australian Demographic Statistics*, Cat. no. 3101.0; tables 3A.2 and 3A.36.

Figure 3.22 shows the combined expenditure from both the Australian Government and the State and Territory governments per child in the community aged 0–12 years over the period 2004-05 to 2008-09.

Figure 3.22 Total government real expenditure on children's services per child in the community aged 0–12 (2008-09 dollars)<sup>a, b</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Includes administration expenditure, other expenditure on service provision, financial support to families, and net capital expenditure on child care and preschool services from both Australian Government (for child care services only) and State and Territory governments (for child care services and preschool services).

<sup>b</sup> See notes to figures 3.20 and 3.21 for further detail on the Australian Government's and State and Territory governments' expenditure data.

Source: DEEWR (unpublished); State and Territory governments (unpublished); ABS (unpublished) *Australian Demographic Statistics*, Cat. no. 3101.0; tables 3A.2, 3A.35 and 3A.36.

*Inputs per output unit — Australian government expenditure per child attending*

'Australian Government expenditure per child attending' (approved children's services) is an indicator of governments' objective to maximise the availability and quality of services through the efficient use of taxpayer resources (box 3.22).

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**Box 3.22 Australian Government expenditure per child attending approved children's services**

'Australian Government expenditure per child attending approved children's services' is defined as Australian Government expenditure per child aged 0–12 years attending Australian Government approved child care services in Australia.

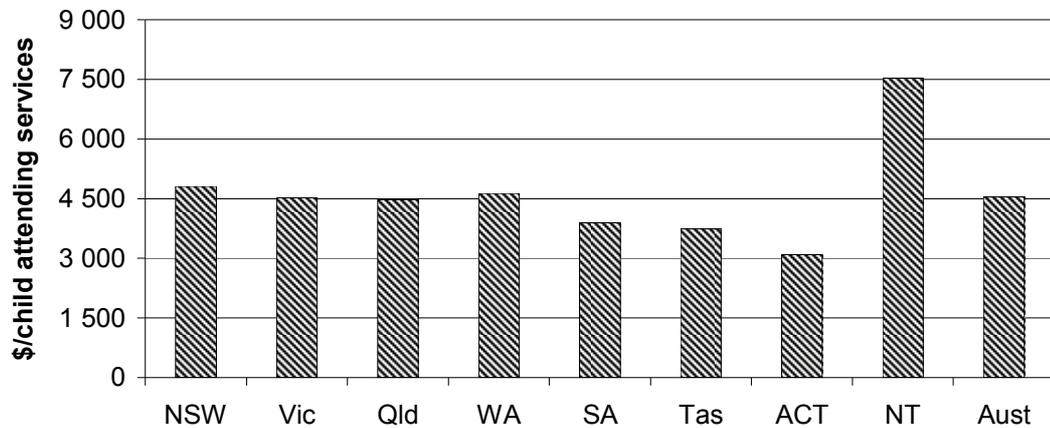
Provided the level and quality of, and access to, services remains unchanged, lower expenditure per child can indicate greater efficiency of government expenditure.

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

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Figure 3.23 shows expenditure by the Australian Government on each child aged 0–12 years attending Australian Government approved child care services. Nationally in 2008-09, Australian Government expenditure per child attending approved child care services was \$4545 (figure 3.23).

**Figure 3.23 Australian Government expenditure per child aged 0–12 years attending Australian Government approved child care services, 2009<sup>a, b, c, d</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Includes expenditure for some children aged greater than 12 years, including Indigenous children and children with special needs who can be older than 12 years. <sup>b</sup> Data for 2009 are drawn from DEEWR administrative data and are not directly comparable to data reported for previous years. See box 3.1 and table 3A.37 for more information. <sup>c</sup> Children attending approved services are counted once, even if attending more than one type of service during the reference week. <sup>d</sup> Attendance counted as the number of children attending approved care in all services except Vacation Care during the week 23–29 March 2009. The week in which vacation care attendance was measured varied due to different vacation care periods across Australia.

Source: DEEWR (unpublished); table 3A.37.

## Outcomes

Outcomes are the impact of services on the status of an individual or group (while outputs are the actual services delivered) (see chapter 1, section 1.5).

### *Family work-related needs*

‘Family work-related needs’ is an indicator of governments’ objective for children’s services to provide support for families in caring for their children, to allow the needs of the family to be met (box 3.23).

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**Box 3.23 Family work-related needs**

'Family work related needs' has one measure, defined as the proportion children aged 0–12 years in families participating in the labour force for whom formal care, or additional hours of formal care, were required for work-related reasons.

Families participating in the labour force include single parent families where the lone parent is employed or unemployed, and couple families where both parents are employed or unemployed.

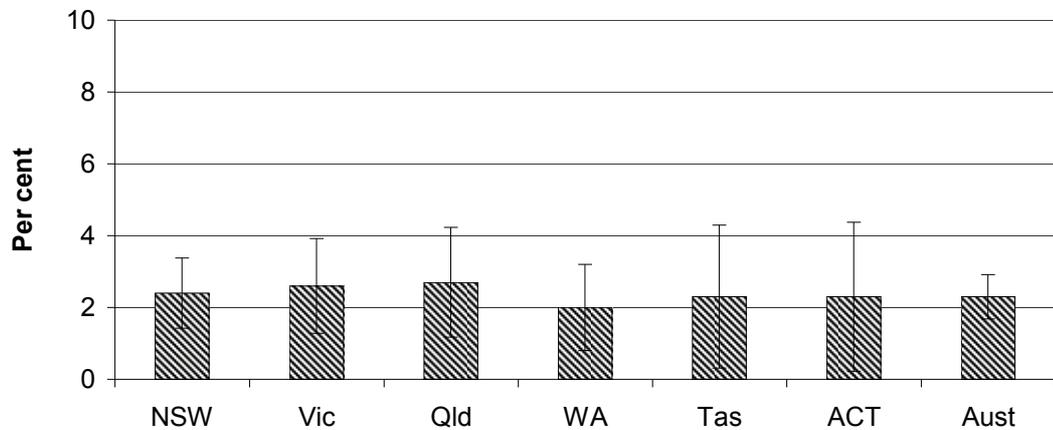
A lower or decreasing proportion indicates more families work-related needs for formal care, or additional hours of formal care, are being met.

This measure addresses the need for families to participate in the labour force without child care impeding this participation. Development is underway to investigate other measures of 'meeting families needs'.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Data for this indicator were obtained from the ABS *2008 Childhood Education and Care Survey* and are reported in attachment table 3A.38. Box 3.13 includes further information about the 2008 *Childhood Education and Care Survey*. Nationally, 2.3 per cent of children aged 0–12 years from working families required formal care, or additional formal care for work related reasons (figure 3.24).

Figure 3.24 **Children aged 0–12 years in working families who required formal care for work related reasons<sup>a, b</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Data for SA and the NT were not available for publication, but are included in the total for Australia. <sup>b</sup> Error bars represent the 95 per cent confidence interval associated with each point estimate.

Source: ABS (unpublished) *Childhood Education and Care Survey, 2008*, Cat. no. 4402.0; table 3A.38.

### *Demand for formal care*

‘Demand for formal care’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure children’s services meet the requirements of all Australian families. Expressed need for any or additional formal care indicates the extent to which children’s services are not meeting demand by families (box 3.24).

#### **Box 3.24 Demand for formal care**

‘Demand for formal care’ is defined as the proportion of children aged 0–12 years for whom additional formal care services are required. Formal care includes child care and preschool services.

