
3 Children's services

Children's services aim to meet the care, education and development needs of children. In this chapter, child care services are those that are provided to children aged less than 13 years (that is, 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. To acknowledge the important links between children's services and education, this chapter is included in the 'Early childhood, education and training' section of the *Report on Government Services 2009* (2009 Report).

The data in this chapter relate to services that are supported by the Australian, State and Territory governments. Local governments also plan, fund and deliver children's services. Due to data limitations, the only local government data included are where Australian, State and Territory government funding and licensing are involved.

The major improvement to reporting on children's services this year include reporting a measure and data for 'Indigenous preschool attendance' for the first time.

Indigenous data in the children's services chapter

The Children's services chapter in the 2009 Report contains the following data items on Indigenous people:

- representation of Indigenous children in Australian Government approved child care services (compared to their representation in the community)
- representation of Indigenous children in State and Territory Government child care and preschools (compared to their representation in the community), 2007-08
- children absent from non-government preschools, 2007.

The 2009 Report also states that the Australian Government provides supplementary funding to support the participation of Indigenous children in preschool programs. In 2008, an estimated \$13.9 million was provided on a per

capita and project basis to 1250 preschools. The funding covers 8900 full time equivalent Indigenous preschool enrolments (DEEWR unpublished).

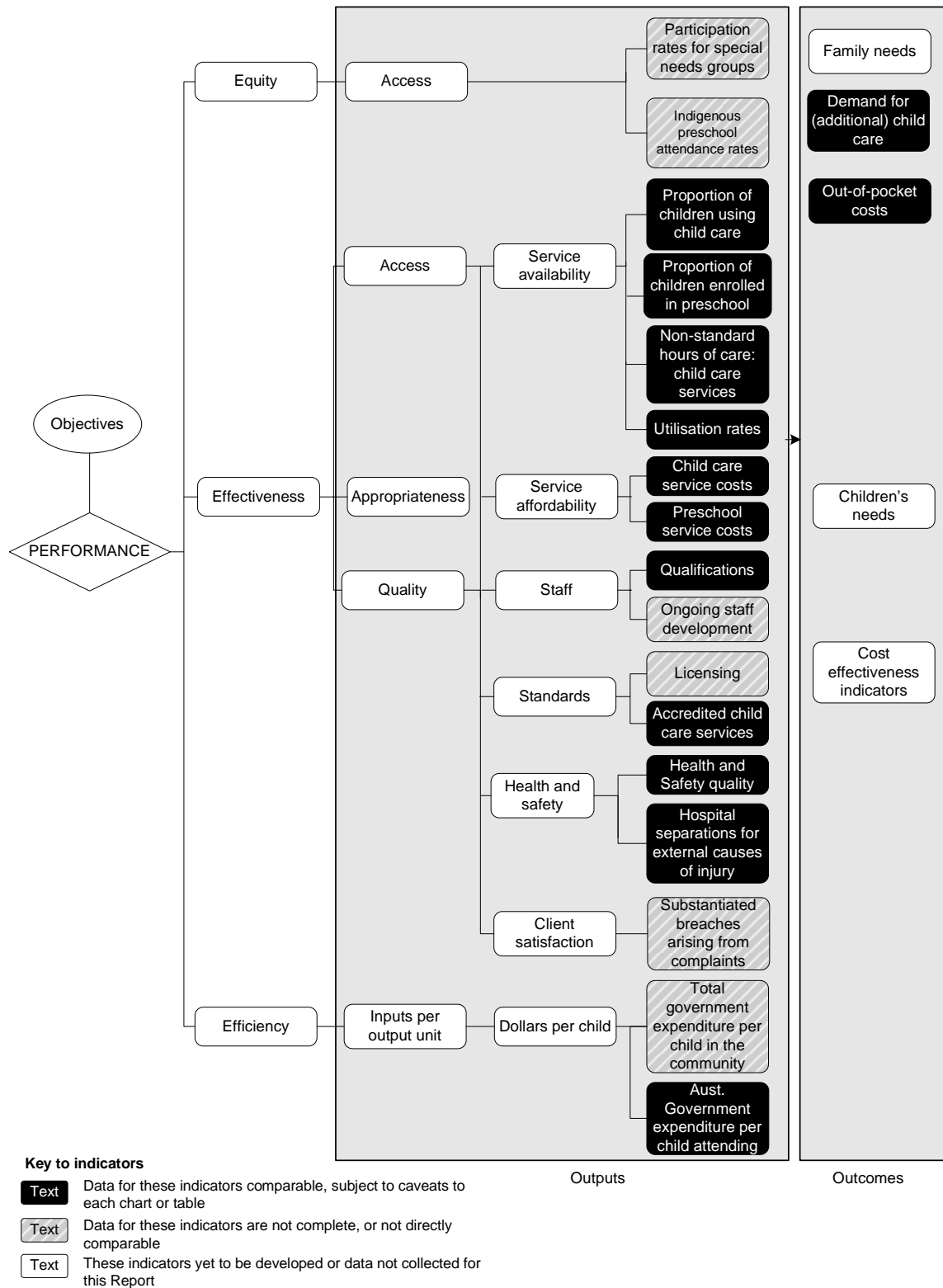
Attachment tables

Attachment tables for data within the children's services chapter of this compendium are contained in attachment 3A of the compendium. These tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an 'A' suffix (for example, table 3A.3 is table 3 in the children's services attachment). As the data are directly sourced from the 2009 Report, the compendium also notes where the original table, figure or text in the 2009 Report can be found. For example, where the compendium refers to '2009 Report, p. 3.15' this is page 15 of chapter 3 of the 2009 Report, and '2009 Report, table 3A.2' is attachment table 2 of attachment 3A of the 2009 Report.

