## Data quality information —Early childhood education and care, chapter 3

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| Data quality information |
| Data quality information (DQI) provides information against the seven ABS data quality framework dimensions, for a selection of performance indicators in the Early childhood education and care chapter. DQI for additional indicators will be progressively introduced in future reports.  Where Report on Government Services indicators align with National Agreement indicators, DQI has been sourced from the Steering Committee’s reports on National Agreements to the COAG Reform Council.  Technical DQI has been supplied or agreed by relevant data providers. Additional Steering Committee commentary does not necessarily reflect the views of data providers. |
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DQI are available for the following performance indicators:

Participation rates for special needs groups in preschool – Proportion of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in preschool – Non-English speaking background; Disability 3

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Children using child care 13

Children enrolled in preschool – Proportion of children who are enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling 17

Children enrolled in preschool – Proportion of Indigenous children (by geographic location) who are enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling (national data only) 20

Children attending preschool – Proportion of children who are attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling 23

Children attending preschool – Proportion of Indigenous children (by geographic location) who are attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling (national data only) 26

Non-standard hours of care in child care services 29

Child care service costs 31

Preschool service costs 32

Staff quality in early childhood education and care – Proportion of workers delivering preschool programs who are at least three year university trained and early childhood qualified 35

Achievement of the *National Quality Standard* 38

Total government recurrent expenditure on early childhood education and care per child in the community 40

Australian Government recurrent expenditure per child attending approved child care 42

Family work-related needs 44

Demand for formal care 46

Out-of-pocket costs of child care 48

### Participation rates for special needs groups in preschool – Proportion of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in preschool – Non-English speaking background; Disability

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Secretariat in consultation with the State and Territory governments, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Equity |
| **Indicator** | Participation rates for special needs groups in preschool |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  The proportion of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in preschool – Non-English speaking background; Disability  Numerator:  Number of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in preschool – from Non-English speaking backgrounds; with Disability  Denominator:  Number of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in a preschool program  Computation:  The number of children (by special need group) aged 3–5 years enrolled in a preschool program divided by the number of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in a preschool program. |
| **Data source/s** | Numerator/Denominator:  State and Territory governments (unpublished) |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |
| **Institutional environment** | Preschool data are collected by individual State and Territory departments. Additional information on the separate institutional environments is outlined below:   * NSW – In NSW preschool data are collected by the Department of Education and Communities (DEC) as part of its role in providing and monitoring funding for the community preschool sector. Government funded preschool services are required to participate in the ECEC preschool census each year as part of their funding agreement. NSW DEC also collects data on children who are enrolled in 100 DEC preschools as part of the NSW annual government school census. Data are not collected from the long day care sector. Data on children with disabilities attending Early Intervention classes at NSW schools were collected for the first time in 2012. * Victoria – Data were collected by Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) during the Confirmed Kindergarten Funding Data Collection reported as at 30 June 2012. Completion of this data collection was compulsory for all funded service providers. In 2012, DEECD collected data from 1708 funded service providers which offered a kindergarten program at 1965 kindergarten services. Funded kindergarten services in Victoria include sessional kindergarten services and long day care services which offer an integrated kindergarten program. * Queensland – Data are collected in an annual Early Childhood Education and Care services census (online). Census participants include all Queensland Government approved/licensed early childhood education and care services. For services that receive funding under the Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme, participation is mandatory. * Western Australia – The organisation responsible is the Western Australia Department of Education (DoE). * South Australia – Data collected by the Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) as part of the termly preschool staffing collection (Term 2) from sites offering preschool. * Tasmania – Data collected by the Tasmanian Department of Education from 220 pre-school providers, using National Minimum Dataset specifications. * Northern Territory – Data are collected by the Department of Education. |
| **Relevance** | Information on the relevance of State and Territory preschool data collected by individual State and Territory departments is outlined below.   * NSW – The community preschool census and government school census collect a range of data relevant to the funded or government operated segments of the preschool sector such as service operating characteristics, staff employed, gender, disability, language background, low income status, Indigenous status, attendance/enrolment patterns and staff qualifications. * Victoria – Information is collected on service providers, management models, staff employed, children enrolled, gender, birthdates, disability, language background, indigenous status, attendance patterns and fees paid. All DEECD funded service providers are required to undertake the data collection, therefore full coverage of 4 year old preschool programs delivered through these service providers was achieved. * Queensland – Data collected from the Census enable Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment (DETE) to report on a variety of matters, such as the performance of the early childhood education and care sector, to the Queensland and Australian Governments, and the community. The data are used to provide evidence for policy and program development and planning and to monitor outcomes of early childhood initiatives. * Western Australia – The data collected through the School Census by the DoE are used to meet national reporting requirements, including meeting the reporting requirements of the national ECEC collection. Full coverage is achieved for all government schools and community kindergartens with a  pre-school program. * South Australia – collection is mandatory and there is full coverage for DECD funded or provided preschool services. * Tasmania – data collected for pre-school providers in a registered kindergarten. * Northern Territory – enrolments are from registered preschool programs and four government funded remote Catholic schools, collected at unit record level and available by remoteness area. |
| **Timeliness** | Information on the timeliness of State and Territory preschool data collected by individual State and Territory departments is outlined below.   * NSW – The ECEC preschool census is conducted annually over a representative fortnight. In 2012 the collection period was 30 July to 10 August. The Government School Mid-Year Census is conducted annually in August. * Victoria – The Confirmed Kindergarten Funding Data Collection was undertaken between 2 April and 4 May 2012, with updates included until 30 June 2012. * Queensland – The Census is an annual collection, with the most current year data census commencing in the week beginning 30 July 2012. * Western Australia – The collection was undertaken at 3 August 2012 with a reference period of 30 July to 3 August. * South Australia – Data collected in late July to early August 2012. * Tasmania – Data are collected annually, for a two week reference period in late July to early August 2012. * Northern Territory – Data are collected as part of an annual census collection run on the 1st Friday of August each year across all NT Schools. |
| **Accuracy** | Due to different methods of data collection, not all jurisdictions are able to identify duplicate records of children. Double counting of children may occur due to:   * Children moving interstate during a preschool year * Children attending multiple providers to access an appropriate amount of care * Children attending multiple service types * Children attending preschool for greater than one year.   These factors can lead to an overestimation of children enrolment in some states and territories (for example, where enrolment rates exceed 100 per cent).  There are differences in collection dates, reference periods and age reference dates.  Additional information on the accuracy of State and Territory preschool data collected by individual State and Territory departments is outlined below.   * NSW – For the ECEC preschool census, data are collected from government funded community preschools through a web based portal. The web based portal has data validation software to reduce data entry errors. The Department also carries out data verification checks by comparing enrolment and service characteristic variations across years. For the government school mid-year census, the results on children attending Government preschools or children with disabilities attending Early Intervention classes at NSW schools are validated by a process in which data are extracted from the school enrolment system and presented back to schools for signoff. There is no current requirement for unfunded preschools to supply data to the Department of Education and Communities. Preschool programs are provided in preschools and long day care centres in NSW. However, children undertaking a preschool program in a long day care setting are not captured in the collection, resulting in an undercount. * Victoria – It is compulsory for all service providers in receipt of kindergarten funding to complete the data collection. Information on service provider characteristics and staff details is also required to be confirmed. DEECD carried out data validation in response to missing fields of data as well as cross-checking data for accuracy. DEECD regional staff also performed verification checks on all funded organisation submissions, ensuring that no blanks occurred in data records and comparing enrolments across years. There is no current requirement for unfunded organisations to supply data to DEECD. * Queensland – Data has been adjusted for partial non‑responses at the service and preschool program levels through an imputation process, and incorrect responses corrected via validation and error checking processes. No adjustments for undercounts have been applied and no standard errors are applied to this data item. * South Australia – Data are collected through the mandatory Term 2 preschool collection and validated by all preschools. Double counting of children in government preschools is analysed centrally. * Tasmania – All kindergartens reported enrolment data for the reference period in 2012. Duplicate students attending more than one kindergarten are identified and allocated the same statistical linkage key. * Northern Territory – Data collected through the annual census and validated by all schools. NT is able to report the number of children attending preschool programs within the Government sector and attending preschool in the year before full time school. |
| **Coherence** | Data for Australia for children from non-English speaking backgrounds and children with disability are the total of the sum of states and territories for which data are available, and should not be interpreted as national data.  Data on children with disability are not directly comparable because the definition of disability varies across jurisdictions.  Children enrolled in preschool can be counted in more than one special needs group. |
| **Accessibility** | Information on the accessibility of State and Territory preschool data collected by individual State and Territory departments is outlined below. Preschool data for all jurisdictions are published by the ABS in Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0). Data on children from non-English speaking backgrounds and children with disability are not available in the ABS publication.   * NSW – Limited data are collected for national and state reporting requirements. * Victoria – Limited data are collected for funding purposes and State and National Reporting requirements. Aggregated data items are presented in the Victoria attachment tables section of the RoGS. * Queensland – Fact sheets on the sector are available on the Early Childhood Education and Care website. This information includes attendance rates, management types, locations of services and staff qualifications and experience for all services (inclusive of both funded and unfunded services) across the state. * South Australia – Limited data are collected for national and state reporting requirements. Summary data are published annually on the department website. Unpublished data can be requested. |
| **Interpretability** | Limited supporting documentation is available.   * Victoria – The scope of the collection included children enrolled and attending funded kindergarten programs in the year before school. * Queensland provided a range of information to assist in the collection and reporting of data, such as explanatory notes for providers. The explanatory notes, together with printable copies of ECECSC collection forms, are available   from the Queensland DETE website:  <deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/office/services-census.html> |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:   * Participation in preschool is not compulsory. This measure 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 on children with disability are not directly comparable because the definition of disability varies across jurisdictions. * In NSW, preschool programs are provided in preschools and long day care centres. However, children undertaking a preschool program in a long day care setting are not captured in the collection, resulting in an undercount. There is no current requirement for unfunded preschools in NSW to supply data to the Department of Education and Communities. |