A low or decreasing proportion of children for whom additional services are required indicates demand by families is being met to a greater extent. This indicator has some limitations as a measure of unmet demand (box 3.13).

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

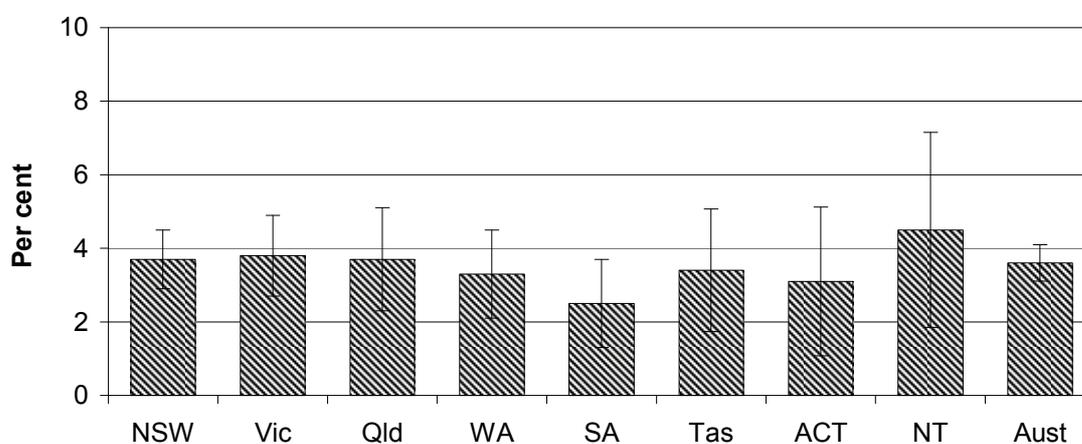
Data for this indicator were obtained from the ABS 2008 *Childhood Education and Care Survey*. Box 3.13 includes further information about the 2008 survey.

The 2008 survey collected data on whether any, or additional, formal child care or preschool were required currently, or in the future. Nationally in 2008, additional child care or preschool services were required for 3.6 per cent of children aged

0–12 years (figure 3.25). In 2008, additional child care services were required for approximately 89 300 children aged 0–12 years, and additional preschool services were required for 36 400 children (table 3A.39).

Data on demand for formal child care from the 2005 ABS *Child Care Survey* are presented in tables 3A.39 and 3A.40. The 2005 survey collected data on additional formal care required in the previous four weeks, and are not directly comparable to data from 2008.

**Figure 3.25 Proportion of children aged under 12 years for whom additional formal child care or preschool was required, 2008<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Error bars represent the 95 per cent confidence interval associated with each point estimate.

Source: ABS (unpublished) *Childhood Education and Care Survey 2008*, Cat. no. 4402.0; table 3A.39.

Nationally, work-related reasons were most commonly cited for needing additional formal child care or preschool in 2008 (46.9 per cent of children aged 0–12 years), personal reasons were cited for 10.7 per cent of children and other reasons were cited for 42.3 per cent (table 3A.40). Data for 2005 are presented in table 3A.40.

Parents who required additional formal child care and preschool services, but were unable to access extra services, were asked about the barriers to access. Cost was reported as a barrier to access for 22.5 per cent of children aged 0–12 years, ‘no services exist/don’t know of any in area’ was reported for 12.8 per cent of children, and lack of available places (‘booked out or no places’) was reported for 4.7 per cent of children in 2008. ‘Other reasons’ were cited for 59.9 per cent of children aged 0–12 years who required, but did not use, additional formal child care or preschool (table 3A.41).

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### *Out-of-pocket costs*

‘Out-of-pocket costs’ is an indicator of governments’ objective that all Australian families have equitable access to children’s services irrespective of their financial circumstances (box 3.25).

#### **Box 3.25 Out-of-pocket costs**

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

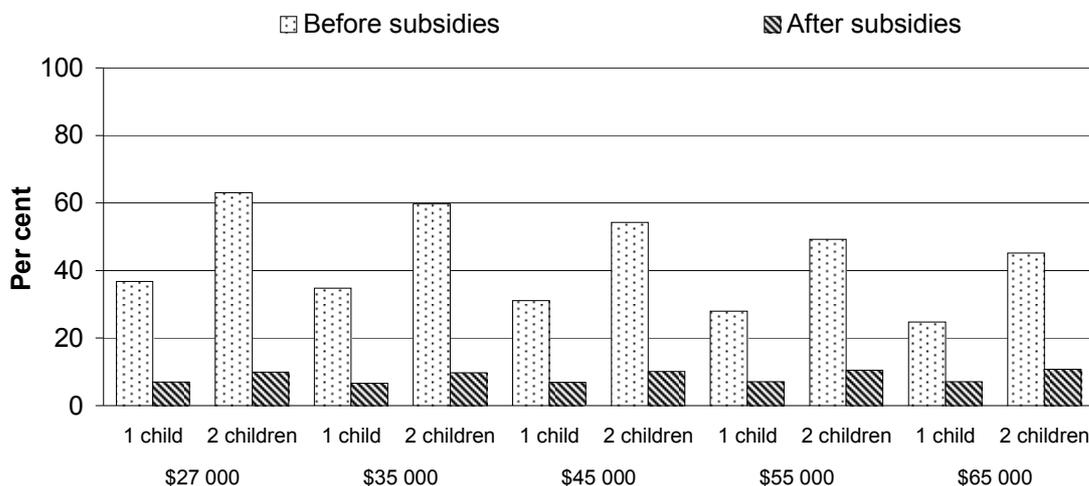
Lower out-of-pocket costs for child care as a proportion of weekly disposable income (after child care subsidies) represents more affordable child care. Similar percentages across income groups suggest a more equitable outcome.

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

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Nationally, out-of-pocket costs as a proportion of weekly family income after subsidies in 2009 showed less variation across income bands than before subsidies were taken into account (figure 3.26).

**Figure 3.26 Out-of-pocket costs of child care for families with children in full time centre-based long day care, as a proportion of weekly disposable income, by gross annual family income, 2009<sup>a, b</sup>**

