



# The Council for the Care of Children

**A snapshot of young  
South Australians**

June 2013



**Government of  
South Australia**



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**Government of  
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## A snapshot of young South Australians



*"To improve something, first measure it" (UNICEF 2007).*

In 2009, as part of its responsibility to report to government on the wellbeing of South Australian children and young people, the Council for the Care of Children developed a monitoring framework, *Looking out for young South Australians*, in keeping with the Council's vision that,

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**'South Australian children and young people are cherished, nurtured, respected and encouraged to be all that they can be, by their families, communities and government, and by all members of society'.**

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*Looking out for young South Australians* was guided by the concept of 'child wellbeing', underpinned by the United Nations' *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, to which Australia is a signatory. The Convention includes developmental, participatory and protective obligations to fulfil, respect and protect children and young people at different stages in their lives.

Outcomes for our youngest citizens are not static. They result from the continuing interplay of resources and risk and protective factors, and relate to the individual and social situations of children and young people and their families, friends, the communities where they live and learn, and the wider society. Children and young people – with their considerable evolving capacities – are also active in their own wellbeing.

Why monitor the wellbeing of young South Australians? Assessing how well our youngest members are doing can help us set priorities, and, into the future, serve as a guiding rail for keeping our efforts on track, giving early warning of failure or success, and making us accountable for how well they are doing. In short, it allows us to celebrate successes and look to areas where further effort may be needed.

The first report outlined the framework and set a baseline to enable the Council to monitor, track and measure the wellbeing of South Australian children and young people over time. It set the measurement parameters by which we could highlight the areas where improvements have occurred as well as indicate those areas where more attention is required.

Overall, children and young people in South Australia continue to do well. Yet there remain areas of inequality and disadvantage particularly relating to South Australia's young Aboriginal population, those living with disability and those who have experienced trauma in its various forms, and the impact of poverty and discrimination.

Moreover, the Council has not been able to update some data that were reported in the first report, either because data are no longer being collected in that form or because later data have not been published. This is of particular concern in the areas of mental health, and disability. Data reported in the Council's 2009 report that have been revised in the interim have been included at the end of the document.

The challenge for all who are concerned with the wellbeing of our youngest South Australian citizens, wherever they are, whatever problems they face and wherever they live, is to continue to ensure they have the opportunities for a good life.

**Diana Hetzel**  
**Chair, Council for the Care of Children, SA**



## What does the framework cover?

*A Snapshot of Young South Australians* examines the wellbeing of South Australians aged less than 18 years across five dimensions of their lives: health; safety; achievement and enjoyment of life; relationships with family, peers, community, culture and society; and preparedness for adulthood. Each dimension contains a number of areas of focus or 'indicators', and each indicator has at least one measure.

Using these indicators, the present life and development, and the future life chances of children and young people are brought together, by looking both at the conditions under which they are doing well and not as well, and the actual outcomes that are being achieved.

While the focus aims to be on the outcomes for children and young people, there are areas where information is lacking; so where possible, indicators reflecting service use have been substituted until there are better measures. The Council sees the framework as an evolving tool, which will be adapted as important issues emerge or new information becomes available.

### The five dimensions of young South Australians' lives

#### Young South Australians

- **are healthy** (*enjoying good physical and emotional health and living healthy lives*)
- **stay safe and are nurtured** (*being cared for and nurtured and protected from harm and neglect*)
- **enjoy and achieve** (*getting the most out of life and developing skills for life, according to their capabilities*)
- **make a positive contribution** (*being actively involved with their peers, families, culture, community and society, according to their capabilities*)
- **are prepared for adult life** (*gaining knowledge and skills to participate as adults and not being prevented by social and economic disadvantage from achieving in life*)

The framework takes into account current work to improve the lives of children and young people, such as *South Australia's Strategic Plan* and the *Seven Strategic Priorities*; and the *Closing the Gap*, *Child Protection* and *Early Childhood* areas of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). Both include a focus on the substantial disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples compared with other Australians.