Framework of performance indicators

Data for Indigenous people are reported for a subset of the performance indicators for children's services in the 2009 Report. It is important to interpret these data in the context of the broader performance indicator framework outlined in figure 3.1. The performance indicator framework shows which data are comparable in the 2009 Report. For data that are not considered directly comparable, the text includes relevant caveats and supporting commentary.

Figure 3.1 Performance indicators for children's services



Source: 2009 Report, figure 3.2, p. 3.12.

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 may have special difficulty in accessing services (box 3.1).

Box 3.1 Participation rates for special needs groups

'Participation rates for special needs groups' is defined as the proportion of children using child care services who are from targeted special needs groups, compared with the representation of these groups in the community. Data are reported separately for child care (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 a disability, and children from regional and remote areas.

The representation of special needs groups among children's services users being broadly similar to their representation in the community, may indicate equity of access.

Therefore, a higher participation rate is desirable.

Data reported for this indicator are not directly comparable. Updated data for childcare services were not available for this Report.

Data for participation by special needs groups using Australian Government approved child care services were previously sourced from the Australian Government Census of Child Care Services (AGCCCS), which was discontinued following the 2006 AGCCCS. Anticipated replacement data (for 2008) for this indicator were not available for the 2009 Report. Data for 2006 can be found in the attachment tables and the 2008 Report.

Data on the representation of special needs groups for children aged 3–5 years in government funded preschools are provided in table 3.1. The data provide a broad indication of the relative access to preschool for special needs groups.

- Indigenous children's representation in preschools varied across jurisdictions, though at the national level, they participated at a similar proportion (4.9 per cent) to their representation in the community (4.5 per cent).

Data on representation of special needs groups in State and Territory child care and preschools, for children aged 0–12, can be found in attachment table 3A.4.

Table 3.1 Proportion of children (aged 3–5 years) from special needs groups attending State and Territory funded or provided preschools, 2007-08^a

<i>Representation</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Children from non-English speaking backgrounds									
In preschool services ^c	10.1	17.1	4.7	na	10.5	na	8.1	na	9.9
In the community ^b	23.2	21.6	11.6	15.6	13.5	7.2	16.1	38.7	18.7
Indigenous children									
In preschool services ^c	3.7	1.0	7.7	9.1	6.2	5.2	2.7	43.5	4.9
In the community ^b	4.1	1.2	6.4	5.8	3.5	6.4	2.3	41.8	4.5
Children with a disability									
In preschool services ^{c, d}	6.3	6.1	7.4	3.1	15.5	na	4.4	5.3	6.6
In the community ^b	7.7	6.5	8.6	10.2	8.3	7.2	14.3	np	8.0
Children from regional areas ^e									
In preschool services ^c	31.4	28.5	89.5	23.6	29.0	98.3	1.0	45.5	35.8
In the community ^b	28.0	27.5	45.1	24.5	26.2	97.7	0.1	48.2	32.3
Children from remote areas ^e									
In preschool services ^c	1.3	0.1	10.5	8.7	5.8	1.7	..	54.5	4.1
In the community ^b	1.0	0.1	6.2	11.8	5.8	2.6	..	68.2	4.2

^a See table 3A.4 for complete footnotes and definitions. ^b Data showing representation in the community are sourced from the ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing, except for 'children with a disability', which are sourced from the ABS 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers. Data for children in the community aged 3–5 years are different to the data for children in the community aged 0–12 years included in table 3A.4.

^c These numbers do not include innovative or flexible services that receive direct funding from the Australian Government and are targeted towards children from these groups. Data on preschool services may include some children aged 3 years or 5 years for all jurisdictions. Preschool data in the NT may include some children aged greater than 5 years in very remote areas. ^d Data are not directly comparable between jurisdictions because there is no national definition or standard on children with a disability. ^e Regional and remote areas based on the Australian Standard Geographical Classification of Remoteness Areas (ASGC) (ABS 2001). Regional areas include inner regional and outer regional areas. Remote areas include remote, very remote and migratory areas. **na** Not available. **np** Not published. **..** Not applicable.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); ABS (unpublished), derived from *2006 Census of Population and Housing*; ABS (unpublished), derived from *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2003*; table 3A.4; 2009 Report, table 3.2, p. 3.15.

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 may have special difficulty in accessing services (box 3.2).

Box 3.2 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 considered 'absent' if they missed one or more of the sessions they were enrolled in during the reference week.