### Participation rates for special needs groups in preschool – Proportion of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in preschool – Indigenous; Regional areas; Remote areas

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Secretariat in consultation with the ABS, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Equity |
| **Indicator** | Participation rates for special needs groups in preschool |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  The proportion of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in preschool – Indigenous; Regional areas; Remote areas  Numerator:  Number of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in preschool – Indigenous; in inner/outer regional Australia; in remote/very remote Australia  Denominator:  Number of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in a preschool program  Computation:  The number of children (by special need group) aged 3–5 years enrolled in a preschool program divided by the number of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in a preschool program. |
| **Data source/s** | Numerator/denominator:  ABS (unpublished) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no. 4240.0). |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Institutional environment** | Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) is compiled from data from the National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection. The National ECEC Collection is derived from administrative data provided by state and territory and Commonwealth government departments with responsibility for early childhood education and care. A comprehensive quality declaration for each jurisdiction can be found in the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001).  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see ABS Institutional Environment. | | **Relevance** | In 2008, the importance of education in the early years of a child's development was formally acknowledged through the Council of Australian Governments' endorsement of a new National Partnership on Early Childhood Education (NP ECE). The National ECEC Collection was conducted for the third time in 2012 as part of data improvement projects under the NP ECE and the National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care (NIA ECEC). The aim of the National ECEC Collection is to provide comparable state and territory statistics on early childhood education. Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) presents counts of children enrolled and attending preschool programs and episodes of enrolment and attendance at preschool programs across Australia.  The scope of the collection consists of all service providersdelivering apreschool program. A preschool program for the National ECEC Collection is defined as a structured, play based learning program, delivered by a degree qualified teacher, primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling. This is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it, or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Programs may be delivered in a variety of service settings including separate preschools or kindergartens, long day care centres or in association with a school. Long day care centres that do not operate a preschool program are considered out of scope.  The operational collection scope of child information for the National ECEC Collection consists of all children who at 1 July were between 3 and 6 years of age (inclusive), are within scope of the collection if they were enrolled during the reference period at a preschool program. To be considered as enrolled, the child must have attended the preschool program for at least one hour during the reference period, or be absent due to illness or extended holiday leave and expected to return.  The collection date for the National ECEC Collection is the first Friday in August of each year. In 2012, the collection date for all jurisdictions was Friday, 3 August 2012, with a reference period of 30 July 2012 to 3 August 2012. Some jurisdictions preferred to incorporate a reference period of two weeks that included the collection date, to better reflect their preschool program delivery model.  A summary of jurisdictional collection reference periods for 2012 can be found within the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001).  Regional and remote areas are based upon the ABS’ Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) 2011. The ASGS replaced the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) 2006. The ASGS is based on the 2011 Census of Population and Housing and represents a more comprehensive, flexible and consistent way of defining Australia’s statistical geography than the previous classification. | | **Timeliness** | The National ECEC Collection was conducted for the third time in 2012 and will continue to be conducted annually. Information from the 2012 collection was released within 8 months of the August 2012 reference period. | | **Accuracy** | Data for the National ECEC Collection have been compiled according to the National standards outlined in the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) in order to maximise consistency of data across the various jurisdictional collections. Alignment with these standards has not been completely achieved by all jurisdictions for 2012, and care should be taken when comparison across jurisdictions are made. In addition, some jurisdictions were not able to provide the ABS with certain data elements as specified in the ECEC NMDS.  Data limitations for the 2012 collection include:   * A small level of under-coverage of the preschool programs in some sectors, particularly programs delivered to three year olds * Comprehensive child unit record level data not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non-government sector or unfunded preschools * Children enrolled in multiple preschool programs are not identifiable within all jurisdictions * Differences between data element collection methodologies and alignment to national data standards across jurisdictions.   Care needs to be taken interpreting data relating to Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander children due to reporting issues associated with both the identification and reporting of Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander status.  Where information on the child’s usual place of residence is not available - that is, where insufficient information on the child’s address was collected or, where no address details have been provided, remoteness area in 2012 is to be assigned using the address of the service at which the child is enrolled. For more information on the collection methodologies and current data limitations for each state and territory, see the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001).  More information on the ECEC NMDS can be found on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website. | | **Coherence** | Due to the differing levels of coverage, collection methodologies and alignment with the ECEC NMDS across jurisdictions, the data presented in Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) may not be directly comparable across all jurisdictions.  Children enrolled in preschool can be counted in more than one special needs group.  Earlier reports classified regional and remote areas according to the ASGC. This Report used the ASGS 2011. The changes from ASGC to ASGS represent a break in series between reports. | | **Accessibility** | The ABS publication Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) contains estimates of children enrolled in, and attending preschool in Australia collected through the National ECEC Collection.  If the information required is not available as a standard product or service, then ABS Consultancy Services can assist with customised services to suit specific needs. Inquiries should be made to the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070. | | **Interpretability** | National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001) contains detailed information on the data sources, terminology and other technical aspects associated with the National ECEC statistics. | | |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:   * Participation in preschool is not compulsory. This measure does not provide information on parental preferences for using preschool, or other factors, such as school starting age, which can affect use of preschool. * Comprehensive child unit record level data not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non-government sector or unfunded preschools. Child level data for Queensland is not available. Episode of enrolment data are used instead for Queensland. Children may be enrolled in more than one preschool program so will be counted more than once in episode counts where they are enrolled in more than one preschool program. * Preschool programs are provided in preschools and long day care centres. However, not all children undertaking a preschool program in a long day care setting in NSW are captured in the collection, resulting in an undercount for NSW. |

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### Participation rates for special needs groups in preschool – Proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program who are disadvantaged