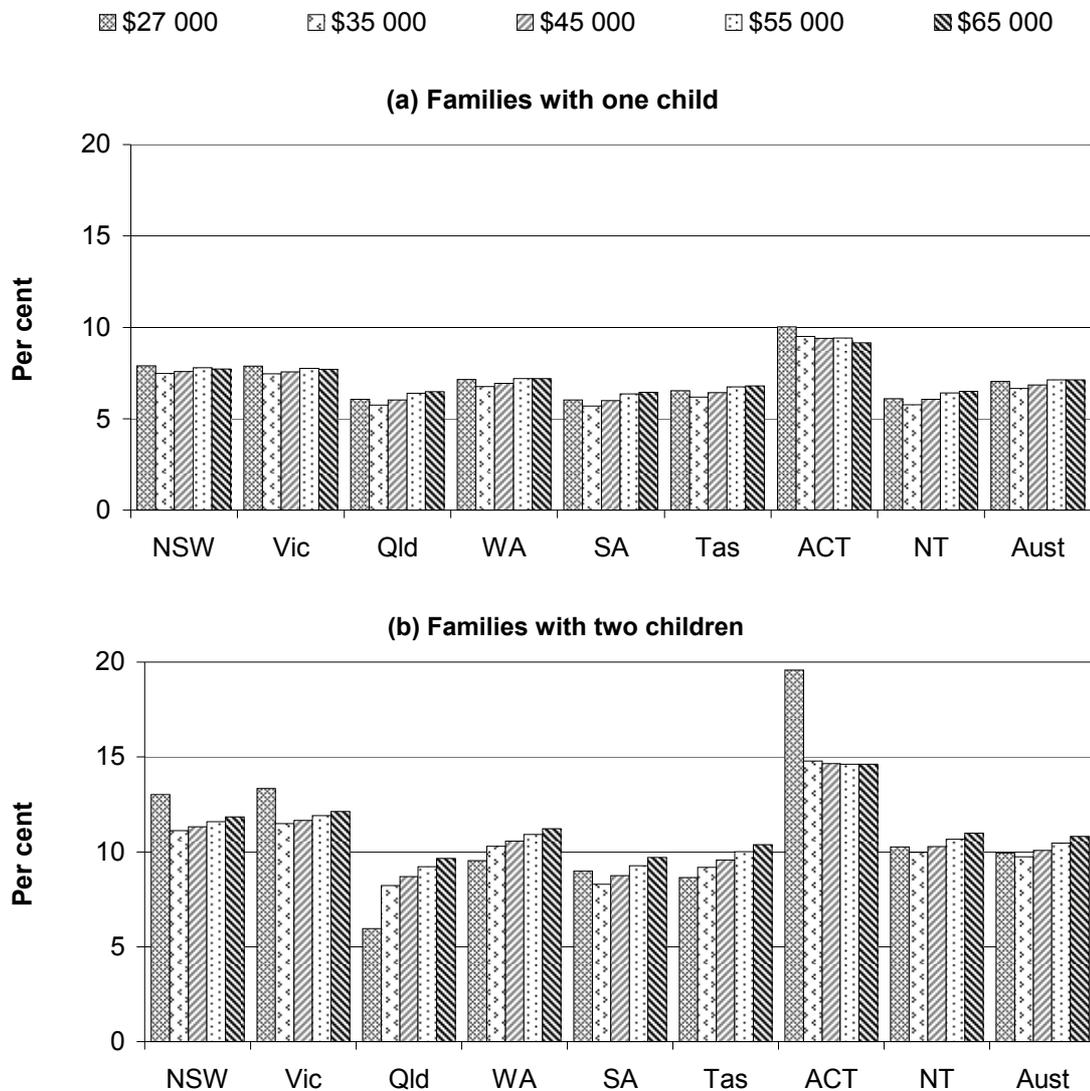


<sup>a</sup> The CCTR (known as the CCR from 1 July 2009) increased from 30 per cent to 50 per cent on 1 July 2008.  
<sup>b</sup> Data for 2009 are not directly comparable to data in previous Report's due to a change in data source Refer to box 3.1 and table 3A.42 for more information.

Source: DEEWR (unpublished); table 3A.42.

Figure 3.27 shows out of pocket costs (after subsidies) in 2009 for centre-based long day care for families with one child and with two children in care across jurisdictions. Nationally, the out-of-pocket costs (after subsidies) for families with one child was between 6.7 per cent and 7.1 per cent of weekly disposable income, and between 9.7 per cent and 10.8 per cent of weekly disposable income for families with two children (figure 3.27).

**Figure 3.27 Out-of-pocket costs for centre-based long day care (after subsidies), as a proportion of weekly disposable income, by gross annual family income, 2009<sup>a, b</sup>**



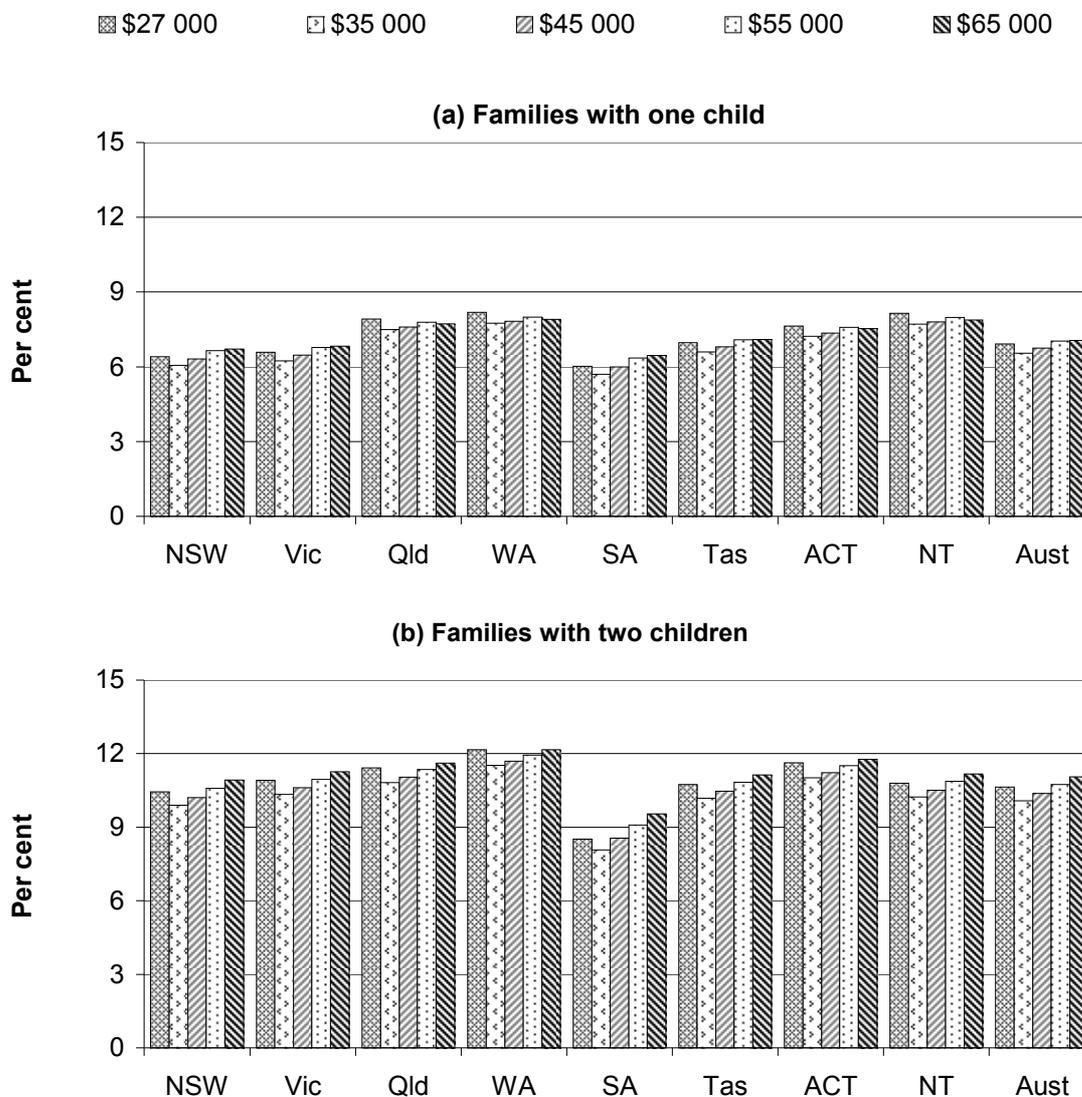
<sup>a</sup> The CCTR (known as the CCR from 1 July 2009) increased from 30 per cent to 50 per cent on 1 July 2008.

<sup>b</sup> Data for 2009 are not directly comparable to data in previous Report's due to a change in data source. Refer to box 3.1 and table 3A.42 for more information.

Source: DEEWR (unpublished); table 3A.42.