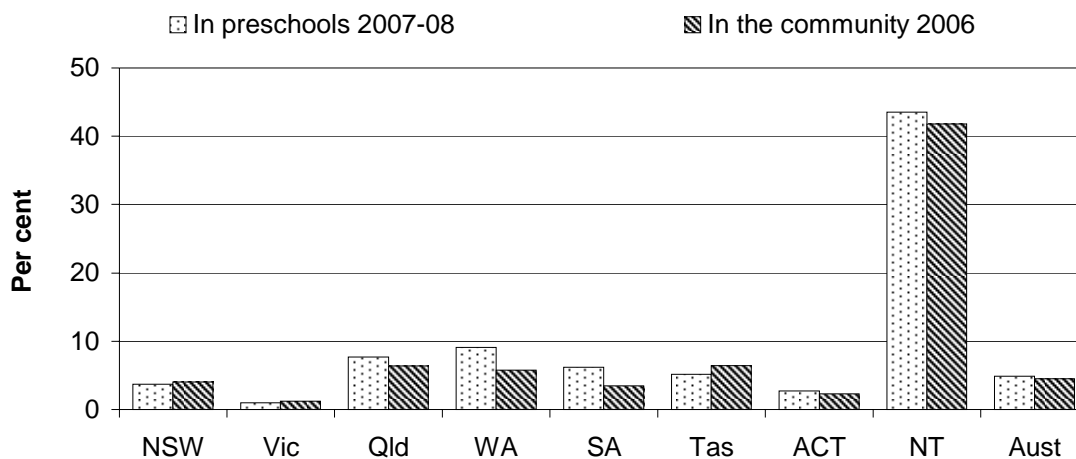
Attendance rates are measured by absentee rates. A low absentee rate indicates a higher rate of attendance at preschools, and is desirable.

Preschool attendance is not compulsory, and data are limited to Indigenous children enrolled in non-government preschools.

Data reported for this indicator are not complete, as they do not include Indigenous children enrolled in government preschools.

'Indigenous preschool enrolment rates' provides a broad indication of access to preschools. Indigenous enrolments in government and non-government preschools between 2003-04 and 2007-08 increased slightly in almost all jurisdictions, and nationally are similar to Indigenous children's representation in the community (figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2 Proportion of Indigenous children aged 3–5 years, in the community and enrolled at preschools ^{a, b, c, d}



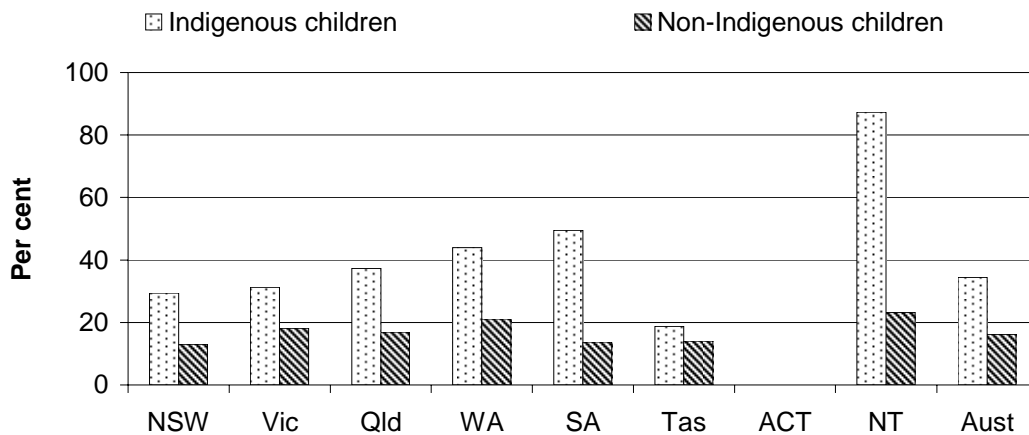
^a Data showing representation in the community are sourced from the ABS 2006 *Census of Population and Housing*. ^b Data for the representation in preschool services are from State and Territory enrolment data. ^c All Indigenous data relate to people of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin who self identify or are identified by a parent or guardian to be of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin. ^d The ABS Census Post Enumeration Survey has estimated an undercount of Indigenous people in the 2006 Census, and the estimates of the proportional representation in the community of Indigenous children should be treated with caution.

Source: ABS (unpublished), derived from 2006 *Census of Population and Housing*; State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 3A.4; 2009 Report, figure 3.3, p. 3.16.

‘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 may 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 National Preschool Census collected data from 3248 of the 3274 non-government preschools in scope for the 2007 NPC (which represents approximately 70 per cent of all government and non-government preschools) (DEEWR unpublished).