With the framework, we have a common basis for setting goals and monitoring young South Australians' progress. This will allow us to reflect upon the success of the efforts of children and young people themselves, and their families, communities, organisations and governments in improving their lives.

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Full details of all measures and data sources can be found in the companion technical report on the Council's website at [www.childrensa.sa.gov.au](http://www.childrensa.sa.gov.au).

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# Look out for Young South Australians Framework – A framework for monitoring the wellbeing of young South Australians

Dimensions					
ARE HEALTHY		STAY SAFE AND ARE NURTURED	ENJOY AND ACHIEVE	MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	ARE PREPARED FOR ADULT LIFE
Achievable Outcomes	Optimal development before birth	Children are safe from injury	Children's developmental experience of early childhood is enriched	Children engage in decision-making	Children's material needs are met
	Children have a healthy start to life	Children are safe from abuse, neglect and violence	Children's experience of learning is positive	Children identify and participate with their kinship group and/or culture	Children live in sustainable communities
	Children have health-promoting behaviours	Children are safe from crime and anti-social behaviour	Children learn effectively and develop life skills according to their capabilities	Children are involved in community activities	Children are ready to engage in further education, employment or training according to their capabilities
	Children are physically and emotionally healthy	Children have security, stability and are cared for	Children play and participate in recreational activities according to their capabilities	Children engage in positive behaviour	



# Young South Australians at a glance:

*In 2011, children and young people aged 0–19 years made up 24.4% of the South Australian population (a total of 390,184 children and young people):*

Age range	Proportion of the SA population in 2006	Proportion of the population in 2011
0–19 years	25.0% (392,051)	24.4% (390,184)
0–4 years	5.7%	6%
5–9 years	6.1%	5.8%
10–14 years	6.5%	6.1%
15–19 years	6.7%	6.5%

- In 2011 (2006), 10,551 (9,010) children and young people aged 0–14 years identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin.
- In 2011 (2006), there were 9,436 (7,233) children and young people aged 0–19 years who were reported as needing assistance due to a severe or profound disability.
- In 2011 (2006), it was estimated that there were 177, 538 (171,000) families with children and young people under 15 years.
- In 2011 (2006), 20.3% (23.1%) of children and young people under 15 years were living in sole parent families.

There are no accurate data on the prevalence of disability among children and young people in SA. The Council's 2009 report indicated that, in 2003, it was estimated that 38,100 children and young people aged 0–14 years had a disability. Unfortunately, this key indicator could not be updated for this report as no later equivalent data were available.



# 1. Young South Australians are healthy ... enjoying good physical and emotional health and living healthy lives

The foundations for health and wellbeing are established early in life. Along with the genes inherited from parents and their own biology, children and young people grow, develop, experience and learn. These factors act in different ways on their physical and emotional health, their behaviours and their abilities to learn. They also help to set the pattern for health in adulthood.

Children and young people who have special needs and who live with disability, those who identify as Aboriginal, those who have experienced deprivation and trauma, and those with existing long-term illnesses are among young South Australians most likely to experience the poorest health and wellbeing.

## Achievable outcomes

### Optimal development before birth

- Low birthweight is a predictor of future health. A birthweight of less than 2.5 kilograms may leave a child susceptible to a range of health problems.
- A child's risk of dying is greatest around the time of birth and in the first year of life. Infant mortality rate is a key measure of a nation's population and child health.

### A healthy start to life

- Immunisation is an effective means of preventing childhood death and illness, and reflects the capacity of health services.
- Breastfeeding increases immunity, protects against illness and strengthens infant development.

### Develop health-promoting behaviours

- Attitudes and behaviours that are risky to health start when we are young; tobacco smoking and high-risk alcohol use are examples.

### Children and young people are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy

- Good physical, mental and emotional health is essential to wellbeing throughout life.