Out-of-pocket costs (after subsidies) for family day care in 2009 are shown in figure 3.28. Nationally, the out-of-pocket costs (after subsidies) for families with one child was between 6.6 per cent and 7.1 per cent of weekly disposable income, and between 10.1 per cent and 11.1 per cent of weekly disposable income for families with two children (figure 3.28).

**Figure 3.28 Out-of-pocket costs for family day care (after subsidies), as a proportion of weekly disposable income, by gross annual family income, 2009<sup>a, b</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> The CCTR (known as the CCR from 1 July 2009) increased from 30 per cent to 50 per cent on 1 July 2008.

<sup>b</sup> Data for 2009 are not directly comparable to data in previous Report's due to a change in data source. Refer to box 3.1 and table 3A.43 for more information.

Source: DEEWR (unpublished); table 3A.43.

### Children's needs

'Children's needs' is an indicator of governments' objective to provide children's services that meet the care, education and development needs of children, in a safe and nurturing environment (box 3.26).

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**Box 3.26 Children's needs**

'Children's needs' has been identified for development and reporting in future.

Development work is focused on outcomes measures for children's needs in the areas of:

- learning and development
- health and safety
- social and emotional wellbeing.

Development is underway to investigate a broad set of measures for children's needs using data from the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (box 3.27) and/or the Australian Early Development Index (box 3.28).

**Box 3.27 Longitudinal Study of Australian Children**

The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC) is a longitudinal study on a discrete cohort of children, that aims to examine the impact of Australia's unique social, economic and cultural environment on children growing up in Australia today (AIFS 2005a).

The LSAC was initiated and is funded by FaHCSIA, with the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) having responsibility for the design and management of the study.

The sampling unit for the LSAC is the child. During 2004, the study recruited a sample of 5107 infants (children aged 0-1 year at the time) and 4983 children (children aged 4-5 years at the time) (see AIFS 2005a for more details).

*LSAC and outcomes for children*

The LSAC Outcome Index, attached to each infant and child in the study, is a composite measure that indicates how children are developing across physical, social/emotional and learning domains of competence.

The Outcome Index provides a means of summarising the development of children across multiple domains, and wherever possible incorporates both positive and negative outcomes (see AIFS 2005b for more details).

The LSAC Outcome Index is currently being investigated as a possible measure of the developmental outcomes of infants/children in child care/preschool, compared with those infants/children who are not in child care/preschool.

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### Box 3.28 Australian Early Development Index

The Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) is a population measure of how children in a community are developing by the time they reach school age. It is an adapted version of the Canadian Early Development Instrument, and measures five domains of early childhood development from information collected on children in their first year of full-time schooling (the year prior to year one) through a teacher completed checklist. These domains are:

- physical health and wellbeing
- social competence
- emotional maturity
- language and cognitive skills (school based)
- communication skills and general knowledge.

The AEDI will deliver valuable information about early childhood development at the local population level. Together with other relevant data this information will enable communities and governments to pinpoint the types of services, resources, infrastructure and supports young children and their families need to give children the best possible start in life.

The Australian Government first funded a trial of the AEDI in 60 communities across Australia between 2004 and 2008. In recognition of its potential value to communities and to governments in their decisions around early childhood policy development and resourcing, the Australian Government has funded (\$21.9 million) national implementation of the AEDI until 2011. The AEDI has also been endorsed by COAG as a national progress measure of early childhood development.

*A Snapshot of Early Childhood Development in Australia*, the first AEDI national report, was released in December 2009.

Community profiles will be released in March 2010, which will provide communities with a detailed report to help explain the AEDI results.

The AEDI is conducted by the Centre for Community Child Health in Melbourne, working in partnership with the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research in Perth. For more information on the AEDI, including access to the community level maps, refer to [www.aedi.org.au](http://www.aedi.org.au).

Source: DEEWR (unpublished).

## 3.4 Future directions in performance reporting

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

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## Improving reporting of existing indicators

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

## Future indicator development

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

- expanding reporting against the quality indicator of staff qualifications
- completing the quality indicators for licensing of services
- developing a quality indicator for health and safety in preschool services
- developing indicators to measure the extent to which children's services meet family needs
- developing indicators to measure the extent to which children's services meet children's needs.

## Improving the completeness and comparability of data

### *Potential new sources of data*

Several new sources of data may be able to be used in future Reports:

- The Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs endorsed the *National Early Childhood Education and Care Information Agreement* on 6 November 2009. The Agreement provides a framework for cooperation between the Australian, State and Territory Governments and information agencies to develop the information base required for the COAG early childhood reform agenda and will also contribute to the development of an evidence base for assessing outcomes and informing future policy development. The Agreement is an important step in national efforts to improve the quality and reliability of early childhood education and care data.
- A National Minimum Data Set (NMDS) for children's services has been developed, which provides a framework for collecting a set of nationally comparable data for child care and preschool services. The NMDS was

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developed by the AIHW, under the guidance of the Children's Services Data Working Group (CSDWG). The CSDWG is a working group established by the National Community Services Information Management Group, a subgroup of the CDSMAC. The AIHW has published the final report on the development of the NMDS, and a report on the feasibility of implementation of the NMDS.

- The LSAC is a longitudinal study that aims to examine the impact of Australia's unique social, economic and cultural environment on children growing up in Australia today (see box 3.27 for more information).
- The AEDI measures young children's development from a teacher-completed checklist (see box 3.28 for more information).

## **COAG developments**

### *Report on Government Services alignment with National Agreement reporting*

It is anticipated that future editions of the Children's services chapter will align with applicable NIRA indicators. Further reporting changes might result from future developments in NA and National Partnership reporting.

### *Outcomes from review of Report on Government Services*

COAG agreed to Terms of Reference for a Heads of Treasuries/Senior Officials review of the ROGS in November 2008, to report to COAG by end-September 2009. The review examined the ongoing usefulness of the ROGS in the context of new national reporting under the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations.

No significant changes from this review are reflected in the 2010 Report. Any COAG endorsed recommendations from the review are likely to be implemented for the 2011 Report.

## **3.5 Jurisdictions' comments**

This section provides comments from each jurisdiction on the services covered in this chapter.

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### Australian Government comments

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The Australian Government has committed to fund a range of early childcare education and care initiatives, many of which are under the agenda being advanced through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). The focus of Australian Government funding over the next 5 years is: the provision of quality early childhood education in the year before school; improving the quality, access and affordability of child care to Australian families; and strategies to lift qualifications and supply of workforce. The Office of Early Childhood Education and Child Care, established by the Government in early 2008, is responsible for delivering the Government's key commitments to the agenda and guiding major policy reforms at a national level. Major initiatives and their progress include:

- improving the cost of child care. From 1 July 2008, the Child Care Rebate was increased from 30 per cent to 50 per cent of out-of-pocket expenses, to a maximum of \$7778 indexed per child per year
- establishing integrated early learning and care centres (including six Autism-specific centres) in priority locations to be operational by end of 2010. As at 12 November 2009, arrangements for 34 of the 38 priority locations had been announced
- helping to close the gap in outcomes for Indigenous children through \$293 million of funding under the *Indigenous Early Childhood Development National Partnership Agreement* for Children and Family Centres that provide early learning, child care, parent and family support services
- provision of \$970 million over 5 years through a *National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education* to ensure that by 2013, every Australian child has access to a quality early childhood education program in the year before formal school. Bilateral agreements, specifying actions and strategies to be undertaken by jurisdictions to achieve universal access, were finalised with all states and territories in 2009
- investing around \$127 million over 4 years to increase the supply and quality of the early childhood workforce and to develop a National Early Years Workforce Strategy. In 2009, the Government made available: refunds for TAFE Fees for Diplomas and Advanced Diplomas; a HECS-HELP Benefit for early childhood teachers teaching in disadvantaged areas; and 500 new ongoing early childhood education university places
- investing \$21.9 million until June 2011 to nationally implement the Australian Early Development Index with preliminary data expected to be available in December 2009
- implementation of the Early Years Learning Framework commenced in July 2009, to guide the development of nationally consistent and quality early childhood education programs. Improvements to the quality of service provision, quality standards and a jointly governed unified national system to replace current licensing and quality assurance processes are underway.