Nationally in 2007, non-attendance by Indigenous children (34.5 per cent) was significantly higher than non-attendance by non-Indigenous children (16.2 per cent) (figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3 Enrolled children absent from non-government preschools, 2007 a, b, c, d, e, f



a Data on attendance are limited to non-government preschools, and exclude government preschools. At the national level, around 70 per cent of children are in preschools considered to be ‘non-government’, though this percentage varies across jurisdictions. **b** Preschool attendance is not compulsory. **c** Attendance measured during the week of 30 July–3 August 2007. Children are counted as absent if they miss one or more of the sessions that they were enrolled in during this week. Absences due to illness may be higher during winter than at other times of the year. **d** ‘Non-Indigenous children’ has been derived by subtracting ‘Indigenous children’ from ‘all children’. **e** Data are suppressed for the ACT due to the small number of Indigenous children enrolled in non-government preschools. **f** The Australian totals include jurisdictions for which data are published only.

Source: DEEWR (unpublished), *National Preschool Census 2007*; table 3A.5; 2009 Report, figure 3.4, p. 3.17.

Attachment tables

Attachment tables for data within this chapter are contained in the attachment to the compendium. These tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an 'A' suffix (for example, table 3A.3 is table 3 in the children's services attachment). The tables included in the attachment are listed below.

- Table 3A.1** Early Childhood Education and Care in Australia, as at 30 June 2008
- Table 3A.2** Representation of special needs groups in attendees at Australian Government approved child care services, children aged 0–12 (per cent)
- Table 3A.3** Representation of special needs groups in attendees at Australian Government approved child care services (per cent), by age group, 2008
- Table 3A.4** Representation of special needs groups in attendees at State and Territory Government child care and preschools, children aged 0–12, 2007-08 (number)
- Table 3A.5** Children absent from non-government preschools, 2007

References

ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) 2001, *Australian Standard Geographical Classification*, Cat. no. 1216.0, Canberra.

3A Children's services — attachment

Definitions for the indicators and descriptors in this attachment are in section 3.6 of the chapter in the *Report on Government Services 2009* (2009 Report). Unsourced information was obtained from the Australian, State and Territory governments. Data in this Report are examined by the Children's Services Working Group, but have not been formally audited by the Secretariat.

This file is available in Adobe PDF format on the Review web page (www.pc.gov.au/gsp). Users without Internet access can contact the Secretariat to obtain these tables (see details on the inside front cover of the Report).

Attachment contents

Table 3A.1	Early Childhood Education and Care in Australia, as at 30 June 2008
Table 3A.2	Representation of special needs groups in attendees at Australian Government approved child care services, children aged 0–12 (per cent)
Table 3A.3	Representation of special needs groups in attendees at Australian Government approved child care services (per cent), by age group, 2008
Table 3A.4	Representation of special needs groups in attendees at State and Territory Government child care and preschools, children aged 0–12, 2007-08 (number)
Table 3A.5	Children absent from non-government preschools, 2007

Table 3A.1

Table 3A.1 Early Childhood Education and Care in Australia, as at 30 June 2008

		CHILD CARE				PRESCHOOL			
		2 years before Year One		1 year before Year One					
Agency (a)	Program name	Age of entry	Agency (a)	Program name	Age of entry	Agency (a)	Program name	Age of entry	Agency (a)
NSW (b)	Dept of Community Services Preschool	generally 3 and 4 year olds	Dept of Community Services (licensing for all services, funding for community based services)	Kindergarten	5 by 31 July	Dept of Education and Training	Kindergarten	5 by 31 July	Dept of Education and Training
			Dept of Education & Training (funding for government run preschools)						
Vic	Dept of Education and Early Childhood Development	4 by 30 April	Dept of Education and Early Childhood Development	Prep	5 by 30 April	Dept of Education and Early Childhood Development	Prep	5 by 30 April	Dept of Education and Early Childhood Development
Qld	Dept of Communities	4 by 30 June	Dept of Communities (licensing)	Preparatory Year (Prep)	5 by 30 June	Dept of Education, Training & the Arts	Preparatory Year (Prep)	5 by 30 June	Dept of Education, Training & the Arts
			Dept of Education, Training & the Arts (funding to approved community kindergartens)						
			Dept of Education, Training & the Arts (fund access across 35 Indigenous Communities)						
WA	Dept for Communities	4 by 30 June	Dept of Education and Training	Pre-primary	5 by 30 June	Dept of Education and Training	Pre-primary	5 by 30 June	Dept of Education and Training
SA (c)	Dept of Education and Children's Services	entry after 4th birthday	Dept of Education and Children's Services	Reception	entry after 5 th birthday	Dept of Education and Children's Services	Reception	entry after 5 th birthday	Dept of Education and Children's Services
Tas	Dept of Education	4 by 1 January	Dept of Education	Preparatory	5 by 1 January	Dept of Education	Preparatory	5 by 1 January	Dept of Education
ACT (d)	Dept of Disability, Housing and Community Services	4 by 30 April	Dept of Education and Training (government preschools)	Kindergarten	5 by 30 April	Dept of Education and Training	Kindergarten	5 by 30 April	Dept of Education and Training
NT (e)	Dept of Health and Community Services	continuous entry after 4 th birthday	Dept of Employment, Education & Training	Transition	5 but some schools 4.5. Trial: 5 by 30 June	Dept of Employment, Education & Training	Transition	5 but some schools 4.5. Trial: 5 by 30 June	Dept of Employment, Education & Training