## Key indicators in SA

Domain:				
How healthy are young South Australians?		Baseline	Update	Trend
Optimal development before birth	Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) per 1,000 live births for all infants	3.2 (2006)	3.8 (2010)	✗
	IMR per 1,000 live births for Aboriginal infants	6.7 (2004–06)	4.6 (2008–10)	✓
	Aboriginal IMR compared to non-Aboriginal IMR	6.7 compared to 3.6	4.6 compared to 3.4	
	Low birthweight infants as a proportion of total live births (all births)	6.4% (2006)	6.8% (2010)	✗
	Low birthweight infants as a proportion of total live births (Aboriginal births)	13.4% (2006)	16.0% (2010)	✗
Children have a healthy start to life	Proportion of all children fully immunised at 2 years	92.4% (2008)	92.3% (2012)	~
	Proportion of Aboriginal children fully immunised at 2 years	not included in 2009 report	91.9% (2011)	..
	Proportion of Aboriginal children fully immunised at 2 years compared to non-Aboriginal children	not included in 2009 report	(2011) 91.9% (Aboriginal) compared to 92.8% (non-Aboriginal)	..
	Proportion of mothers who reported breastfeeding at their infant's six month check	56.0% (Jan-Mar 2008)	55.0% (Oct-Dec 2009)	~
Children and young people have health-promoting behaviours	Proportion of students aged 12–17 years who reported smoking tobacco in the previous week	7.5% (2005)	4.7% (2011)	✓
	Proportion of students aged 12–17 years who reported consuming alcohol in the previous week	23.0% (2008)	15.0% (2011)	✓
Children and young people are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy	Proportion of 4 year old pre-school children reported as overweight	13.8% (2007)	13.8% (2010)	~
	Proportion of 4 year old pre-school children reported as obese	5.0% (2007)	4.8% (2010)	✓
	Proportion of 12 year-old children who had experienced some tooth decay in their permanent teeth	42.2% (2005)	34.2% (2007)	✓

Key: ✓ = favourable trend    ~ = no change or clear trend  
 ✗ = unfavourable trend    .. = no trend data available



## Key indicators in the 2009 report for which updated data were not available

Domain:			
How healthy are young South Australians?		Baseline	Update
Children and young people have health-promoting behaviours	Proportion of students aged 12–17 years who reported potentially unsafe or binge-drinking behaviour	27.3% (2005)	n.a
Children and young people are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy	Proportion of children and young people aged 2–15 years reported as having asthma	16.9% (2002–07)	n.a
	Proportion of children and young people aged 4–17 years estimated to have a mental health problem	14.1% (June 2006)	n.a

Key: n.a. = no later equivalent data available



## 2. Young South Australians stay safe and are nurtured ... being well cared for and protected from harm and neglect

Children and young people rely on others to keep them safe and provide enriching social experiences. These are important for emotional wellbeing, healthy development, resilience to life stresses and the ability to form good relationships. Families need supportive environments so that they can nurture and protect their children. When families are unable to do so, alternative caring arrangements are required which can provide for the needs of children and young people.

Children and young people who are more vulnerable to injury, abuse, neglect or trauma include those who have special needs or a disability; those who are disadvantaged by poverty, poor parental health and education, or social isolation; and those who have already experienced trauma and dislocation from kin and country (such as some Aboriginal, refugee and homeless children and young people).

### Achievable outcomes

#### **Children and young people are safe from injury**

- Although injuries are largely preventable, they remain a major cause of suffering and disability for children and young people.

#### **Children and young people are safe from abuse, neglect and violence**

- Abuse, neglect and violence in all their forms can have long-lasting consequences for children's and young people's physical and emotional wellbeing.

#### **Children and young people are safe from anti-social behaviour and crime**

- Children and young people are vulnerable as victims of anti-social behaviour and crime because of their relative powerlessness and evolving development.

#### **Children and young people have stability, security and are cared for**

- Children and young people need consistent, warm and responsive care in a stable, secure environment where they can develop and thrive.