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### **New South Wales Government comments**

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

During 2008-09, the NSW Government continued the review of the regulatory framework for children’s services. Consultation focussed on options for streamlining the licensing scheme, improving standards for children and improving the flow of information to families about children’s services.

In late 2008, the NSW Government announced that the re-made children’s services regulation would introduce an improved staff to child ratio of 1:4 for children under 2 years of age in all centre based and mobile children’s services. The NSW Government has also announced that it will introduce partial cost recovery for its children’s services regulatory activities in the form of a licence fee from January 2010.

From July 2009, NSW extended the regulation and licensing of school-based children’s services to include the Sydney metropolitan region, the Hunter and Central Coast, and the Southern region of the State. From July 2010, the children’s services regulation will extend to cover school based children’s services across all of NSW.

The NSW Government’s Preschool Investment and Reform Plan (PIRP) entered a growth phase in 2008-09 with funding to create 5250 preschool places. The new funding is boosting attendance for children who live in areas where preschool participation was low and there were insufficient places. In 2008-09, more than half the State’s community preschools benefited from \$10.2 million in PIRP funding with \$2 million from the Universal Access to Early Childhood Education program.

A new way of funding community-based preschools was introduced in July 2008 to make funding fairer. The model is based on the number of children who attend preschool each week and the level of need of each child in a service. A higher rate of funding is given to services with children from low income families, Aboriginal or culturally and linguistically diverse families, and those in disadvantaged areas. A further loading is given to remote and mobile services.

Due to the integrated nature of early childhood education and care in NSW, the structure of the Children’s services chapter continues to pose difficulties in comparing the performance of NSW with that of other jurisdictions, and in accurately reporting NSW data. The chapter continues to distinguish preschool services from child care services, whereas in NSW the same standards for educational programs and early childhood teachers apply across all centre based and mobile children’s and there is no regulatory distinction between preschool and long day care.”

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### Victorian Government comments

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The Victorian Government is committed to providing access to high quality early childhood education and care services for all Victorian families. The work of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has continued to implement its education and early childhood reform agenda during 2009.

New Victorian children's services legislation came into effect in 2009 ensuring that minimum standards are met in all child care services, including for the first time Family Day Care and Outside School Hours Care. The legislation promotes quality by improving staff/child ratios and the level and mix of qualifications.

A Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework is being developed which aims to advance all children's learning and development from birth to 8 years. It supports early childhood professionals to work together and with families to achieve common outcomes for all children. Linking early childhood services more closely with schools, the *Transition: A Positive Start to School* initiative aims to ensure that by the time children start school they will be ready to learn and schools will be ready for them. A key feature of this initiative is the introduction of Transition Learning and Development Statements for all children starting school.

Investment in a year of high quality kindergarten in the year before school, in a range of settings including long day care and integrated children's centres continues to grow. Children of concession card holders can access 10 hours of quality early childhood education at no cost to the family. Over 17 000 children have benefitted from the kindergarten fee subsidy which was expanded in 2009 to include all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

An early childhood workforce strategy was released in 2009 that includes a range of new initiatives to support the development of a highly-skilled, professional early childhood workforce. A priority for the strategy is to attract and retain staff to work in early childhood services, and to increase qualification levels for early childhood education and care staff. Scholarships for the upgrade of qualifications, and incentives for early childhood teachers to take up employment in long day care and in rural kindergartens support this workforce.

Since 2003-04, the Victorian Government has committed funds towards the establishment of 98 integrated children's centres. There are now 51 centres open and operating in Victoria with six centres open in the last 12 months.

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### Queensland Government comments

“ Under *Toward Q2-Tomorrow's Queensland*, the Queensland Government is committed to providing all children with access to a quality early childhood education, so that they are ready for school. In order to achieve this, Queensland is implementing a number of new initiatives to provide all children with access to kindergarten programs.

By 2014, all Queensland children will have access to a quality early education program, delivered by a qualified teacher, in the year before they start Prep. The Queensland and Australian governments are investing \$889 million to deliver universal access to kindergarten, and approximately \$100 million will be provided in 2010, including funding for long day care services to deliver kindergarten programs. Specific initiatives being progressed include:

- building up to 240 additional kindergarten services by 2014. This investment will double the capacity of the kindergarten sector, and allow up to 12 000 additional children to participate in a kindergarten program
- implementing a new kindergarten funding scheme that will recognise need and ensure that cost is not a barrier for families accessing a kindergarten program
- developing innovative delivery models, including mobile and outreach kindergarten programs, to meet the needs of children living in regional and remote areas
- tailoring support for children with additional needs to assist them to access and participate in kindergarten. This support will be responsive to the specific needs of individual children as well as complementing existing government supports
- building the capacity of the early childhood workforce, including supporting existing early childhood workers to gain teaching level qualifications and encouraging new entrants to join the sector
- developing new Queensland learning guidelines so that all children have access to a high quality early childhood education program no matter where they live or where they access a kindergarten program

Queensland is also continuing to implement the *Bound for Success* initiative which provides access to a quality early education program for children in discrete Indigenous communities. As part of this initiative, new and refurbished facilities are being established across 35 communities, together with guidelines for early learning programs, and professional development for educators to support culturally appropriate programs. This quality early learning program supports Indigenous children's participation in early childhood education. The program received the Premier's 2009 Award for Excellence in Public Service Delivery in the Smart category — delivering world-class education and training.

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## Western Australia Government comments

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The Department for Communities (DfC) continues to work in partnership with the Department of Education and Training to progress the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Reform Agenda for early childhood care and education. DfC has been involved in the process and design of the national quality standard, national regulation and licensing system, a quality rating system, and the endorsed Early Years Learning Framework.

DfC through the Child Care Licensing and Standards Unit administers the *Child Care Services Act 2007* and the related Regulations. The role includes education and support about the regulatory framework, support and guidance for new and existing service operators, and the application of compliance, assessment and sanctions.

In Western Australia there are 511 long day care centres, 26 occasional care centres, 738 family day care services, 236 outside school hours care services and 24 pre-kindys currently licensed at 11 November 2009. Services are licensed for a maximum of 3 years and regular monitoring visits are conducted. A new computer system (Realm) is now installed and operational, allowing for greater reporting and analysis of child care sector licensing data. Tailored regulations for rural and remote child care services are being developed.

Drafting of the Act amendments and Regulations arising from the review of the child care legislation is well underway. This review factors in the COAG National Quality Agenda announcements of an integrated national regulatory system with the development of National Quality Standards for child care services.

Pre-compulsory education (kindergarten and pre-primary) lays the foundation for compulsory education. The Department of Education and Training provides an 11 hours per week kindergarten program for children aged 4 years of age by 30 June in any given year. Beginning in 2010, some districts will be moving to provide 15 hours in kindergarten. There is a small number of community kindergartens which are managed by a voluntary parent committee.