Table 3A.1 Early Childhood Education and Care in Australia, as at 30 June 2008

CHILD CARE		PRE-SCHOOL	
2 years before Year One		1 year before Year One	
Agency (a)	Age of entry	Program name	Agency (a)
(a)	The responsibility of agencies varies between child care and preschool. Agency responsibility refers to licensing services for child care, licensing and/or funding services for preschool programs 2 years before Year One, and funding and/or providing services for preschool programs 1 year before Year One.		
(b)	In NSW, all licensed children's services for under 6 year olds (who have not commenced Kindergarten) are required to offer programs that meet children's educational and developmental needs.		
(c)	In SA, exceptions include: Indigenous children and children under the guardianship of the Minister can enter from 3 years, children with additional needs (which includes gifted children) and those living in small rural communities may commence at 3 ½ years.		
(d)	In the ACT, private preschools are licensed by Dept of Disability, Housing and Community Services.		
(e)	In the NT, responsibility for child care will move to Dept of Employment, Education & Training from 1 July 2008.		

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); 2009 Report, table 3A.1.

Table 3A.2

Table 3A.2 Representation of special needs groups in attendees at Australian Government approved child care services, children aged 0–12 (per cent) (a), (b)

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Children from non-English speaking backgrounds (c)									
Representation in child care services									
2002 (d)	16.3	12.3	5.9	7.2	6.4	2.4	11.0	6.3	10.8
2004 (d)	17.4	13.5	6.3	7.9	6.9	3.4	12.1	8.1	11.6
2006 (e)	17.0	12.8	5.1	6.4	8.0	2.5	9.7	8.5	10.9
2008	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Representation in the community (f)	23.2	21.7	11.9	15.5	13.7	7.2	16.2	36.8	18.8
Indigenous children (g)									
Representation in child care services									
2002 (d)	1.5	0.5	2.7	1.7	1.4	1.2	0.7	9.8	1.7
2004 (d)	1.6	0.6	2.5	1.8	1.3	1.0	0.7	10.7	1.6
2006 (e)	1.6	0.7	2.2	2.1	2.1	1.4	0.7	11.1	1.7
2008	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Representation in the community (f)	4.1	1.2	6.2	5.6	3.3	6.5	2.3	39.2	4.4
Children from low-income families (h)									
Representation in child care services									
2002 (d)	29.1	29.0	35.2	34.3	35.4	33.6	13.7	19.1	31.2
2004 (d)	28.0	28.3	33.8	32.6	33.0	31.5	12.4	18.8	29.9
2006 (e)	25.2	26.5	28.6	27.6	29.3	29.1	10.4	17.5	26.6
2008	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Representation in the community (i)	27.2	27.0	28.9	25.3	30.3	34.2	9.4	13.2	27.3
Children with a disability (j)									
Representation in child care services									
2002 (d)	2.3	2.3	2.1	1.6	3.3	2.5	2.1	2.0	2.3
2004 (d)	2.1	2.0	2.0	1.7	3.5	2.2	2.1	2.4	2.1
2006 (e)	3.1	2.4	2.2	2.5	3.8	2.3	1.8	3.7	2.7
2008	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Representation in the community	8.0	6.8	7.6	8.9	8.8	6.2	7.5	np	7.7
Children from regional and remote areas									
Regional									
Representation in child care services									
2002 (d)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
2004 (d)	25.9	22.5	38.9	18.2	16.2	99.6	–	74.0	28.8
2006 (e)	25.6	25.0	36.6	18.9	17.9	99.4	0.1	77.3	29.0
2008	25.0	23.5	30.9	17.2	17.2	96.4	0.2	81.1	27.0
Representation in the community (f)	28.9	28.2	45.9	24.8	26.7	97.9	0.2	51.4	33.1

Table 3A.2

Table 3A.2 Representation of special needs groups in attendees at Australian Government approved child care services, children aged 0–12 (per cent) (a), (b)

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Remote									
Representation in child care services									
2002 (d)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
2004 (d)	0.4	0.1	1.6	5.0	2.0	0.4	..	26.0	1.4
2006 (e)	0.3	–	1.3	3.7	2.0	0.6	..	22.7	1.1
2008	0.2	–	0.8	2.9	1.5	0.6	..	18.9	0.8
Representation in the community (f)	0.7	0.1	4.4	8.6	4.4	2.0	..	50.7	3.0