## Key indicators in SA

### Domain:

#### How safe and nurtured are young South Australians?

#### Baseline

#### Update

#### Trend

Children and young people are safe from injury

Injury death rate for children and young people aged 0-14 years per 1,000 population

7.1  
(2004-06)

5.1  
(2008-10)



Children and young people are safe from abuse, neglect and violence

Rate of child protection substantiations for all children and young people aged 0-17 years per 1,000 population

5.5  
(2007-08)

5.1  
(2010-11)



Rate of child protection substantiations for Aboriginal children and young people aged 0-17 years per 1,000 population;

48.4  
(2007-08)

35.7  
(2010-11)



Rate for Aboriginal compared to non-Aboriginal children and young people aged 0-17 years

48.4  
compared to  
4.0 (2007-08)

35.7  
compared to  
3.9 (2010-11)



Proportion of children and young people aged 0-17 years who were the subject of a decision not to substantiate and who were also the subject of a subsequent substantiation within 3 months

4.5%  
(2006-07)

5.8%  
(2010-11)



Proportion of children and young people aged 0-17 years who were the subject of a decision not to substantiate and who were also the subject of a subsequent substantiation within 12 months

13.4%  
(2006-07)

13.1%  
(2010-11)



Number of children aged less than 5 years admitted to out-of-home care

284  
(2007-08)

486  
(2010-11)



Number of children and young people aged 0-14 years on care and protection orders

1,817  
(at 30 June 2008)

2,144  
(at 30 June 2011)



Rate of children and young people aged 0-17 years on care and protection orders per 1,000 population

6.2  
(at 30 June 2008)

7.3  
(at 30 June 2011)





Domain:				
How safe and nurtured are young South Australians?		Baseline	Update	Trend
Children and young people are safe from abuse, neglect and violence (continued)	Rate of Aboriginal children and young people aged 0-17 years on care and protection orders per 1,000 population;	45.2 (at 30 June 2008)	51.8 (at 30 June 2011)	✗
	Rate for Aboriginal compared to non-Aboriginal children and young people aged 0-17 years per 1,000 population	45.2 compared to 4.9 (at 30 June 2008)	51.8 compared to 5.5 (at 30 June 2011)	✗
Children and young people are safe from anti-social behaviour and crime	Number of children and young people under 18 years who were victims of an offence reported to police (excluding sexual offences)	2615 (2006)*	1972 (2012)	✓
	Number of children and young people under 18 years who were victims of a sexual offence reported to police	782 (2006)*	639 (2012)	✓
Children and young people have stability, security and are cared for	Number of mothers and fathers who commenced a first-time parents' course	1,977 (2007)	2,716 (2008)	✓
	Proportion of children and young people in out-of-home care in a continuous placement for 5 years or more	63.6% (at 30 June 2008)	67.3% (at 30 June 2011)	✓

Key: ✓ = favourable trend      ~ = no change or clear trend  
 ✗ = unfavourable trend      \* = see revised data table on page 22

## Key indicators in the 2009 report for which updated data were not available

Domain:			
How safe and nurtured are young South Australians?		Baseline	Update
Children and young people have stability, security and are cared for	Estimated number of children and young people less than 18 years caring for a family member	14,800 (2006)	n.a.
	Estimated number of children and young people under 15 years caring for a family member	10,200 (2006)	n.a.
	Estimated number of children under 9 years caring for a family member	over 600 (2006)	n.a.

Key: n.a. = no later equivalent data available



### 3 Young South Australians enjoy and achieve ... getting the most out of life and developing skills for life, according to their capabilities

Children and young people develop physical abilities, complex emotions and essential social skills from the first years of life. Early childhood is a key period for brain development, and a time of both potential and vulnerability. Learning opportunities, from pre-school through to secondary education and then to employment, influence future life chances as adults. Children and young people are also active partners in their own learning.

Children and young people who have special needs and who live with disability, those who identify as Aboriginal, those in the care and protection system, and those who are disadvantaged by low family income, caring responsibilities, trauma and discrimination, or geographic or social isolation are the ones who benefit most from effective early intervention services and increased family support.

#### Achievable outcomes

##### **Children's developmental experience of early childhood is enriched**

- Enriched experiences of the infant and young child provide an important foundation for their development.

##### **Children's and young people's experience of learning is positive**

- Children and young people who are encouraged, included and supported are more likely to enjoy learning, and less likely to leave school early.