The *Curriculum Framework (K-12)* outlines learning outcomes for all children. The emphasis of the early years curriculum is on: the development of social, emotional, and physical wellbeing; literacy and numeracy development; and nurturing positive attitudes to learning. An integrated and inclusive curriculum is provided through a balance of child initiated and adult-directed learning experiences, a focus on interaction, and planned use of outdoor and indoor learning environments.

The Framework places the child at the centre of the learning program and enables early childhood teachers to plan and implement quality programs that are both integrated and developmentally appropriate.

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### South Australian Government comments

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The Government of South Australia created the Early Childhood Development (ECD) ministerial portfolio in July 2008 in recognition of the need to coordinate and integrate where appropriate, the planning and delivery of services for the care, education, health and wellbeing of young children. The Minister for ECD has the authority to coordinate effort across relevant portfolios to improve outcomes for SA children. This is reflected in the governance arrangements for the Inter-Ministerial Committee on ECD and the supporting Chief Executives' and Senior Officers' meetings.

The Government of South Australia's investment in the early years continues, with nine of 20 planned Children's Centres for Early Childhood Development and Parenting already opened. The remaining centres are due to open in 2010. SA's Children's Centres are widely acknowledged as a leading example of coordination and integration of education, care, health and family support services with strong connections to local communities.

Through the Senior Officer Group: Early Childhood, SA facilitates inter-agency coordination and integration of services for children from pre-birth to 8 years. The realignment of speech pathology, supporting the SA/NT Data Linkage Project and reporting on the financial investment in early childhood in SA are several of the inter-agency projects the Senior Officer Group has progressed.

SA also has a strong focus on addressing the inequalities faced by Aboriginal children through targeted literacy support in the early years and access to preschool from 3 years of age. An extra 13 full time equivalent teacher positions have been provided in preschools to support Aboriginal children. Preschool enrolments by Aboriginal children has increased from 77 per cent in 2004 to 88 per cent in 2008.

SA is continuing the reform of education and early childhood development legislation. The aim is to progressively enact modern legislation that underpins and supports a stronger coordination and integration of birth to year 12 services.

An inter-agency Taskforce on the SA ECD Workforce has been established by the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology to systematically address workforce issues, which are emerging as crucial to the reform of children's services locally and nationally.

As part of its commitment to the national reform agenda for early childhood, SA is a signatory to the *National Partnership on Early Childhood Education*. This provides every child with access to a preschool program in the year prior to full time schooling, delivered by a four-year university qualified early childhood worker by 2013.

The *National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development* implements a range of initiatives across the health and education sectors, supporting the inter-agency effort required to 'close the gap'. These initiatives include four Family and Children's Centres and programs to improve sexual education and pregnancy wellbeing.

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## Tasmanian Government comments

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There are several significant Early Years initiatives in Tasmania to build relationships and better support families with young children from birth to 5 years of age:

- *Launching into Learning* is a 4 year (2006 to 2010) \$12.6 million project to support parents as their child's first, ongoing and often most influential teacher. Funding to schools enables them to develop and lead initiatives with families and their community to support children's learning prior to preschool, that is from birth onwards. Further funding has been guaranteed until 2013.
- Up to 30 Child and Family Centres (CFCs). CFCs will provide a range of integrated services that support families with the health, care and education needs of children from birth to school age, preparing them for a healthy life and success at school. Eleven communities have been announced, and discussion and planning within the first eight is well underway. The CFC project is an interagency collaboration under the leadership of the Early Years Strategy Inter Departmental Committee.
- *Let's Read* is a comprehensive early literacy initiative promoting the importance of reading to young children from birth to 5 years of age. In its second year of implementation across the State, it is delivered by trained professionals including child health nurses, teachers, child carers, family support workers and librarians in all 27 local government areas. Families receive ongoing support from professionals together with resources such as books and tip sheets to help them develop a love of books with their children.
- Tasmanian schools are well on target to deliver universal access to preschool (kindergarten in Tasmania) for 15 hours a week by a 4 year university-trained early childhood teacher by 2013. In 2009, 45 schools are involved in this initiative and this will increase further in 2010.

Other initiatives include:

- revised Centre Based Care Standards Class 1 for 0–5 year olds and the final stage of the Centre Based Care Standards Class 2 Standards for 5–12 year olds were completed by the end of June 2009, for implementation in July
- the Recognition Project (Early Years Recognition of Child Care Qualifications) commenced in July 2009, assisting, in addition with other strategies, to address the shortage of qualified child care professionals in Tasmania
- the Skills to Care Initiative has continued successfully and is operating in more areas around the State
- the Scholarship Program, in addition to providing funds for scholarships, is also being refocused toward implementing a course for unqualified carers in outside school hours care services.

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### Australian Capital Territory Government comments

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The ACT Government seeks to ensure the children of the ACT are encouraged and supported to reach their full potential. These goals are articulated in the ACT Children’s Plan, a whole of government policy framework for children up to 12 years of age for the period 2004–14.

The Office for Children, Youth and Family Support within the ACT Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services works in partnership with the community to provide a wide range of services for children, young people and their families. Services include prevention and early intervention services (Child and Family Centres), family and community support (in partnership with the community sector), Youth Justice services, Care and Protection services and monitoring and licensing of children’s services.

The Children’s Policy and Regulation Unit has responsibility for the monitoring and licensing of children’s services. The *Children and Young People Act 2008* commenced on 18 August 2008 with the introduction of the child care chapter and related *ACT Childcare Services Standards* in February 2009.

The ACT Government is committed to ensuring all children get the best possible start to their education. This is supported by the opening of four new early Childhood Schools in 2009, as well as offering quality preschool programs across Canberra. The Early Childhood Schools are regional hubs offering integrated services for children aged birth to eight years.

The ACT Department of Education and Training provides universal access to preschool education to all age eligible children. The first stage of the Universal Access strategy commenced this year with the implementation of 15 hours at five sites across the ACT. This access will increase over the next 4 years with full implementation in all schools by 2013.

During 2008, all preschools were amalgamated with their local primary school. Sixty primary schools in the ACT now offer preschool programs, with a number offering more than one preschool program.

The Koori Preschool Program offers Aboriginal children and Torres Strait Islander children 9 hours of preschool education for children aged birth to 5 years (3 to 5 year olds attend without an adult carer). Eligible children enrolled in the Koori Preschool program may also access full hours at their local preschool program in addition to the Koori Preschool Program.

The Early Intervention Program offers targeted programs to children aged 2 to 5 years. This program is delivered in 14 sites across Canberra, and supports children (and their families) who have, or are at risk of, a developmental delay, speech and language disorders, disabilities, and or communication or social difficulties.

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### Northern Territory Government comments

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The past year has seen the development of the newly established division of Early Childhood Policy and Regulation, within the NT Department of Education and Training. This Division oversees a number of projects and integrates a range of ongoing, expanded and new programs including:

- children’s services licensing
- early years education, including preschools and mobile early childhood services
- new child and family centres.

In 2009, the Division introduced new licensing and registration regulations for children’s services in the Northern Territory. The introduction of the new licensing requirement will provide a number of benefits. The regulations support:

- consistent safety and learning standards to a broader range of children’s services
- quality assurance and capacity building in remote children’s services with the opportunity to employ Action Plan Agreements with eligible service providers
- more innovation and flexibility through various new provisions, including the removal of the 75 place limit, and the introduction of Venue Management Plans for outside school hours care services.