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Secretariat in consultation with the ABS, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Equity |
| **Indicator** | Participation rates for special needs groups in preschool |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  Proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program who are disadvantaged.  Numerator:  Number of children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling who reside in an area with a Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD) quintile of 1.  Denominator:  Number of children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling.  Computation:  Number of children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling who are disadvantaged divided by the number of children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling. |
| **Data source/s** | Numerator/denominator:  ABS *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no. 4240.0). |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Institutional environment** | Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) is compiled from data from the National ECEC Collection. The National ECEC Collection is derived from administrative data provided by state and territory and Commonwealth government departments with responsibility for early childhood education and care. A comprehensive quality declaration for each jurisdiction can be found in the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001).  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see ABS Institutional Environment. | | **Relevance** | In 2008, the importance of education in the early years of a child's development was formally acknowledged through the Council of Australian Governments' endorsement of a new National Partnership on Early Childhood Education (NP ECE). The National ECEC Collection was conducted for the third time in 2012 as part of data improvement projects under the NP ECE and the National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care (NIA ECEC). The aim of the National ECEC Collection is to provide comparable state and territory statistics on early childhood education. Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) presents counts of children enrolled and attending preschool programs and episodes of enrolment and attendance at preschool programs across Australia.  The scope of the collection consists of all service providersdelivering apreschool program. A preschool program for the National ECEC Collection is defined as a structured, play based learning program, delivered by a degree qualified teacher, primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling. This is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it, or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Programs may be delivered in a variety of service settings including separate preschools or kindergartens, long day care centres or in association with a school. Long day care centres that do not operate a preschool program are considered out of scope.  The operational collection scope of child information for the National ECEC Collection consists of all children who at 1 July were between 3 and 6 years of age (inclusive), are within scope of the collection if they were enrolled during the reference period at a preschool program. To be considered as enrolled, the child must have attended the preschool program for at least one hour during the reference period, or be absent due to illness or extended holiday leave and expected to return.  The collection date for the National ECEC Collection is the first Friday in August of each year. In 2012, the collection date for all jurisdictions was Friday, 3 August 2012, with a reference period of 30 July 2012 to 3 August 2012. Some jurisdictions preferred to incorporate a reference period of two weeks that included the collection date, to better reflect their preschool program delivery model.  A summary of jurisdictional collection reference periods for 2012 can be found within the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001).  Children who are disadvantaged are defined as residing in an area with a Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD) quintile of 1 (based on the 2011 Census of Population and Housing). The SEIFA IRSD summarises a range of information about the economic and social resources of people and households within an area. The use of SEIFA IRSD as a proxy for disadvantage needs to be interpreted with care as it pertains to the area in which the child resides, rather than to the child specifically. | | **Timeliness** | The National ECEC Collection was conducted for the third time in 2012 and will continue to be conducted annually. Information from the 2012 collection was released within 8 months of the August 2012 reference period. | | **Accuracy** | Data for the National ECEC Collection have been compiled according to the National standards outlined in the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) in order to maximise consistency of data across the various jurisdictional collections. Alignment with these standards has not been completely achieved by all jurisdictions for 2012, and care should be taken when comparison across jurisdictions are made. In addition, some jurisdictions were not able to provide the ABS with certain data elements as specified in the ECEC NMDS.  Data limitations for the 2012 collection include:   * A small level of under-coverage of the preschool programs in some sectors, particularly programs delivered to three year olds * Comprehensive child unit record level data not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non-government sector or unfunded preschools * Children enrolled in multiple preschool programs are not identifiable within all jurisdictions * Differences between data element collection methodologies and alignment to national data standards across jurisdictions.   Where information on the child’s usual place of residence is not available - that is, where insufficient information on the child’s address was collected or, where no address details have been provided, remoteness area in 2012 is to be assigned using the address of the service at which the child is enrolled. For more information on the collection methodologies and current data limitations for each state and territory, see the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001).  More information on the ECEC NMDS can be found on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website. | | **Coherence** | Due to the differing levels of coverage, collection methodologies and alignment with the ECEC NMDS across jurisdictions, the data presented in Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) may not be directly comparable across all jurisdictions. | | **Accessibility** | The ABS publication Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) contains estimates of children enrolled in, and attending preschool in Australia collected through the National ECEC Collection.  If the information required is not available as a standard product or service, then ABS Consultancy Services can assist with customised services to suit specific needs. Inquiries should be made to the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070. | | **Interpretability** | National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001) contains detailed information on the data sources, terminology and other technical aspects associated with the National ECEC statistics. | | |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:   * Participation in preschool is not compulsory. This measure does not provide information on parental preferences for using preschool, or other factors, such as school starting age, which can affect use of preschool. * Comprehensive child unit record level data not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non-government sector or unfunded preschools. Child level data for Queensland is not available. Episode of enrolment data are used instead for Queensland. Children may be enrolled in more than one preschool program so will be counted more than once in episode counts where they are enrolled in more than one preschool program. * Preschool programs are provided in preschools and long day care centres. However, not all children undertaking a preschool program in a long day care setting in NSW are captured in the collection, resulting in an undercount for NSW * Use of SEIFA IRSD to define children who are most disadvantaged needs to be interpreted with care as it pertains to the area in which the child resides, rather than to the child specifically. |

### Children using child care

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Secretariat in consultation with the Australian Government Department of Education and the State and Territory governments, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Effectiveness |
| **Indicator** | Children using child care |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  The proportion of children using Australian Government approved plus State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care.  Numerator:  Number of children attending Australian Government approved and State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care (age groups 0–5; 6–12;  0–12 years).  Denominator:  Estimated resident population as at 31 December (age groups 0–5; 6–12;  0–12 years).  Computation:  The number of children attending Australian Government approved and State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care divided by the total estimated resident population. Calculated separately for each age group (0–5;  6–12; 0–12 years |
| **Data source/s** | Numerator/s:  Department of Education (unpublished); State and Territory governments (unpublished)  Denominator/s:  ABS (unpublished) *Australian Demographic Statistics* (cat. no. 3101.0). |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |
| **Institutional environment** | Australian government approved child care services data are collected through the Child Care Management System (CCMS) by the Department of Social Services (DSS) under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act. These data are compiled for RoGS by the Australian Government Department of Education.  State and Territory child care data are collected by individual State and Territory departments. Additional information on the separate institutional environments is outlined below:   * NSW – Only collects data on government funded community preschools and DEC operated preschools. NSW does not collect data on long day care services. * Victoria – Provides funding to approximately 100 organisations offering child care to parents enrolled in Adult and Community Further Education (ACFE) courses. These are mainly neighbourhood model occasional care services. No data were collected on funded places or staff characteristics for these services in 2012. * Queensland – Data are collected in an annual Early Childhood Education and Care services census (online). Census participants include all Queensland Government approved/licensed early childhood education and care services. For services that receive funding under the Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme, participation is mandatory. * South Australia – Data are collected by the DECD as part of the annual children’s services census from sites offering rural care, state funded vacation care or occasional care. The census is mandatory for rural and occasional care services but not vacation care services. * Tasmania – Data are compiled by the Department of Education for funded child care services. Through their funding agreement, these services are required to provide data in August of each year. * Northern Territory – Information on approved education and care services is collected by the Department of Education through the NQA ITS from January 2012.   Estimated resident population data are obtained from the ABS. For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, which cover this collection, please see ABS Institutional Environment. |
| **Relevance** | Australian government approved child care services data are collected at the service level and geocoded and boundary tagged, so all geographies are available.  The relevance of State and Territory child care data collected by individual State and Territory departments is outlined below.   * NSW – Data are only collected on government funded community preschools and DEC operated preschools. NSW does not collect data on long day care services. * Queensland – Data collected from the Census enable Queensland DETE to report on a variety of matters, such as the performance of the early childhood education and care sector, to the Queensland and Australian Governments, and the community. The data are used to provide evidence for policy and program development and planning and to monitor outcomes of early childhood. * South Australia – As the census is mandatory there is full coverage for rural and occasional care services. * Tasmania – Data provided for each child care service funded by the State Department of Education. Services provide the data for each of the children attending in the data week. * Northern Territory *–* Utilisation information is provided by approved Centre based long day care and kindergarten services through funding agreements.   Rates of the population are based on as a proportion of the estimated resident population collected by the ABS. |
| **Timeliness** | Australian government approved child care services data are collected weekly, available since services transitioned to reporting under the CCMS between 2008 and June 2009. Data are reported on a quarterly basis.  State and Territory child care data are collected by individual State and Territory departments through various independent data collections. Data are collected in the first half of the financial year reported in RoGS and therefore are collected approximately 18 months prior to publication. Additional information is outlined below.   * NSW – Annual data collection from funded services undertaken each August for a representative fortnight. The census of Government preschools is undertaken for a representative week in August of each year. * Queensland – The census is an annual collection, with the most current year data census commencing Monday 30 August 2012. Data relating to vacation care was collected during a separate period. * South Australia – Data collected annually with reference period usually July/August of financial year. * Tasmania – Data collected annually in August of the financial year. * Northern Territory – Approved services that are eligible to receive funds, are required to provide data quarterly to the Department of Education by the month following the end of each quarter.   ABS population estimates used for the denominator of population rates are available each year. |
| **Accuracy** | Australian government approved child care services data are collected through an electronic administrative system and all approved services are represented.  Additional information on the accuracy State and Territory child care data collected by individual State and Territory departments is outlined below.   * NSW – Only counts children using care or early childhood education in NSW Government funded services, which excludes for-profit long day care centres but does not necessarily include all not-for-profit services. Funded services which do not respond to the annual collection are not included in the overall counts. Hence there is a potential undercount of child care attendance. Children may attend child care with more than one service provider, resulting in over-counting. * Queensland – Data have been adjusted for partial non-responses at the service level through imputation, and incorrect responses corrected through a validation and error checking process. No adjustments for undercounts have been applied and no standard errors are applied to this data item. It is possible that due to the aggregate nature of the collection, there may be an issue of duplicate records (that is children being counted in multiple child care services either multiple providers or multiple service types) within the reference week which could lead to an overestimation of children using child care. * South Australia – Data collected in a paper based survey from Rural Care and Vacation Care, and submitted electronically by Occasional Care services. Duplicate records or undercounts are not identifiable as the information is de-identified and cannot be matched across sites * Northern Territory – All eligible education and care services submit data electronically, that is linked to the ongoing eligibility of funding. Data quality is well managed through the NQA ITS’s application submission processes. * Tasmania – Data completed by staff in each funded service to the Department of Education and includes all child care services funded by the State. Services report on actual age of each child attending during the data week. Services provide attendance records with data collection sheets and these are used for validation. However as dates of birth of the children are not provided age validations cannot be made.   In addition, across each data collection, the proportion of children attending child care in the population is based on Estimated Resident Population denominator at 31 December, and therefore a variation between the jurisdiction data collection period for the numerator and the denominator vary. |
| **Coherence** | Australian government approved child care services has been consistent since the introduction of the CCMS. The definitions remain unchanged.  Additional information on the coherence of State and Territory child care data collected by individual State and Territory departments is outlined below.   * NSW – Did not collect data from child care services in 2012. The presented data items for 2012-13 are estimates using Commonwealth data to proportion the number of children using child care services by age category. * Queensland – Age range scope of the data for the numerator and denominator are comparable. * South Australia – Is only provided by DECD for state funded/provided services * Tasmania – Data collection in place for over 10 years and data appear to be consistent, taking into account changes in number of services each year (significant given the small number of services). * Northern Territory – Utilisation data had been collected from approved services through CSIS until it was replaced in January 2012 by the NQA ITS. Data exclude previously funded services that were deemed out-of-scope from January 2012.   Rates of the population may differ from those released in previous editions of this  publication due to scheduled revisions of the estimated resident population by the ABS. These differences are likely to be very small. |
| **Accessibility** | The Australian government approved child care data at the service level is protected under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act legislation. To date data have only been released for purposes of RoGS reporting.  Additional information on the accessibility of State and Territory child care data collected by individual State and Territory departments is outlined below.   * NSW – There are limited data collected for national and state reporting requirements and all aggregated data items are presented in NSW attachment tables section of the RoGS. * Queensland – Fact sheets on the sector are produced each year available on the Early Childhood Education and Care website containing information on attendance rates, management types, locations of services and staff qualifications and experience for all services (inclusive of both funded and unfunded services) across the state. * South Australia – Unpublished data can be requested. There are some published data available online. * Tasmania – Data provided through internal process within the Department of Education as part of its funding agreement with these services. There are no other processes to collect this data. * Northern Territory – Some of the required data are available as public information published in the Department of Education’s Annual Report following the end of each financial year. |
| **Interpretability** | Limited supporting documentation is available.   * Queensland – Queensland provided a range of information to assist in the collection and reporting of data, such as explanatory notes for providers. The explanatory notes, together with printable copies of ECECSC collection forms, are available from the Queensland DETE website:   <deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/office/services-census.html> |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:   * This indicator does not provide information on the parental preferences for using child care, or other factors, such as school starting age, which can affect use of child care. |