##### **Children and young people learn effectively and develop life skills according to their capabilities**

- Children and young people who are able to learn effectively are more likely to gain confidence and skills that will equip them for later life.

##### **Children and young people play and participate in recreational activities, according to their capabilities**

- Play and recreational activities are important for children and young people to develop skills, learn how to interact with others and enjoy life.



## Key indicators in SA

Domain:				
How are young South Australians enjoying and achieving?		Baseline	Update	Trend
Children's developmental experience of early childhood is enriched	Proportion of children who were developmentally vulnerable in one or more of five domains under the AEDI** when they entered school	22.8% (2009)	23.7% (2012)	✗
	Proportion of children who were developmentally vulnerable in two or more of five domains under the AEDI when they entered school	11.5% (2009)	12.2% (2012)	✗
	Proportion of 4 year old children who were enrolled in DECD-funded Preschools, Integrated Centres and Children's Centres	87.6% (Term 2, 2007)	82.7% (Term 2, 2012)	✗
	Proportion and number of 3 year old Aboriginal children who were enrolled in DECD-funded Preschools	71.0%* or 474* (Term 2, 2007)	71.0% or 516 (Term 2, 2012)	~
	Proportion of special needs children aged 0-5 years attending approved child care services:			
	• Children with a disability	3.2% (2006)	2.9% (2010)	✗
	• Children from non-English speaking backgrounds	9.2% (2006)	9.2% (2010)	~
	• Children living in low-income families	27.8% (2006)	24.3% (2010)	✗
	• Children living in regional areas	20.8% (2006)	20.5% (2010)	~
	• Children living in remote areas	2.6% (2006)	2.2% (2010)	~
	• Aboriginal children	2.3% (2006)	1.4% (2010)	✗



## Domain:

### How are young South Australians enjoying and achieving?

#### Baseline

#### Update

#### Trend

Children's and young people's experiences of learning are positive

Proportion of Year 1 students who were reading at an age-appropriate level or better

67.9%  
(2007)

70.7%  
(2011)



Proportion of Aboriginal Year 1 students who were reading at an age-appropriate level or better

29.8%  
(2007)

31.9%  
(2011)



Children and young people learn effectively and develop life skills according to their capabilities

Proportion of children and young people aged 5-14 years who accessed the Internet

65.0%  
(2006)

91.8%  
(2011)



Proportion of Year 3 students who achieved national benchmarks in reading

93.0%  
(2006)

92.6%  
(2012)



Proportion of Aboriginal Year 3 students who achieved national benchmarks in reading

not available  
for the 2009  
report

72.5%  
(2012)

..

Proportion of Year 3 students who achieved national benchmarks in writing

92.0%  
(2006)

95.3%  
(2012)



Proportion of Aboriginal Year 3 students who achieved national benchmarks in writing

not available  
for the 2009  
report

79.5%  
(2012)

..

Proportion of Year 3 students who achieved national benchmarks in numeracy

92.0%  
(2006)

91.9%  
(2012)

~

Proportion of Aboriginal Year 3 students who achieved national benchmarks in numeracy

73.0%  
(2006)

66.7%  
(2012)



Proportion of Year 5 students who achieved national benchmarks in reading

88.0%  
(2006)

90.7%  
(2012)



Proportion of Aboriginal Year 5 students who achieved national benchmarks in reading

59.0%  
(2006)

63.8%  
(2012)



Proportion of Year 5 students who achieved national benchmarks in writing

93.0%  
(2006)

90.6%  
(2012)