An increasing number of young children in remote areas now have access to quality early childhood programs through Mobile Early Childhood Services (MECS). Through MECS, children from birth up to 3 years old (or 4 years old where there is no preschool) attend playgroups in a number of communities throughout the NT.

Funding under the *National Partnership Agreement for Indigenous Early Childhood Development*, will enable the establishment of five Indigenous child and family centres in four remote locations and one urban location in the NT.

The centres will provide a range of integrated services aimed at meeting targets to reduce the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children’s development outcomes. The services will include:

- child care
- early learning
- parenting and family support services
- strong links to health services
- targeted intervention services for vulnerable children and families.

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## 3.6 Definitions of key terms and indicators

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

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

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

<b>Priority of access</b>	<p>The Australian Government funds child care with a major purpose of meeting the child care needs of Australian families. However, the demand for child care sometimes exceeds supply in some locations. When this happens, it's important for services to allocate available places to those families with the greatest need for child care support. The Government has determined Guidelines for allocating places in these circumstances. These Guidelines apply to centre based long day care, in-home care, family day care and outside school hours care services. They set out the following three levels of priority, which child care services must follow when filling vacant places:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• priority 1: a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect</li> <li>• priority 2: a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test under section 14 of the Family Assistance Act</li> <li>• priority 3: any other child.</li> </ul> <p>Within these main categories priority should also be given to the following children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families</li> <li>• children in families which include a disabled person</li> <li>• children in families on lower incomes</li> <li>• children in families with a non-English speaking background</li> <li>• children in socially isolated families</li> <li>• children of single parents.</li> </ul>
<b>Real expenditure</b>	<p>Actual expenditure adjusted for changes in prices. Adjustments were made using the GDP price deflator and expressed in terms of final year prices.</p>
<b>Recurrent expenditure</b>	<p>Expenditure that does not result in the creation or acquisition of fixed assets (new or second hand). It consists mainly of expenditure on wages, salaries and supplements, purchases of goods and services, and the consumption of fixed capital (depreciation).</p>
<b>Regional and remote areas</b>	<p>Geographic location is based on the ABS's Australian Standard Geographical Classification of Remoteness Areas, which categorises areas as 'major cities', 'inner regional', 'outer regional', 'remote', 'very remote' and 'migratory'. The criteria for remoteness areas are based on the Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia, which measures the remoteness of a point based on the physical road distance to the nearest urban centre in each of five size classes.</p> <p>The 'regional' classification used in the chapter is derived by adding data for inner regional and outer regional areas. The 'remote' classification is derived by adding data for remote, very remote and migratory areas.</p>
<b>Service model</b>	<p>The categories for which data were collected, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• centre-based long day care</li> <li>• family day care</li> <li>• outside school hours care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– before/after school care</li> </ul> </li> <li>• vacation care</li> <li>• occasional care</li> <li>• 'other' care</li> <li>• preschool services.</li> </ul>

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<b>Special needs group</b>	An identifiable group within the general population who can have special difficulty accessing services. Special needs groups for which data are reported in this chapter include: children from a non-English speaking background; Indigenous children; children from low income families (Australian Government child care only); children with disability; and children from regional or remote areas.
<b>Standard hours of care</b>	<p>Defined by service model as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• centre-based long day care — less than or equal to 10 hours per day on Monday to Friday</li> <li>• preschool — less than or equal to six hours per day on Monday to Friday, for stand alone preschools only.</li> <li>• family day care — less than or equal to 10 hours per day on Monday to Friday, where no hours are overnight hours</li> <li>• outside school hours care: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– before/after school care — less than or equal to two hours before school and three hours after school</li> </ul> </li> <li>• vacation care — less than or equal to 10 hours per day on Monday to Friday</li> <li>• occasional care — less than or equal to eight hours per day Monday to Friday</li> <li>• other care — less than or equal to 10 hours per day Monday to Friday.</li> </ul>
<b>Substantiated breach arising from a complaint</b>	An expression of concern about a child care or preschool service, made orally, in writing or in person to the regulatory authority, which constitutes a failure by the service to abide by the State or Territory legislation, regulations or conditions. This concern is investigated and subsequently deemed to have substance by the regulatory body.

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## 3.7 Attachment tables

Attachment tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an ‘3A’ suffix (for example, table 3A.3). Attachment tables are provided on the CD-ROM enclosed with the Report and on the Review website ([www.pc.gov.au/gsp](http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp)). Users without access to the CD-ROM or the website can contact the Secretariat to obtain the attachment tables (see contact details on the inside front cover of the Report).

### All jurisdiction data

<b>Table 3A.1</b>	Early Childhood Education and Care in Australia, as at 30 June 2009
<b>Table 3A.2</b>	Estimated resident population, children aged 12 years and younger ('000)
<b>Table 3A.3</b>	Total government real expenditure on children's services (2008-09 dollars) (\$'000)
<b>Table 3A.4</b>	Australian Government real expenditure on children's services (2008-09 dollars) (\$'000)
<b>Table 3A.5</b>	State and Territory Government real expenditure on child care and preschool services (2008-09 dollars) (\$'000)
<b>Table 3A.6</b>	Comparability of expenditure — items included, 2008-09
<b>Table 3A.7</b>	Treatment of assets by children's services agencies, 2008-09
<b>Table 3A.8</b>	Places provided by Australian Government approved child care services (number)
<b>Table 3A.9</b>	Children aged 0–12 years attending Australian Government approved child care services
<b>Table 3A.10</b>	Children attending Australian Government approved child care services, by age, 2009
<b>Table 3A.11</b>	Children attending Australian Government approved and State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care, 2008-09
<b>Table 3A.12</b>	Children aged 0–12, average attendance at Australian Government approved child care services
<b>Table 3A.13</b>	Children enrolled in State and Territory Government funded and/or provided preschool services
<b>Table 3A.14</b>	Representation of special needs groups in attendees at Australian Government approved child care services (per cent), by age group, 2008-09
<b>Table 3A.15</b>	Representation of special needs groups in attendees at Australian Government approved child care services, children aged 0–12 (per cent)
<b>Table 3A.16</b>	Representation of children aged from special needs groups in State and Territory Government child care and preschool services, 2008-09
<b>Table 3A.17</b>	Indigenous children enrolled in State and Territory Government preschool services, 2004-05 to 2008-09
<b>Table 3A.18</b>	Children absent from non-government preschools, 2008
<b>Table 3A.19</b>	Children aged 0–12 years using child care and preschool services, by employment status of parents (per cent)
<b>Table 3A.20</b>	Service availability during non-standard hours for Australian Government approved child care services (per cent)