### Children enrolled in preschool – Proportion of children who are enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Secretariat in consultation with the ABS, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Effectiveness |
| **Indicator** | Children enrolled in preschool |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  The proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling. Data are also reported for the proportion of children aged 3 years enrolled in a preschool program.  Numerator:  Number of children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling.  Denominator:  Estimated number of children aged 4 years, as at 30 June.  Computation:  The number of children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling divided by the estimated number of children aged 4 years. |
| **Data source/s** | Numerator/s:  ABS (unpublished) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no. 4240.0)  Denominator/s:  ABS (unpublished) *Australian Demographic Statistics* (cat. no. 3101.0). |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Institutional environment** | Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) is compiled from data from the National ECEC Collection. The National ECEC Collection is derived from administrative data provided by state and territory and Commonwealth government departments with responsibility for early childhood education and care. A comprehensive quality declaration for each jurisdiction can be found in the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001).  Estimated resident population data are obtained from the ABS.  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see ABS Institutional Environment. | | **Relevance** | In 2008, the importance of education in the early years of a child's development was formally acknowledged through the Council of Australian Governments' endorsement of a new National Partnership on Early Childhood Education (NP ECE). The National ECEC Collection was conducted for the third time in 2012 as part of data improvement projects under the NP ECE and the National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care (NIA ECEC). The aim of the National ECEC Collection is to provide comparable state and territory statistics on early childhood education. Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) presents counts of children enrolled and attending preschool programs and episodes of enrolment and attendance at preschool programs across Australia.  The scope of the collection consists of all service providersdelivering apreschool program. A preschool program for the National ECEC Collection is defined as a structured, play based learning program, delivered by a degree qualified teacher, primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling. The year before full time schooling is a term used to describe the ‘preschool’ cohort, due to the varying delivery models of early childhood education in the different jurisdictions. This definition of a preschool program is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it, or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Programs may be delivered in a variety of service settings including separate preschools or kindergartens, long day care centres or in association with a school. Long day care centres that do not operate a preschool program are considered out of scope.  The operational collection scope of child information for the National ECEC Collection consists of all children who at 1 July were between 3 and 6 years of age (inclusive), are within scope of the collection if they were enrolled during the reference period at a preschool program. To be considered as enrolled, the child must have attended the preschool program for at least one hour during the reference period, or be absent due to illness or extended holiday leave and expected to return.  The collection date for the National ECEC Collection is the first Friday in August of each year. In 2012, the collection date for all jurisdictions was Friday, 3 August 2012, with a reference period of 30 July 2012 to 3 August 2012. Some jurisdictions preferred to incorporate a reference period of two weeks that included the collection date, to better reflect their preschool program delivery model.  A summary of jurisdictional collection reference periods for 2012 can be found within the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001).  Rates of the population are based on as a proportion of the estimated resident population collected by the ABS. | | **Timeliness** | The National ECEC Collection was conducted for the third time in 2012 and will continue to be conducted annually. Information from the 2012 collection was released within 8 months of the August 2012 reference period.  ABS population estimates used for the denominator of population rates are available each year. | | **Accuracy** | Data for the National ECEC Collection have been compiled according to the National standards outlined in the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) in order to maximise consistency of data across the various jurisdictional collections. Alignment with these standards has not been completely achieved by all jurisdictions for 2012, and care should be taken when comparison across jurisdictions are made. In addition, some jurisdictions were not able to provide the ABS with certain data elements as specified in the ECEC NMDS.  Data limitations for the 2012 collection include:   * A small level of under-coverage of the preschool programs in some sectors, particularly programs delivered to three year olds * Comprehensive child unit record level data not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non-government sector or unfunded preschools * Children enrolled in multiple preschool programs are not identifiable within all jurisdictions * Differences between data element collection methodologies and alignment to national data standards across jurisdictions.   Where information on the child’s usual place of residence is not available - that is, where insufficient information on the child’s address was collected or, where no address details have been provided, remoteness area in 2012 is to be assigned using the address of the service at which the child is enrolled. For more information on the collection methodologies and current data limitations for each state and territory, see the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001).  More information on the ECEC NMDS can be found on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website. | | **Coherence** | Due to the differing levels of coverage, collection methodologies and alignment with the ECEC NMDS across jurisdictions, the data presented in Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) may not be directly comparable across all jurisdictions.  Data for the proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling are based on the number of 4 year old children in the population, even though older or younger children can be enrolled in a preschool program. This can result in an overestimation of the proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling (for example, where enrolment rates exceed 100 per cent). | | **Accessibility** | The ABS publication Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) contains estimates of children enrolled in, and attending preschool in Australia collected through the National ECEC Collection.  If the information required is not available as a standard product or service, then ABS Consultancy Services can assist with customised services to suit specific needs. Inquiries should be made to the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070. | | **Interpretability** | National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001) contains detailed information on the data sources, terminology and other technical aspects associated with the National ECEC statistics. | | |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:   * Participation in preschool is not compulsory. This measure does not provide information on parental preferences for using preschool, or other factors, such as school starting age, which can affect use of preschool. * Comprehensive child unit record level data not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non-government sector or unfunded preschools. Child level data for Queensland is not available. Episode of enrolment data are used instead for Queensland. Children may be enrolled in more than one preschool program so will be counted more than once in episode counts where they are enrolled in more than one preschool program. * Preschool programs are provided in preschools and long day care centres. However, not all children undertaking a preschool program in a long day care setting in NSW are captured in the collection, resulting in an undercount for NSW. |

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### Children enrolled in preschool – Proportion of Indigenous children (by geographic location) who are enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling (national data only)