- (a) Data for 2002, 2004 and 2006 are weighted from the AGCCCS, while data for 2008 are drawn from DEEWR administrative data collected through the Child Care Benefit (CCB) payments system. Data for 2008 are not comparable to previous years due to the change in the source for data collection.
- (b) Children attending approved services in 2002, 2004 and 2006 may be counted more than once if attending more than one service during the reference week. Children attending approved services in 2008 are counted once, even if attending more than one type of service during the reference week.
- (c) Children from non-English speaking backgrounds' are defined in the AGCCCS as children who speak, or whose parent/guardian speak a language other than English at home. The 'representation in the community' data refer to the proportion of children who do not speak English as their main language at home.
- (d) Data exclude children from multifunctional aboriginal children's services, multifunctional children's services, Aboriginal playgroups and enrichment programs and mobile and toy library services.
- (e) Excludes Aboriginal playgroups and enrichment programs.
- (f) Data for representation in the community are estimated from the ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing, except for 'children from low-income families' and 'children with a disability'.
- (g) 'Indigenous children' in the AGCCCS as children who child care services identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin. The "representation in the community data" refer to children of an Indigenous descent who identify as being Indigenous.
- (h) Data relate to children aged 0-12 years from families with a gross annual parental income of less than the cut-off point for receiving the maximum amount of child care benefits. In May 2006, this cut-off was \$33 361.
- (i) The data showing representation children from low income families in the community were obtained from the ABS 2005-06 Survey of Income and Housing Costs. Data in italics have relative standard errors above 25 per cent, and need to be used with caution.
- (j) Children with a disability' are defined in the AGCCCS as children who child care services identify as having a continuing disability including intellectual, sensory or physical impairment. The 'representation in the community' data refer to children with any limitation, restriction or impairment, which has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months and restricts everyday activities. These data were obtained from the ABS 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers. Due to the small sample size, data for the NT are not published.

na Not available. **..** Not applicable. **–** Nil or rounded to zero. **np** Not published.

Source: DEEWR (unpublished); FaCSIA (unpublished), derived from *Australian Government Census of Child Care Services 2002 and 2004*; DEEWR (unpublished), derived from *Australian Government Census of Child Care Services 2006*; ABS (unpublished), derived from *2006 Census of Population and Housing*; ABS (unpublished), derived from *Survey of Income and Housing Costs 2005-06*, ABS (unpublished), derived from *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2003*; 2009 Report, table 3A.22.

Table 3A.3

Table 3A.3 Representation of special needs groups in attendees at Australian Government approved child care services (per cent), by age group, 2008 (a), (b)

		Unit	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
Children from non-English speaking backgrounds (c)											
Children aged 0–5 in child care services	%	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Children aged 0–5 in the community	%	24.6	23.2	12.8	16.8	14.8	8.1	17.8	37.0	20.1	
Children aged 6–12 in child care services	%	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Children aged 6–12 in the community	%	22.1	20.5	11.2	14.5	12.8	6.5	14.9	36.5	17.7	
Indigenous children (d)											
Children aged 0–5 in child care services	%	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Children aged 0–5 in the community (e)	%	4.1	1.2	6.4	5.6	3.4	6.6	2.2	38.9	4.4	
Children aged 6–12 in child care services	%	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Children aged 6–12 in the community (e)	%	4.1	1.2	6.1	5.5	3.3	6.4	2.3	39.4	4.3	
Children from low-income families											
Children aged 0–5 in child care services (f)	%	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Children aged 0–5 in the community (h)	%	23.9	27.2	29.0	27.7	25.8	32.7	7.7	np	26.1	
Children aged 6–12 in child care services (f)	%	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Children aged 6–12 in the community (g)	%	29.9	26.8	28.8	23.5	34.1	35.3	10.7	np	28.2	
Children with a disability											
Children aged 0–5 in child care services	%	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Children aged 0–5 in the community (h)	%	4.7	4.6	5.1	6.0	7.0	4.4	9.1	np	5.2	
Children aged 6–12 in child care services	%	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Children aged 6–12 in the community (h)	%	10.7	8.5	9.5	11.4	10.2	7.7	6.2	np	9.8	
Children from regional areas (i)											
Children aged 0–5 in child care services	%	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Children aged 0–5 in the community	%	27.1	26.5	44.6	23.9	25.8	98.0	0.1	50.9	31.6	
Children aged 6–12 in child care services	%	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Children aged 6–12 in the community	%	30.3	29.7	47.1	25.5	27.4	97.8	0.3	51.9	34.3	
Children from remote areas (j)											
Children aged 0–5 in child care services	%	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Children aged 0–5 in the community	%	0.7	0.1	4.6	8.9	4.3	2.0	..	50.6	3.1	
Children aged 6–12 in child care services	%	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Children aged 6–12 in the community	%	0.7	0.1	4.3	8.4	4.4	2.1	..	50.7	3.0	

(a) Data for representation in the community are estimated from the ABS 2006 *Census of Population and Housing*, except for 'children from low-income families' and 'children with a disability'.

(b) Australian Government data for 2008 for children aged 0–5 years and 6–12 years in child care services were not available at the time of publication. Data were previously sourced from the AGCCCS.

(c) 'Children from non-English speaking backgrounds' are defined as children who speak, or whose parent/guardian speak a language other than English at home. The 'representation in the community' data refer to the proportion of children who do not speak English as their main language at home.

(d) 'Indigenous children' as children who child care services identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin. The 'representation in the community data' refer to children of an Indigenous descent who identify as being Indigenous.