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<b>Table 3A.21</b>	Service availability during non-standard hours for State and Territory Government approved child care services, 2008-09
<b>Table 3A.22</b>	Utilisation rates for Australian Government approved centre-based long day care and family day care, 2009 (per cent)
<b>Table 3A.23</b>	Median weekly fees charged by Australian Government approved child care services (2009 dollars)
<b>Table 3A.24</b>	Median weekly fees charged by Australian Government approved long day care services, by remoteness area, 2009
<b>Table 3A.25</b>	Weekly cost of preschool (after subsidies), per child attending, by cost range, Australia, 2005, 2008
<b>Table 3A.26</b>	Weekly cost of preschool (after subsidies), per child attending, 2005, 2008
<b>Table 3A.27</b>	Median weekly cost of preschool (after subsidies), per child attending, by remoteness area, 2008
<b>Table 3A.28</b>	Staff employed by Australian Government approved child care services
<b>Table 3A.29</b>	Paid primary contact staff employed by Australian Government approved child care services, by qualification
<b>Table 3A.30</b>	Qualified paid primary contact staff employed by Australian Government approved child care services, by level of qualification and field of study, 2008-09
<b>Table 3A.31</b>	Paid primary contact staff in Australian Government approved child care services who undertook relevant in-service training in previous 12 months
<b>Table 3A.32</b>	Progress in the Quality Improvement and Accreditation System, Family Day Care Quality Assurance, and Outside School Hours Care Quality Assurance, Australia (number)
<b>Table 3A.33</b>	Health and safety quality: performance against NCAC principles, family day care schemes and long day care, 2008-09
<b>Table 3A.34</b>	Hospital separations for external cause of injuries, persons aged 0–4 years, all hospitals, by place of occurrence
<b>Table 3A.35</b>	Australian Government expenditure on child care services per child in the community aged 0–12 years (2008-09 dollars) (\$/child)
<b>Table 3A.36</b>	Total State/Territory government real expenditure on children's services per child in the community aged 0–12 years (2008-09 dollars) (\$/child)
<b>Table 3A.37</b>	Australian Government expenditure per child aged 0–12 attending approved child care services (2008-09 dollars) (\$ per child)
<b>Table 3A.38</b>	Children aged 0–12 years in families participating in the labour force who required (additional) formal care for work related reasons, 2008
<b>Table 3A.39</b>	Children aged 0–12 years by whether any or additional formal child care or preschool was required, 2005, 2008
<b>Table 3A.40</b>	Main reason children aged 0–12 years required formal child care child or preschool, 2005, 2008
<b>Table 3A.41</b>	Main reason formal child care or preschool required for children aged 0–12 years was not used, 2005, 2008
<b>Table 3A.42</b>	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, 2009 (per cent)

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**Table 3A.43** Out-of-pocket costs of child care for families with children in full time family day care, as a proportion of weekly disposable income, by gross annual family incomes, 2009 (per cent)

**Single jurisdiction data – NSW**

**Table 3A.44** State Government real expenditure on child care and preschool services, New South Wales (2008-09 dollars) (\$'000)

**Table 3A.45** Characteristics of child care and preschool services not included by the Australian Government, New South Wales

**Table 3A.46** Children aged 0–12 years using State Government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services, by age, New South Wales

**Table 3A.47** Staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, New South Wales

**Table 3A.48** Paid staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, by qualification and experience, New South Wales

**Table 3A.49** Licensed and/or registered service providers, by management type, New South Wales

**Table 3A.50** Substantiated breaches arising from complaints about State Government registered or licensed service providers, New South Wales

**Single jurisdiction data – Vic**

**Table 3A.51** State Government real expenditure on child care and preschool services, Victoria (2008-09 dollars) (\$'000)

**Table 3A.52** Characteristics of child care and preschool services not included by the Australian Government, Victoria

**Table 3A.53** Children aged 0–12 years using State Government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services, by age, Victoria

**Table 3A.54** Staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, Victoria

**Table 3A.55** Paid staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, by qualification and experience, Victoria

**Table 3A.56** Licensed and/or registered service providers, by management type, Victoria

**Table 3A.57** Substantiated breaches arising from complaints about State Government registered or licensed service providers, Victoria

**Single jurisdiction data – Qld**

**Table 3A.58** State Government real expenditure on child care and preschool services, Queensland (2008-09 dollars) (\$'000)

**Table 3A.59** Characteristics of child care and preschool services not included by the Australian Government, Queensland

**Table 3A.60** Children aged 0–12 years using State Government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services, by age, Queensland

**Table 3A.61** Staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, Queensland

**Table 3A.62** Paid staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, by qualification and experience,

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Queensland

**Table 3A.63** Licensed and/or registered service providers, by management type, Queensland

**Table 3A.64** Substantiated breaches arising from complaints about State Government registered or licensed service providers, Queensland

**Single jurisdiction data – WA**

**Table 3A.65** State Government real expenditure on child care and preschool services, Western Australia (2008-09 dollars) (\$'000)

**Table 3A.66** Characteristics of child care and preschool services not included by the Australian Government, Western Australia

**Table 3A.67** Children aged 0–12 years using State Government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services, by age, Western Australia

**Table 3A.68** Staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, Western Australia

**Table 3A.69** Paid staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, by qualification and experience, Western Australia

**Table 3A.70** Licensed and/or registered service providers, by management type, Western Australia

**Table 3A.71** Substantiated breaches arising from complaints about State Government registered or licensed service providers, Western Australia

**Single jurisdiction data – SA**

**Table 3A.72** State Government real expenditure on child care and preschool services, South Australia (2008-09 dollars) (\$'000)

**Table 3A.73** Characteristics of child care and preschool services not included by the Australian Government, South Australia

**Table 3A.74** Children aged 0–12 years using State Government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services, by age, South Australia

**Table 3A.75** Staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, South Australia

**Table 3A.76** Paid staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, by qualification and experience, South Australia

**Table 3A.77** Licensed and/or registered service providers, by management type, South Australia

**Table 3A.78** Substantiated breaches arising from complaints about State Government registered or licensed service providers, South Australia

**Single jurisdiction data – Tas**

**Table 3A.79** State Government real expenditure on child care and preschool services, Tasmania (2008-09 dollars) (\$'000)

**Table 3A.80** Characteristics of child care and preschool services not included by the Australian Government, Tasmania

**Table 3A.81** Children aged 0–12 years using State Government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services, by age, Tasmania

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<b>Table 3A.82</b>	Staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, Tasmania
<b>Table 3A.83</b>	Paid staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, by qualification and experience, Tasmania
<b>Table 3A.84</b>	Licensed and/or registered service providers, by management type, Tasmania
<b>Table 3A.85</b>	Substantiated breaches arising from complaints about State Government registered or licensed service providers, Tasmania

**Single jurisdiction data – ACT**

<b>Table 3A.86</b>	State Government real expenditure on child care and preschool services, Australian Capital Territory (2008-09 dollars) (\$'000)
<b>Table 3A.87</b>	Characteristics of child care and preschool services not included by the Australian Government, Australian Capital Territory
<b>Table 3A.88</b>	Children aged 0–12 years using State Government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services, by age, Australian Capital Territory
<b>Table 3A.89</b>	Staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, Australian Capital Territory
<b>Table 3A.90</b>	Paid staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, by qualification and experience, Australian Capital Territory
<b>Table 3A.91</b>	Licensed and/or registered service providers, by management type, Australian Capital Territory
<b>Table 3A.92</b>	Substantiated breaches arising from complaints about State Government registered or licensed service providers, Australian Capital Territory

**Single jurisdiction data – NT**

<b>Table 3A.93</b>	State Government real expenditure on child care and preschool services, Northern Territory (2008-09 dollars) (\$'000)
<b>Table 3A.94</b>	Characteristics of child care and preschool services not included by the Australian Government, Northern Territory
<b>Table 3A.95</b>	Children aged 0–12 years using State Government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services, by age, Northern Territory
<b>Table 3A.96</b>	Staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, Northern Territory
<b>Table 3A.97</b>	Paid staff employed by State Government funded and/or managed child care and preschool service providers, by qualification and experience, Northern Territory
<b>Table 3A.98</b>	Licensed and/or registered service providers, by management type, Northern Territory
<b>Table 3A.99</b>	Substantiated breaches arising from complaints about State Government registered or licensed service providers, Northern Territory

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