Data quality information for this indicator has been sourced from the Steering Committee’s report to the COAG Reform Council on the National Indigenous Reform Agreement (data supplied by ABS) with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Effectiveness |
| **Indicator** | Children enrolled in preschool |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  This measure is defined as the number of Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling, divided by the number of Indigenous children aged 4 years  Numerator:  Number of Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years as at 1 July, who are enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling  Denominator:  Projected number of Indigenous children aged 4 years  Computation:  Numerator divided by denominator (by remoteness areas, on a national basis only). |
| **Data source/s** | Numerator/s:  ABS (unpublished) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no. 4240.0)  Denominator/s:  ABS (unpublished) Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1991 to 2021 (cat. no. 3238.0). |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |
| **Institutional environment** | Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) is compiled from data from the National ECEC Collection. The National ECEC Collection is derived from administrative data provided by state and territory and Commonwealth government departments with responsibility for early childhood education and care. A comprehensive quality declaration for each jurisdiction can be found in the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001).  Estimated resident population data are obtained from the ABS.  Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1991 to 2021 (cat. no. 3238.0) is compiled based on experimental population estimates derived from the 2006 Census of Population and Housing and Post Enumeration Survey, and assumptions derived from analysis of data sourced from a variety of institutional environments. Detailed quality information for this product is available via the ABS website, see Data Quality Statement.  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see ABS Institutional Environment. |
| **Relevance** | In 2008, the importance of education in the early years of a child's development was formally acknowledged through the Council of Australian Governments' endorsement of a new National Partnership on Early Childhood Education (NP ECE). The National ECEC Collection was conducted for the third time in 2012 as part of data improvement projects under the NP ECE and the National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care (NIA ECEC). The aim of the National ECEC Collection is to provide comparable state and territory statistics on early childhood education. Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) presents counts of children enrolled and attending preschool programs and episodes of enrolment and attendance at preschool programs across Australia.  The scope of the collection consists of all service providersdelivering apreschool program. A preschool program for the National ECEC Collection is defined as a structured, play based learning program, delivered by a degree qualified teacher, primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling. This is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it, or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Programs may be delivered in a variety of service settings including separate preschools or kindergartens, long day care centres or in association with a school. Long day care centres that do not operate a preschool program are considered out of scope.  The operational collection scope of child information for the National ECEC Collection consists of all children who at 1 July were between 3 and 6 years of age (inclusive), are within scope of the collection if they were enrolled during the reference period at a preschool program. To be considered as enrolled, the child must have attended the preschool program for at least one hour during the reference period, or be absent due to illness or extended holiday leave and expected to return.  The collection date for the National ECEC Collection is the first Friday in August of each year. In 2012, the collection date for all jurisdictions was Friday, 3 August 2012, with a reference period of 30 July 2012 to 3 August 2012. Some jurisdictions preferred to incorporate a reference period of two weeks that included the collection date, to better reflect their preschool program delivery model.  A summary of jurisdictional collection reference periods for 2012 can be found within the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001).  Remoteness areas are based upon the ABS’ Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) 2006. The ASGC is based on the 2006 Census of Population and Housing. |
| **Timeliness** | The National ECEC Collection was conducted for the third time in 2012 and will continue to be conducted annually. Information from the 2012 collection was released within 8 months of the August 2012 reference period. |
| **Accuracy** | Data for the National ECEC Collection have been compiled according to the national standards outlined in the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) in order to maximise consistency of data across the various jurisdictional collections. Alignment with these standards has not been completely achieved by all jurisdictions for 2012 and care should be taken when comparison of estimates across jurisdictions are made. In addition, some jurisdictions were not able to provide the ABS with certain data elements as specified in the ECEC NMDS.  Data limitations for the 2012 collection include:   * A small level of under-coverage of the preschool programs in some sectors, particularly programs delivered to three year olds * Comprehensive child unit record level data not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non-government sector or unfunded preschools * Children enrolled in multiple preschool programs are not identifiable within all jurisdictions * Differences between data element collection methodologies and alignment to national data standards across jurisdictions.   Care needs to be taken interpreting data relating to Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander children due to reporting issues associated with both the identification and reporting of Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander status.  Where information on the child’s usual place of residence is not available – that is, where insufficient information on the child’s address was collected, where no address details have been provided, or no unit record level information exists - remoteness in 2012 is to be assigned using the address of the service at which the child is enrolled.  For more information on the collection methodologies and current data limitations for each state and territory, see the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001).  More information on the ECEC NMDS can be found on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website. |
| **Coherence** | Due to the differing levels of coverage, collection methodologies and alignment with the ECEC NMDS across jurisdictions, the data presented in Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) may not be directly comparable across all jurisdictions.  The data differences in the collection scope and counting rules for the National ECEC Collection mean that the data presented in the publication are not strictly comparable to data published in other national or state/territory publications.  All data providers have been engaged in data development activities to improve both collection coverage and data quality. As a consequence, some data items may not be comparable access years. See the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001) for more information |
| **Accessibility** | The ABS publication Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) contains estimates of children enrolled in, and attending preschool in Australia collected through the National ECEC Collection.  If the information required is not available as a standard product or service, then ABS Consultancy Services can assist with customised services to suit specific needs. Inquiries should be made to the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070. |
| **Interpretability** | National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001) contains detailed information on the data sources, terminology and other technical aspects associated with the National ECEC statistics. |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | These data are provided on a national basis by remoteness areas ‘major cities’, ‘inner/outer regional areas’ and ‘remote/very remote areas’. Data for the numbers of Indigenous children enrolled in preschool are from the national ECEC Collection. The data cover government and non-government preschool programs and reflect enrolment during the reference period. The number of Indigenous children is derived from ABS population data.  Data for this measure are not provided on a jurisdiction basis. |

### Children attending preschool – Proportion of children who are attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Secretariat in consultation with the ABS, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Effectiveness |
| **Indicator** | Children attending preschool |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  Proportion of children attending a preschool program  Numerator:  Number of children aged 4 and 5 years attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling.  Denominator:  Estimated number of children aged 4 years, as at 30 June.  Computation:  The number of children attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling divided by the estimated number of children aged 4 years. |
| **Data source/s** | Numerator/s:  ABS (unpublished) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no. 4240.0).  Denominator/s:  ABS (unpublished) *Australian Demographic Statistics* (cat. no. 3101.0). |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Institutional environment** | Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) is compiled from data from the National ECEC Collection. The National ECEC Collection is derived from administrative data provided by state and territory and Commonwealth government departments with responsibility for early childhood education and care. A comprehensive quality declaration for each jurisdiction can be found in the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001).  Estimated resident population data are obtained from the ABS.  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see ABS Institutional Environment. | | **Relevance** | In 2008, the importance of education in the early years of a child's development was formally acknowledged through the Council of Australian Governments' endorsement of a new National Partnership on Early Childhood Education (NP ECE). The National ECEC Collection was conducted for the third time in 2012 as part of data improvement projects under the NP ECE and the National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care (NIA ECEC). The aim of the National ECEC Collection is to provide comparable state and territory statistics on early childhood education. Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) presents counts of children enrolled and attending preschool programs and episodes of enrolment and attendance at preschool programs across Australia.  The scope of the collection consists of all service providersdelivering apreschool program. A preschool program for the National ECEC Collection is defined as a structured, play based learning program, delivered by a degree qualified teacher, primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling. The year before full time schooling is a term used to describe the ‘preschool’ cohort, due to the varying delivery models of early childhood education in the different jurisdictions. This definition of a preschool program is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it, or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Programs may be delivered in a variety of service settings including separate preschools or kindergartens, long day care centres or in association with a school. Long day care centres that do not operate a preschool program are considered out of scope.  The operational collection scope of child information for the National ECEC Collection consists of all children who at 1 July were between 3 and 6 years of age (inclusive), are within scope of the collection if they were enrolled during the reference period at a preschool program. To be considered as enrolled, the child must have attended the preschool program for at least one hour during the reference period, or be absent due to illness or extended holiday leave and expected to return.  The National ECEC Collection was conducted for the third time in 2012 and will continue to be conducted annually. The collection date for the National ECEC Collection is the first Friday in August of each year. In 2012, the collection date for all jurisdictions was Friday, 3 August 2012, with a reference period of 30 July 2012 to 3 August 2012. Some jurisdictions preferred to incorporate a reference period of two weeks that included the collection date, to better reflect their preschool program delivery model.  The first Friday in August will be the collection date for future collections, with jurisdictions determining their reference periods ensuring that they include the collection date. A summary of jurisdictional collection reference periods for 2012 can be found within the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001).  Rates of the population are based on as a proportion of the estimated resident population collected by the ABS. | | **Timeliness** | The National ECEC Collection was conducted for the third time in 2012 and will continue to be conducted annually. Information from the 2012 collection was released within 8 months of the August 2012 reference period.  ABS population estimates used for the denominator of population rates are available each year. | | **Accuracy** | Data for the National ECEC Collection have been compiled according to the National standards outlined in the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) in order to maximise consistency of data across the various jurisdictional collections. Alignment with these standards has not been completely achieved by all jurisdictions for 2012, and care should be taken when comparison across jurisdictions are made. In addition, some jurisdictions were not able to provide the ABS with certain data elements as specified in the ECEC NMDS.  Data limitations for the 2012 collection include:   * A small level of under-coverage of the preschool programs in some sectors, particularly programs delivered to three year olds * Comprehensive child unit record level data not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non-government sector or unfunded preschools * Children enrolled in multiple preschool programs are not identifiable within all jurisdictions * Differences between data element collection methodologies and alignment to national data standards across jurisdictions.   Where information on the child’s usual place of residence is not available - that is, where insufficient information on the child’s address was collected or, where no address details have been provided, remoteness area in 2012 is to be assigned using the address of the service at which the child is enrolled. For more information on the collection methodologies and current data limitations for each state and territory, see the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001).  More information on the ECEC NMDS can be found on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website. | | **Coherence** | Due to the differing levels of coverage, collection methodologies and alignment with the ECEC NMDS across jurisdictions, the data presented in Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) may not be directly comparable across all jurisdictions.  Data for the proportion of children attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling are based on the number of 4 year old children in the population, even though older or younger children can attend a preschool program. This can result in an overestimation of the proportion of children attending preschool in the year before full time schooling. | | **Accessibility** | The ABS publication Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) contains estimates of children enrolled in, and attending preschool in Australia collected through the National ECEC Collection.  If the information required is not available as a standard product or service, then ABS Consultancy Services can assist with customised services to suit specific needs. Inquiries should be made to the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070. | | **Interpretability** | National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001) contains detailed information on the data sources, terminology and other technical aspects associated with the National ECEC statistics. | | |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:   * Participation in preschool is not compulsory. This measure does not provide information on parental preferences for using preschool, or other factors, such as school starting age, which can affect use of preschool. * Comprehensive child unit record level data not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non-government sector or unfunded preschools. Child level data for Queensland is not available. Episode of enrolment data are used instead for Queensland. Children may be enrolled in more than one preschool program so will be counted more than once in episode counts where they are enrolled in more than one preschool program. * Preschool programs are provided in preschools and long day care centres. However, not all children undertaking a preschool program in a long day care setting in NSW are captured in the collection, resulting in an undercount for NSW. |