Table 3A.3 Representation of special needs groups in attendees at Australian Government approved child care services (per cent), by age group, 2008 (a), (b)

	<i>Unit</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
(e)	The ABS Census Post Enumeration Survey has estimated an undercount of Indigenous people in the 2006 Census, and the estimates of the proportional representation in the community of Indigenous children should be treated with caution.									
(f)	Data relate to children from families with a gross annual household income that is less than or equal to the cut-off point for receiving the maximum amount of child care benefits.									
(g)	Data on 'children from low-income families' in the community were obtained from the ABS 2005-06 Survey of Income and Housing Costs. Data in italics have relative standard errors above 25 per cent, and need to be used with caution.									
(h)	'Children with a disability' are defined by DEEWR as children who child care services identify as having a continuing disability including intellectual, sensory or physical impairment. The 'representation in the community' data refer to children with any limitation, restriction or impairment, which has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months and restricts everyday activities. These data were obtained from the ABS 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers. Due to the small sample size, data for the NT are not published. Data in italics have relative standard errors above 25 per cent, and need to be used with caution.									
(i)	The data include Inner Regional and Outer Regional areas of Australia.									
(j)	The data include Remote and Very Remote areas of Australia.									
	na Not available. .. Not applicable. – Nil or rounded to zero. np Not published.									

Source: DEEWR (unpublished); ABS (unpublished), derived from *2006 Census of Population and Housing*; ABS (unpublished), derived from *Survey of Income and Housing Costs 2005-06*; ABS (unpublished), derived from *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2003*; 2009 Report, table 3A.23.

Table 3A.4

Table 3A.4 Representation of special needs groups in attendees at State and Territory Government child care and preschools, children aged 0–12, 2007–08 (number) (a)

	Unit	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
		(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)		(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)
Number of children										
Representation of children from non-English speaking backgrounds in:										
	Child care services	no. 12 341	405	150	na	200	9	na	na	13 105
	Preschool services	no. 6 435	10 466	810	na	2 160	na	307	na	20 178
	The general community (j)	no. 259 780	177 501	82 731	52 871	32 876	5 804	8 625	15 229	635 676
Representation of Indigenous children in:										
	Child care services	no. 3 181	3	154	na	70	7	na	na	3 415
	Preschool services	no. 2 341	612	1 326	2 494	1 280	310	102	1 477	9 942
	The general community (j)	no. 45 973	9 603	43 060	18 904	8 035	5 202	1 215	16 227	148 273
Representation of children with disabilities in:										
	Child care services	no. 5 218	46	57	na	280	15	na	na	5 616
	Preschool services	no. 3 982	3 694	1 280	861	3 200	na	166	181	13 364
	The general community (j)	no. 89 728	56 175	51 528	29 922	21 410	5 127	4 178	np	259 937
Representation of children from regional/remote areas:										
Regional										
	Child care services	no. 27 406	na	610	na	640	715	na	na	29 371
	Preschool services	no. 19 946	17 381	15 432	6 492	5 990	5 887	38	1 545	72 711
	The general community (j)	no. 322 922	230 948	318 365	84 285	64 083	78 883	109	21 306	1 121 078
Remote										
	Child care services	no. 1 018	na	457	na	220	49	na	na	1 744
	Preschool services	no. 807	86	1 816	2 399	1 190	103	na	1 849	8 250
	The general community (j)	no. 8 273	793	30 770	29 373	10 548	1 652	..	20 988	102 888

Table 3A.4

Table 3A.4 Representation of special needs groups in attendees at State and Territory Government child care and preschools, children aged 0–12, 2007-08 (number) (a)

Unit	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)		(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)
Proportion of children									
Representation of children from non-English speaking backgrounds in:									
Child care services	%	12.0	32.7	10.1	na	8.6	1.2	na	12.0
Preschool services	%	10.1	17.1	4.7	na	10.5	na	na	9.9
The general community (j)	%	23.2	21.7	11.9	15.5	13.7	7.2	16.2	18.8
Representation of Indigenous children in:									
Child care services	%	3.1	0.2	10.3	na	3.0	0.9	na	3.1
Preschool services	%	3.7	1.0	7.7	9.1	6.2	5.2	2.7	4.9
The general community (j)	%	4.1	1.2	6.2	5.6	3.3	6.5	2.3	4.4
Representation of children with disabilities in:									
Child care services	%	5.1	3.7	3.8	na	12.1	2.0	na	5.2
Preschool services	%	6.3	6.1	7.4	3.1	15.5	na	4.4	6.6
The general community (j)	%	8.0	6.8	7.6	8.9	8.8	6.2	7.5	7.7
Representation of children from regional/remote areas:									
Regional									
Child care services	%	26.6	na	40.9	na	27.6	93.6	na	26.9
Preschool services	%	31.4	28.5	89.5	23.6	29.0	98.3	1.0	35.8
The general community (j)	%	28.9	28.2	45.9	24.8	26.7	97.9	0.2	33.1
Remote									
Child care services	%	1.0	na	30.6	na	9.5	6.4	na	1.6
Preschool services	%	1.3	0.1	10.5	8.7	5.8	1.7	na	4.1
The general community (j)	%	0.7	0.1	4.4	8.6	4.4	2.0	..	3.0