Domain:				
How are young South Australians enjoying and achieving?		Baseline	Update	Trend
Children and young people learn effectively and develop life skills according to their capabilities (continued)	Proportion of Aboriginal Year 5 students who achieved national benchmarks in writing	76.0% (2006)	65.7% (2012)	✗
	Proportion of Year 5 students who achieved national benchmarks in numeracy	88.0% (2006)	91.7% (2012)	✓
	Proportion of Aboriginal Year 5 students who achieved national benchmarks in numeracy	63.0% (2006)	66.8% (2012)	✓
	Proportion of Year 7 students who achieved national benchmarks in reading	93.0% (2006)	93.7% (2012)	~
	Proportion of Aboriginal Year 7 students who achieved national benchmarks in reading	71.0% (2006)	77.4 % (2012)	✓
	Proportion of Year 7 students who achieved national benchmarks in writing	88.0% (2006)	90.2% (2012)	✓
	Proportion of Aboriginal Year 7 students who achieved national benchmarks in writing	59.0% (2006)	67.4% (2012)	✓
	Proportion of Year 7 students who achieved national benchmarks in numeracy	87.0% (2006)	93.5% (2012)	✓
	Proportion of Aboriginal Year 7 students who achieved national benchmarks in numeracy	55.0% (2006)	74.1% (2012)	✓
	Proportion of 19 year olds who completed the SA Certificate of Education (SACE) or equivalent	64.2% (2007)	75.2% (2011)	✓
	Proportion of students who achieved an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR)*** or equivalent with at least one of the following subjects: mathematics, physics or chemistry	35.0% (2007)	32.0% (2011)	✗



## Domain:

How are young South Australians enjoying and achieving?		Baseline	Update	Trend
Children and young people play and participate in recreational activities, according to their capabilities	Proportion of children and young people aged 5-14 years who participated in an organised cultural activity outside of school hours (playing a musical instrument, singing, dancing or drama)	27.4% (2006)	35.8% (2012)	✓
	Proportion of children and young people aged 5-14 years and the three most popular leisure activities undertaken in the previous two weeks	In 2006:	In 2012:	~
		• watching TV, videos or DVDs (98.0%)	• watching TV, videos or DVDs (98.0%)	~
		• reading for pleasure (73.0%)	• reading for pleasure (73.3%)	~
		• playing electronic or computer games (67.0%)	• other screen-based activities (90.8%)	..

Key: ✓ = favourable trend ~ = no change or clear trend

✗ = unfavourable trend .. = no trend data available

\* = see revised data table on page 22

\*\* Australian Early Development Index

\*\*\* previously known as the Tertiary Entrance Rank (TER)

## Key indicators in the 2009 report for which updated data were not available

Domain:		Baseline	Update
How are young South Australians enjoying and achieving?		Baseline	Update
Children's and young people's experience of learning is positive	Proportion of children and young people aged 5-14 years who used a computer (excluding use of the Internet)	30.1% (2006)	n.a.

Key: n.a. = no later equivalent data available



## 4. Young South Australians make a positive contribution ... by being actively involved with their peers, families, culture, community and society, according to their capabilities

Children and young people contribute much to our society: they actively produce knowledge as they learn; they offer their labour in the form of part-time employment, volunteering, and housework, caring and other roles for their families; and they enhance communities, through their artistic, sporting and cultural efforts; and simply by being children and young people.

They form relationships with those who are important to them. They also understand and act to change their social environments; however, they may be constrained by gender, ethnicity and culture, age, lack of experiences, socioeconomic disadvantage and other factors. Opportunities for all children and young people to be active participants in society can reduce the negative effects of social exclusion and discrimination, and enrich our understanding and valuing of childhood.

### Achievable outcomes

#### **Children and young people engage in decision-making**

- An ability to make decisions independently is essential to the development of life skills. Children and young people have the right and usually the ability to make choices about their daily experiences and activities. Children and young people learn to see themselves as capable and competent when they are treated this way by others.

#### **Children and young people are involved in community activities**

- Children and young people are active participants in their communities, and their voices and actions need more acknowledgement.

#### **Children and young people engage in positive behaviour**

- Children and young people learn from others around them and need supportive and appropriate role models with which to identify.

#### **Children and young people identify and participate with their kinship group and/or culture**

- A sense of identity, belonging to and knowledge of culture, kinship, tradition and history enhance wellbeing and resilience for life, and ensures the intergenerational transmission of such knowledge.