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### Children attending preschool – Proportion of Indigenous children (by geographic location) who are attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling (national data only)

Data quality information for this indicator has been sourced from the Steering Committee’s report to the COAG Reform Council on the National Indigenous Reform Agreement (data supplied by ABS) with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Effectiveness |
| **Indicator** | Children attending preschool |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  This measure is defined as the number of Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling, divided by the number of Indigenous children aged 4 years  Numerator:  Number of Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years as at 1 July, who are attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling  Denominator:  Projected number of Indigenous children aged 4 years  Computation:  Numerator divided by denominator (by remoteness areas, on a national basis only). |
| **Data source/s** | Numerator/s:  ABS (unpublished) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no. 4240.0)  Denominator/s:  ABS (unpublished) Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1991 to 2021 (cat. no. 3238.0). |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |
| **Institutional environment** | Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) is compiled from data from the National ECEC Collection. The National ECEC Collection is derived from administrative data provided by state and territory and Commonwealth government departments with responsibility for early childhood education and care. A comprehensive quality declaration for each jurisdiction can be found in the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001).  Estimated resident population data are obtained from the ABS.  Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1991 to 2021 (cat. no. 3238.0) is compiled based on experimental population estimates derived from the 2006 Census of Population and Housing and Post Enumeration Survey, and assumptions derived from analysis of data sourced from a variety of institutional environments. Detailed quality information for this product is available via the ABS website, see Data Quality Statement.  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see ABS Institutional Environment. |
| **Relevance** | In 2008, the importance of education in the early years of a child's development was formally acknowledged through the Council of Australian Governments' endorsement of a new National Partnership on Early Childhood Education (NP ECE). The National ECEC Collection was conducted for the third time in 2012 as part of data improvement projects under the NP ECE and the National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care (NIA ECEC). The aim of the National ECEC Collection is to provide comparable state and territory statistics on early childhood education. Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) presents counts of children enrolled and attending preschool programs and episodes of enrolment and attendance at preschool programs across Australia.  The scope of the collection consists of all service providersdelivering apreschool program. A preschool program for the National ECEC Collection is defined as a structured, play based learning program, delivered by a degree qualified teacher, primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling. This is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it, or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Programs may be delivered in a variety of service settings including separate preschools or kindergartens, long day care centres or in association with a school. Long day care centres that do not operate a preschool program are considered out of scope.  The operational collection scope of child information for the National ECEC Collection consists of all children who at 1 July were between 3 and 6 years of age (inclusive), are within scope of the collection if they were enrolled during the reference period at a preschool program. To be considered as enrolled, the child must have attended the preschool program for at least one hour during the reference period, or be absent due to illness or extended holiday leave and expected to return.  The collection date for the National ECEC Collection is the first Friday in August of each year. In 2012, the collection date for all jurisdictions was Friday, 3 August 2012, with a reference period of 30 July 2012 to 3 August 2012. Some jurisdictions preferred to incorporate a reference period of two weeks that included the collection date, to better reflect their preschool program delivery model.  A summary of jurisdictional collection reference periods for 2012 can be found within the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001).  Remoteness areas are based upon the ABS’ Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) 2006. The ASGC is based on the 2006 Census of Population and Housing. |
| **Timeliness** | The National ECEC Collection was conducted for the third time in 2012 and will continue to be conducted annually. Information from the 2012 collection was released within 8 months of the August 2012 reference period. |
| **Accuracy** | Data for the National ECEC Collection have been compiled according to the national standards outlined in the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) in order to maximise consistency of data across the various jurisdictional collections. Alignment with these standards has not been completely achieved by all jurisdictions for 2012 and care should be taken when comparison of estimates across jurisdictions are made. In addition, some jurisdictions were not able to provide the ABS with certain data elements as specified in the ECEC NMDS.  Data limitations for the 2012 collection include:   * A small level of under-coverage of the preschool programs in some sectors, particularly programs delivered to three year olds * Comprehensive child unit record level data not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non-government sector or unfunded preschools * Children enrolled in multiple preschool programs are not identifiable within all jurisdictions * Differences between data element collection methodologies and alignment to national data standards across jurisdictions.   Care needs to be taken interpreting data relating to Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander children due to reporting issues associated with both the identification and reporting of Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander status.  Where information on the child’s usual place of residence is not available – that is, where insufficient information on the child’s address was collected, where no address details have been provided, or no unit record level information exists - remoteness in 2012 is to be assigned using the address of the service at which the child is enrolled.  For more information on the collection methodologies and current data limitations for each state and territory, see the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001).  More information on the ECEC NMDS can be found on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website. |
| **Coherence** | Due to the differing levels of coverage, collection methodologies and alignment with the ECEC NMDS across jurisdictions, the data presented in Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) may not be directly comparable across all jurisdictions.  The data differences in the collection scope and counting rules for the National ECEC Collection mean that the data presented in the publication are not strictly comparable to data published in other national or state/territory publications.  All data providers have been engaged in data development activities to improve both collection coverage and data quality. As a consequence, some data items may not be comparable access years. See the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001) for more information |
| **Accessibility** | The ABS publication Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) contains estimates of children enrolled in, and attending preschool in Australia collected through the National ECEC Collection.  If the information required is not available as a standard product or service, then ABS Consultancy Services can assist with customised services to suit specific needs. Inquiries should be made to the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070. |
| **Interpretability** | National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001) contains detailed information on the data sources, terminology and other technical aspects associated with the National ECEC statistics. |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | These data are provided on a national basis by remoteness areas ‘major cities’, ‘inner/outer regional areas’ and ‘remote/very remote areas’. Data for the numbers of Indigenous children attending preschool are from the National ECEC Collection. The data cover government and non-government preschool programs and reflect attendance during the reference period. The number of Indigenous children is derived from ABS population data.  Data for this measure are not provided on a jurisdiction basis. |

### Non-standard hours of care in child care services

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Australian Government Department of Education, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Effectiveness |
| **Indicator** | Non-standard hours of care in child care services |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  The proportion of approved child care services providing non-standard hours of care. The definition of non-standard hours is according to the current 10 hour basis (or equivalent by service type) as provided in section 3.6.  Numerator:  Number of approved child care services providing non-standard hours of care by service model (centre-based long day care, vacation care, occasional care, family day care, outside school hours care and other care).  Denominator:  Total number of approved child care services by service model (centre-based long day care, vacation care, occasional care, family day care, outside school hours care and other care).  Computation:  The number of approved child care services providing non-standard hours of care divided by the total number of approved service providers. Calculated separately for each service model (centre-based long day care, vacation care, occasional care, family day care, outside school hours care and other care). |
| **Data source/s** | Numerator/s:  National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census (Department of Education unpublished) (for centre-based long day care, vacation care, occasional care and outside of school hours care, but not family day care or other care)  CCMS (Department of Education unpublished) (for family day care and other care)  Denominator/s:  National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census (Department of Education unpublished); CCMS (Department of Education unpublished) |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |
| **Institutional environment** | CCMS data are collected by the DSS under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act. The Department of Education engaged the Social Research Centre to conduct the National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census.  Data from CCMS and the National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census are compiled by the Department of Education. |
| **Relevance** | Approved child care service data, collected at a service level and geocoded and boundary tagged, so all geographies are available. |
| **Timeliness** | Data are collected weekly, available since services transitioned to CCMS between 2008 and June 2009. Data are reported on a quarterly basis. The National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census is conducted every three years and therefore service types reported from the National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census will be reported only every three years. |
| **Accuracy** | Data sourced from CCMS are collected via an electronic administrative system. Data sourced from the National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census are collected via a compulsory survey of child care services. |
| **Coherence** | From 2013 some data items are sourced differently to others. For those affected service types this introduces a break in time-series.  Data sourced from the CCMS are based on the number of services that have received non-standard hours of Child Care Benefit (CCB) during the reference period. Alternatively, data sourced from the National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census are based on opening hours. Those services will therefore be counted based on the availability of care, not just the actual delivery of care. |
| **Accessibility** | Data at the service level is protected under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act. To date data have only been released for purposes of RoGS reporting. |
| **Interpretability** | A high or increasing proportion of services providing non-standard hour of care can suggest a greater flexibility of services to meet the needs of families.  Care should be taken when interpreting results because information is not provided on the demand for non-standard hours of care or whether available non-standard hours services meet the needs of users. |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:   * This indicator does not provide information on the demand for non‑standard hours of care. * This indicator does not provide information on how non‑standard hours services meet the needs of users. |