Table 3A.4

Table 3A.4 Representation of special needs groups in attendees at State and Territory Government child care and preschools, children aged 0–12, 2007-08 (number) (a)

<i>Unit</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	

(a) Data for representation of special needs groups in the general community relate to children aged 0 to 12 years. In 2007-08, all data except for 'children with a disability' are estimated from the ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing. Data showing Indigenous and regional/remote representation in 2002-03 to 2003-04 were sourced from the ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing and relate to 0 to 14 year olds. Data showing Indigenous and regional/remote representation in 2004-05 to 2005-06 were obtained from the ABS Estimated resident population. Data showing children with a disability were obtained from the ABS 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers. Due to the various data sources used in different years, caution should be used when making comparisons across the years.

(b) As NSW does not discriminate between child care and preschool services, special needs children counted in child care services includes the count of children accessing designated preschool services. Data are for children attending funded licensed services during the survey week in September 2007. In NSW, total special needs children using child care services and total special needs children using preschool services should not be added together as a total and should be interpreted with caution.

(c) As at 30 June 2008 the State Government funded 203 effective full time (EFT) Adult and Community Further Education (ACFE) places. An EFT is equal to 1920 hours of care. Victoria does not report on 540 'Take A Break' EFTs as the Commonwealth contributes 70 per cent of the funding for these places. Preschool services data refer to the number of children attending State funded kindergarten services, including those operating in centre-based long day care services. For children with disabilities in preschool services, data refers to children identified as having additional needs by the kindergarten staff.

(d) For Queensland, child care data are based on an annual voluntary census, and response rates are variable by service type and over time. The reduction in preschool figures for 2007-08 is due to the cessation of preschool at the end of 2006 and the introduction of the Preparatory Year from 2007. Preparatory Year data are included in data on School Education. 2007-08 includes Indigenous Community Pre-Preparatory and Creche and Kindergarten enrolments which are primarily in regional locations.

(e) For WA preschool services, it is assumed the ratio of disabled students and Indigenous students in the non government system is the same as in the government system.

(f) Tasmanian preschool services includes data for government preschools only.

(g) In the ACT there are no regions classified as remote.

(h) NT preschools data for 2006-07 and 2007-08 include Catholic Mission Schools.

(i) Data for Australia are calculated as the sum of the states and territories for which data were available.

(j) Representation of children in the general community are children aged 0-12 years.

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

Table 3A.4

Table 3A.4 Representation of special needs groups in attendees at State and Territory Government child care and preschools, children aged 0–12, 2007-08 (number) (a)

<i>Unit</i>	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(i)

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); ABS (unpublished), derived from 2006 *Census of Population and Housing*; ABS (unpublished), 2001 *Census of Population and Housing*; ABS Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1991 to 2009 (cat. no. 3238.0); ABS (unpublished), derived from 2003 *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers*; ABS (unpublished), derived from *Australian Demographic Statistics*, Cat. no. 3101.0; 2009 Report, table 3A.24.

Table 3A.5

Table 3A.5 Children absent from non-government preschools, 2007 (a), (b), (c)

	Unit	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT (e)	NT	Aust (f)
All children enrolled	no.	58 137	74 530	17 120	6 151	3 285	1 638	407	275	161 543
Number of all children absent	no.	7 921	13 621	3 060	1 362	482	232	89	160	26 927
Proportion all children absent	%	13.6	18.3	17.9	22.1	14.7	14.2	21.9	58.2	16.7
Total Indigenous children enrolled	no.	2 276	589	792	289	89	48	np	150	4 233
Number of Indigenous children absent	no.	669	184	295	127	44	9	np	131	1 459
Proportion Indigenous children absent	%	29.4	31.2	37.2	43.9	49.4	18.8	np	87.3	34.5
Total non-Indigenous children enrolled (d)	no.	55 861	73 941	16 328	5 862	3 196	1 590	np	125	157 310
Number of non-Indigenous children absent	no.	7 252	13 437	2 765	1 235	438	223	np	29	25 468
Proportion non-Indigenous children absent	%	13.0	18.2	16.9	21.1	13.7	14.0	np	23.2	16.2

(a) Data on attendance are limited to non-government preschools, and excludes government preschools. At the national level, around 70 per cent of children are in preschools considered to be 'non-government', though this percentage varies across jurisdictions.

(b) Attendance measured during the Census week of 30 July to 3 August 2007. Children are counted as absent if they miss one or more of the sessions that they were enrolled in during this week. Absences due to illness may be higher during winter than at other times of the year.

(c) Preschool attendance is not compulsory.

(d) Non-Indigenous children' derived by subtracting 'Indigenous children' from 'all children'.

(e) Data are suppressed for the ACT due to the small number of Indigenous children enrolled in non-government preschools.

(f) The Australian totals include jurisdictions for which data are published only.

na Not available. .. Not applicable. – Nil or rounded to zero. np Not published.

Source: DEEWR (unpublished), derived from *National Preschool Census, 2007*; 2009 Report, table 3A.25.