## Key indicators in SA

Domain:				
How are young South Australians making a positive contribution?		Baseline	Update	Trend
Children and young people are involved in community activities	Proportion of children and young people aged 5-14 years who attended cultural venues ie, visited a public library, art gallery or museum, and/or attended a performing arts event	76.6% (2006)	80.9% (2012)	✓
Children and young people engage in positive behaviour	Number of children and young people aged 10-17 years who received a formal police caution, or attended a family conference or the Youth Court	4,545 (2006)*	3,699 (2012)	✓
	Number of children and young people aged 10-17 years under juvenile justice supervision	1,135 (2006-07)	1,058 (2011-12)	✓
	Number of children and young people aged 10-17 years in juvenile detention	498 (2006-07)	506 (2011-12)	✗
	Number of children and young people aged 10-17 years under community supervision	973 (2006-07)	858 (2011-12)	✓
Children and young people identify and participate with their kinship group and/or culture	Proportion of children and young people aged 0-14 years who speak a language at home other than English	13.5% (2006)*	11.2% (2011)	✗

Key: ✓ = favourable trend

✗ = unfavourable trend

\* = see revised data table on page 22

~ = no change or clear trend

.. = no trend data available



Key indicators in the 2009 report for which updated data were not available

Domain:			
How are young South Australians making a positive contribution?		Baseline	Update
Children and young people engage in decision making	Number of young people aged 12-17 years on the Youth Participation Register	64 (2008)	n.a.

Key: n.a. = no later equivalent data available



## 5. Young South Australians are prepared for adult life ... gaining knowledge and skills to participate as adults, and not being prevented by economic and other disadvantage from achieving in life

The life conditions of children and young people are determined by the economic, political and social forces which also create the framework for adults' lives. They have a profound effect on children's and young people's current lives and opportunities. As our youngest citizens, they rely on their families and their communities to fulfil their basic needs.

Children and young people are active agents for change, and they shape the structures and processes around them. Their social relationships are important now and into the future, as they prepare for adult life.

### Achievable outcomes

#### **Children's and young people's material needs are met**

- Children and young people need to live in environments that provide some order and meet their basic physical, emotional and material needs, as well as their developmental and learning requirements.

#### **Children and young people live in sustainable communities**

- Sustainable communities build local capacity and trust, through working together on specific goals and plans. They engage their members, are inclusive, consult on issues and invest in lifelong learning and their local physical environments.

#### **Children and young people are ready to engage in further education, employment or training, according to their capabilities**

- Childhood is a time of rapid development, as children and young people are constantly evolving and adapting to their environments. Those who are able need skills and knowledge to take them forward into further education or training, and employment as adults.



## Key indicators in SA

Domain:				
How are young South Australians prepared for adult life?		Baseline	Update	Trend
Children's and young people's material needs are met	Proportion of children and young people aged less than 15 years living in jobless families	15.9% (2006)	14.7% (2011)	✓
	Proportion of children and young people under the age of 16 years living in welfare-dependent or other low income households	23.3% (June 2006)	22.0% (June 2009)	✓
	Proportion of accompanying children and young people aged 0-15 years turned away on an average day from the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) because their need for accommodation could not be met	76% (2006-07)	73.7% (2010-11)	✓
Children and young people live in sustainable communities	Proportion of children and young people who reported going bike-riding outside of school hours	64.0% (2006)	65.0% (2012)	✓
Children and young people are ready to engage in further education, employment or training, according to their capabilities	Proportion of 15-19 year olds who were engaged fulltime in school, work or further education and training	85.5% (April 2008)	82.5% (April 2010)	✗

Key: ✓ = favourable trend

✗ = unfavourable trend

\* = see revised data table on page 22

~ = no change or clear trend

.. = no trend data available



## Key indicators in the 2009 report for which updated data were not available

### Domain:

How are young South Australians prepared for adult life?		Baseline	Update
Children's and young people's material needs are met	Rate of homelessness per 10,000 population	53 (2006)	n.a.
	Estimated number of young people aged 12-18 years who were homeless	2,129 (2006)	n.a.
Children and young people are ready to engage in further education, employment or training according to their capabilities	Proportion of children and young people aged –5-14 years who had worked at some time in the previous 12 months	6.4% (June 2006)	n.a.