### Child care service costs

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Australian Government Department of Education, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Effectiveness |
| **Indicator** | Child care service costs |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  The median weekly cost of Australian Government approved child care services for 50 hours of care by service model (centre based long day care and family day care). |
| **Data source/s** | Department of Education (unpublished) |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |
| **Institutional environment** | Australian government approved child care services data are collected through the CCMS by the DSS under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act. These data are compiled for RoGS by the Department of Education. |
| **Relevance** | Australian government approved child care services data are collected at the service level and geocoded and boundary tagged, so all geographies are available. |
| **Timeliness** | Australian government approved child care services data are collected weekly, available since services transitioned to reporting under the CCMS between 2008 and June 2009. Data are reported on a quarterly basis. |
| **Accuracy** | Median costs are based on 50 hours of care in the reference week. |
| **Coherence** | Australian government approved child care services has been consistent since the introduction of the CCMS. The definitions remain unchanged. |
| **Accessibility** | The Australian government approved child care data at the service level is protected under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act legislation. To date data have only been released for purposes of RoGS reporting. |
| **Interpretability** | Median costs represent the middle value of the range of costs.  Provided the service quality is held constant, lower service costs are desirable.  Cost 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 across services. Variation in costs 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 Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:   * Provided the service quality is held constant, lower service costs are desirable. * Cost 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 across services. Variation in costs 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. |

### Preschool service costs

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Secretariat in consultation with the ABS, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Effectiveness |
| **Indicator** | Preschool service costs |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  The median per hour preschool cost per child (after subsidies). |
| **Data source/s** | ABS (unpublished) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no. 4240.0) |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |
| **Institutional environment** | Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) is compiled from data from the National ECEC Collection. The National ECEC Collection is derived from administrative data provided by state and territory and Commonwealth government departments with responsibility for early childhood education and care. A comprehensive quality declaration for each jurisdiction can be found in the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001).  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see ABS Institutional Environment. |
| **Relevance** | In 2008, the importance of education in the early years of a child's development was formally acknowledged through the Council of Australian Governments' endorsement of a new National Partnership on Early Childhood Education (NP ECE). The National ECEC Collection was conducted for the third time in 2012 as part of data improvement projects under the NP ECE and the National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care (NIA ECEC). The aim of the National ECEC Collection is to provide comparable state and territory statistics on early childhood education. Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) presents counts of children enrolled and attending preschool programs and episodes of enrolment and attendance at preschool programs across Australia.  The scope of the collection consists of all service providersdelivering apreschool program. A preschool program for the National ECEC Collection is defined as a structured, play based learning program, delivered by a degree qualified teacher, primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling. This is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it, or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Programs may be delivered in a variety of service settings including separate preschools or kindergartens, long day care centres or in association with a school. Long day care centres that do not operate a preschool program are considered out of scope.  The operational collection scope of child information for the National ECEC Collection consists of all children who at 1 July were between 3 and 6 years of age (inclusive), are within scope of the collection if they were enrolled during the reference period at a preschool program. To be considered as enrolled, the child must have attended the preschool program for at least one hour during the reference period, or be absent due to illness or extended holiday leave and expected to return.  The National ECEC Collection was conducted for the third time in 2012 and will continue to be conducted annually. The collection date for the National ECEC Collection is the first Friday in August of each year. In 2012, the collection date for all jurisdictions was Friday, 3 August 2012, with a reference period of 30 July 2012 to 3 August 2012. Some jurisdictions preferred to incorporate a reference period of two weeks that included the collection date, to better reflect their preschool program delivery model.  The first Friday in August will be the collection date for future collections, with jurisdictions determining their reference periods ensuring that they include the collection date. A summary of jurisdictional collection reference periods for 2012 can be found within the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001). |
| **Timeliness** | The National ECEC Collection was conducted for the third time in 2012 and will continue to be conducted annually. Information from the 2012 collection was released within 8 months of the August 2012 reference period. |
| **Accuracy** | Data for the National ECEC Collection have been compiled according to the National standards outlined in the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) in order to maximise consistency of data across the various jurisdictional collections. Alignment with these standards has not been completely achieved by all jurisdictions for 2012, and care should be taken when comparison across jurisdictions are made. In addition, some jurisdictions were not able to provide the ABS with certain data elements as specified in the ECEC NMDS.  Data limitations for the 2012 collection include:   * A small level of under-coverage of the preschool programs in some sectors, particularly programs delivered to three year olds * Comprehensive child unit record level data not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non-government sector or unfunded preschools * Children enrolled in multiple preschool programs are not identifiable within all jurisdictions * Differences between data element collection methodologies and alignment to national data standards across jurisdictions.   Where information on the child’s usual place of residence is not available - that is, where insufficient information on the child’s address was collected or, where no address details have been provided, remoteness area in 2012 is to be assigned using the address of the service at which the child is enrolled. For more information on the collection methodologies and current data limitations for each state and territory, see the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001).  More information on the ECEC NMDS can be found on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website. |
| **Coherence** | Due to the differing levels of coverage, collection methodologies and alignment with the ECEC NMDS across jurisdictions, the data presented in Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) may not be directly comparable across all jurisdictions. |
| **Accessibility** | The ABS publication Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) contains estimates of children enrolled in, and attending preschool in Australia collected through the National ECEC Collection.  If the information required is not available as a standard product or service, then ABS Consultancy Services can assist with customised services to suit specific needs. Inquiries should be made to the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070. |
| **Interpretability** | National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001) contains detailed information on the data sources, terminology and other technical aspects associated with the National ECEC statistics. |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:   * Provided the service quality and quantity is held constant, lower hourly costs represent more affordable preschool. * Various factors influence preschool costs and care needs to be exercised when interpreting results, as: * 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. Some preschool programs, particularly those offered at government preschools have no tuition fees * 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 * Comprehensive child unit record level data not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non-government sector or unfunded preschools. Child level data for Queensland are not available and median costs are not published. * Cost information is not collected for all preschool programs. Caution should therefore be used when interpreting median costs. |

### Staff quality in early childhood education and care – Proportion of workers delivering preschool programs who are at least three year university trained and early childhood qualified

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Secretariat in consultation with the ABS, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Effectiveness |
| **Indicator** | Staff quality in early childhood education and care |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  The proportion of workers delivering preschool programs who are at least three year university trained and early childhood qualified.  Numerator:  Number of episodes of workers (all roles) delivering a preschool program with qualification of Graduate 4 years and above or Bachelor degree pass (3 years or equivalent).  Denominator:  Number of episodes of workers (all roles) delivering a preschool program (i.e. irrespective of workers qualifications).  Computation:  The number of episodes of workers delivering a preschool program who are at least three year university trained and early childhood qualified divided by the total number of episodes of workers delivering a preschool program. |
| **Data source/s** | Numerator/denominator:  ABS (unpublished) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no. 4240.0) |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Institutional environment** | Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) is compiled from data from the National ECEC Collection. The National ECEC Collection is derived from administrative data provided by state and territory and Commonwealth government departments with responsibility for early childhood education and care. A comprehensive quality declaration for each jurisdiction can be found in the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001).  Estimated resident population data are obtained from the ABS.  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see ABS Institutional Environment. | | **Relevance** | In 2008, the importance of education in the early years of a child's development was formally acknowledged through the Council of Australian Governments' endorsement of a new National Partnership on Early Childhood Education (NP ECE). The National ECEC Collection was conducted for the third time in 2012 as part of data improvement projects under the NP ECE and the National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care (NIA ECEC). The aim of the National ECEC Collection is to provide comparable state and territory statistics on early childhood education. Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) presents counts of children enrolled and attending preschool programs and episodes of enrolment and attendance at preschool programs across Australia.  The scope of the collection consists of all service providersdelivering apreschool program. A preschool program for the National ECEC Collection is defined as a structured, play based learning program, delivered by a degree qualified teacher, primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling. This is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it, or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Programs may be delivered in a variety of service settings including separate preschools or kindergartens, long day care centres or in association with a school. Long day care centres that do not operate a preschool program are considered out of scope.  The operational collection scope of worker information for the National ECEC Collection consists of all paid employees who were working at an in-scope service provider during the reference period are in-scope of the collection. This includes both contact and non-contact workers, and is irrespective of whether the worker delivered a preschool program during the reference week.  The National ECEC Collection was conducted for the third time in 2012 and will continue to be conducted annually. The collection date for the National ECEC Collection is the first Friday in August of each year. In 2012, the collection date for all jurisdictions was Friday, 3 August 2012, with a reference period of  30 July 2012 to 3 August 2012. Some jurisdictions preferred to incorporate a reference period of two weeks that included the collection date, to better reflect their preschool program delivery model.  The first Friday in August will be the collection date for future collections, with jurisdictions determining their reference periods ensuring that they include the collection date. A summary of jurisdictional collection reference periods for 2012 can be found within the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001). | | **Timeliness** | The National ECEC Collection was conducted for the third time in 2012 and will continue to be conducted annually. Information from the 2012 collection was released within 8 months of the August 2012 reference period. | | **Accuracy** | Data for the National ECEC Collection have been compiled according to the National standards outlined in the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) in order to maximise consistency of data across the various jurisdictional collections. Alignment with these standards has not been completely achieved by all jurisdictions for 2012, and care should be taken when comparison across jurisdictions are made. In addition, some jurisdictions were not able to provide the ABS with certain data elements as specified in the ECEC NMDS.  Data limitations for the 2012 collection include:   * Incomplete and inconsistent reporting of workers and worker qualifications * A small level of under-coverage of the preschool programs in some sectors * Comprehensive child unit record level data not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non-government sector or unfunded preschools * Children enrolled in multiple preschool programs are not identifiable within all jurisdictions * Differences between data element collection methodologies and alignment to National data standards across jurisdictions.   Where information on the child’s usual place of residence is not available - that is, where insufficient information on the child’s address was collected or, where no address details have been provided, remoteness area in 2012 is to be assigned using the address of the service at which the child is enrolled. For more information on the collection methodologies and current data limitations for each state and territory, see the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001).  More information on the ECEC NMDS can be found on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website.  Worker level data in the National ECEC Collection did not include a unique identifier and as a consequence they can only be reported as episodes of workers delivering preschool programs. Use of episode data means that workers may be counted more than once if they work for multiple providers. In addition, no worker data are collected through the Child Care Management System to populate the National ECEC Collection for the long day care sector. This results in a significant undercount of the actual worker population. The undercount may not be equal for all states and territories and will depend on the relative size of the long day care sector in each state and territory. | | **Coherence** | Due to the differing levels of coverage, collection methodologies and alignment with the ECEC NMDS across jurisdictions, the data presented in Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) may not be directly comparable across all jurisdictions. | | **Accessibility** | The ABS publication Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0) contains estimates of children enrolled in, and attending preschool in Australia collected through the National ECEC Collection.  If the information required is not available as a standard product or service, then ABS Consultancy Services can assist with customised services to suit specific needs. Inquiries should be made to the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070. | | **Interpretability** | National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2012 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001) contains detailed information on the data sources, terminology and other technical aspects associated with the National ECEC statistics. | | |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:   * No worker information is available from the CCMS, the primary source data for long day care sector in many jurisdictions. As a result, the data represent an undercount of the actual worker population. |