Key: n.a. = no later equivalent data available



## Data sources that have been revised by their data custodians since the earlier publication of the data

Domain:			
Young South Australians stay safe and are nurtured ... being well cared for and protected from harm and neglect		Previously	Revised to
Children and young people are safe from anti-social behaviour and crime	Number of children and young people under 18 years who were victims of an offence reported to police (excluding sexual offences)	2,686 (2006)	2,615 (2006)
	Number of children and young people who were victims of a sexual offence reported to police	784 (2006)	782 (2006)
Domain:			
Young South Australians enjoy and achieve ... getting the most out of life and developing skills for life, according to their capabilities		Previously	Revised to
Children's developmental experience of early childhood is enriched	Proportion of 4 year old children who were enrolled in DECD-funded preschools, integrated centres and children's centres in term 2	65.0% (2007)	71.0% (2007)
	Proportion of 3 year old Aboriginal children who were enrolled in preschool in Term 2	1,097 (2007)	516 (2007)
Domain:			
Young South Australians make a positive contribution ... by being actively involved with their peers, families, culture, community and society, according to their capabilities		Previously	Revised to
Children and young people engage in positive behaviour	Number of children and young people aged 10-17 years who received a formal police caution, or attended a family conference or the Youth Court	4,381 (2006)	4,545 (2006)
Children and young people identify and participate with their kinship group and/or culture	Proportion of children and young people aged 0-14 years who speak a language at home other than English	2.3% (2006)	13.5% (2006)



### How healthy are young South Australians?

While the rate of low birthweight of Aboriginal babies continues to be concerning, the infant mortality indicator for Aboriginal infants is more positive. It is encouraging that tobacco smoking and alcohol use by young people aged 12-17 years has markedly decreased.

However, current data on binge-drinking, children and young people reported as having asthma and those estimated to have a mental health problem is needed to plan effectively for prevention, early intervention and treatment services.

### How safe and nurtured are young South Australians?

The decrease in the child protection substantiation rates for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children and young people are encouraging. What continues to be of concern is the increasing number of children and young people who have been admitted to out-of-home care and who remain there for significant periods of time, and that care and protection orders for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children and young people continue to rise.

Reported offences, including sexual offences, against children and young people have dropped significantly. However, the absolute numbers indicate that too many children and young people remain victims of violence in all its forms.

### How are young South Australians enjoying and achieving?

While there has been an upward trend in young children who are developmentally vulnerable at the time they commence their formal education, there has been a positive movement in many of the national benchmarks for numeracy and literacy across all age groups for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. The notable exceptions include Year 5 writing (for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students) and the Year 3 category for numeracy for Aboriginal students.

### How are young South Australians making a positive contribution?

The number of children and young people entering the juvenile justice system has declined, which is positive. However, the number of children and young people in formal detention has risen slightly.

### How are young South Australians prepared for adult life?

The number of children and young people living with socio-economic disadvantage has fallen slightly, although the number remains unacceptably high.





## We do not yet have good information about ...

It has been challenging bringing information from many diverse sources together to develop a picture of the lives of young South Australians. We have chosen sources that are reliable, and already collected and published on a regular basis. This means that there are no additional resources required by the Council to undertake data collection.

However, there are a number of areas where we do not have reliable information at the present time, and other areas where our measures could be better.

These include:

- more information about the long-term outcomes for children and young people who live with disability, their siblings and their parents; children and young people in the care and protection system; disadvantaged Aboriginal children and young people; refugee children and young people; children and young people who live in rural and remote areas; and children and young people who are socioeconomically disadvantaged;
- the views of young South Australians about the issues that affect them and which they believe are important;
- information about young South Australians involved in volunteering, caring and those who are employed; and
- information about young South Australians and their relationships with their families, friends, carers, peer groups and others in their lives.

The Council for the Care of Children hopes to encourage the collection of this information over the next three years, so that we can have a fuller picture of young South Australians and how they are faring now and into the future.