### Achievement of the *National Quality Standard*

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Secretariat in consultation with the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).

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| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Effectiveness |
| **Indicator** | Achievement of the *National Quality Standard* |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  The proportion of approved services with a rating of ‘meeting NQS’ or ‘exceeding NQS’ for each of seven quality areas:   * Quality area 1 educational program and practice * Quality area 2 children’s health and safety * Quality area 3 physical environment * Quality area 4 staffing arrangements * Quality area 5 relationships with children * Quality area 6 partnerships with families and communities * Quality area 7 leadership and service management.   Numerator:  Number of approved services with a rating of ‘meeting NQS’ or ‘exceeding NQS’ for each quality area.  Denominator:  Number of approved services with a quality rating.  Computation:  The number of approved services with a rating of ‘meeting NQS’ or ‘exceeding NQS’ for each quality area divided by all approved services with a quality rating. |
| **Data source/s** | Numerator/denominator:  ACECQA NQF Snapshot Q2 2013. |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |
| **Institutional environment** | The National Quality Framework (NQF) was introduced on 1 January 2012, with the assessments beginning in mid-2012. The NQF operates under an applied law system, comprising the Education and Care Services National Law and Education and Care Services National Regulations. The *National Quality Standard* (NQS) is located at schedule 1 of the National Regulations.  The NQS is a key aspect of the NQF and sets a national benchmark for early childhood education and care, and outside school hours care services in Australia.  ACECQA guides the implementation of the NQF nationally and ensures consistency in delivery.  South Australia has set up a new independent regulatory authority to look after children’s education and care services, while other regulatory authorities mainly operate within existing state and territory government departments. |
| **Relevance** | The NQF applies to most long day care, family day care, outside school hours care and preschools in Australia. NQF information is entered into the national database – the NQA ITS. The NQS promotes continuous quality improvement.  The data covers services with a quality rating. At 30 June 2013, 19 per cent of services have a quality rating. Future reports will incorporate quality ratings data for an increased proportion of services.  Western Australia has completed the smallest proportion of quality ratings. The assessment and rating process started later there because the law only came into effect in Western Australia in August 2012. South Australia also has a relatively lower proportion of quality rated services than other jurisdictions. |
| **Timeliness** | Quality ratings are collected on an ongoing basis. A quarterly report is published which provides analysis on children’s education and care services assessed and rated against the NQS in Australia at the end of each quarter.  As the NQF progresses, every service in the country will be assessed to make sure it meets the new quality standard.  Reporting is based on services rated up to the most recent point in time  (30 June 2013). Any service that received a final quality rating within 14 days of the report cut-off data (30 June 2013) was excluded from the total reported population of approved and rated services. |
| **Coherence** | Every service receives a rating for seven quality areas and an overall rating. There are five rating levels within the national quality rating and assessment process.  Some jurisdictions have rated only a small number of services and the services rated are not representative of all services. |
| **Accessibility** | A quarterly snapshot report is published by ACECQA which provides analysis on children’s education and care services assessed and rated against the NQS in Australia at the end of each quarter.  Ratings for services against each quality area and an overall rating are published on the national register of services on the ACECQA website and on the MyChild website. |
| **Interpretability** | The ACECQA website contains detailed information on the NQS and assessment and ratings. |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | Regulatory authorities in each jurisdiction differ in their approach to selecting services for quality rating data. The implication of quality rating services based on different approaches is that data are not representative of all education and care services nationwide. Therefore, it is inadvisable to draw conclusions about education and care services that are yet to be rated based on those that have been rated to date.  Reporting is based on services rated up to the most recent point in time (30 June 2013). As more services are assessed reporting will become increasingly comprehensive. It is currently based on the 19 per cent of services that have received a quality rating since the start of the assessment and ratings process in June 2012. |

### Total government recurrent expenditure on early childhood education and care per child in the community

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Secretariat, in consultation with the Australian Government Department of Education and State and Territory governments.

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| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Efficiency |
| **Indicator** | Total government recurrent expenditure on early childhood education and care per child in the community. |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  Australian Government and State and Territory government recurrent expenditure on early childhood education and care per child aged 0–12 years in the community.  Numerator:  Australian Government and State and Territory government recurrent expenditure on early childhood education and care.  Denominator:  Number of children aged 0–12 years in the community.  Computation:  Australian Government and State and Territory recurrent expenditure on early childhood education and care divided by the number of children aged 0–12 years in the community. |
| **Data source/s** | Numerator/s:  Department of Education and State and Territory governments (unpublished).  Denominator/s:  ABS (unpublished) *Australian Demographic Statistics* (cat. no. 3101.0). |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |
| **Institutional environment** | Australian Government child care data area collected by the Department of Education.  State and Territory child care and preschool data are collected by individual State and Territory departments.  Estimated resident population data are obtained from the ABS. For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, which cover this collection, please see ABS Institutional Environment. |
| **Relevance** | Government recurrent expenditure includes one-off, non-capital payments to peak agencies who support child care and preschool service providers.  Rates of the population are based on as a proportion of the estimated resident population collected by the ABS. |
| **Timeliness** | Government recurrent expenditure is available annually on a financial year basis.  ABS population estimates used for the denominator of population rates are available each year. |
| **Accuracy** | Australian Government data includes expenditure for some children aged greater than 12 years, including Indigenous children and children with special needs. Children can use more than one type of care. Children are counted once for each type of care they use. |
| **Coherence** | Australian Government recurrent expenditure covers child care services, whereas State and Territory government recurrent expenditure covers both child care and preschool services. Expenditure data per child are reported separately for the Australian Government and each State and Territory government, as well as total expenditure per child. |
| **Accessibility** | To date government recurrent expenditure data are unpublished and released for purposes of RoGS reporting. |
| **Interpretability** | 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 remain unchanged, lower expenditure per child can indicate greater efficiency of government expenditure. |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:   * All Australian Government recurrent expenditure reported for this indicator is provided for child care services. * All State and Territory government recurrent expenditure reported for this indicator is provided for both child care and preschool services. * Government expenditure includes recurrent expenditure on child care and preschool services. Unit cost data for early childhood education and care do not yet contain an estimate of user cost of capital. |

### Australian Government recurrent expenditure per child attending approved child care

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Australian Government Department of Education, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Efficiency |
| **Indicator** | Australian Government recurrent expenditure per child attending approved child care. |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  Australian Government recurrent expenditure per child aged 0–12 years attending Australian Government approved child care services in Australia.  Numerator:  Australian Government recurrent expenditure on approved child care services.  Denominator:  Number of children aged 0–12 years attending Australian government approved child care services.  Computation:  Australian Government recurrent expenditure on approved child care services divided by the number of children aged 0–12 years attending Australian government approved child care services. |
| **Data source/s** | Numerator/denominator:  Department of Education (unpublished). |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |
| **Institutional environment** | Australian Government approved child care services data are collected through the CCMS by the DSS under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act. These data are compiled for RoGS by the Department of Education. |
| **Relevance** | Australian Government approved child care services data are collected at the service level and geocoded and boundary tagged, so all geographies are available. |
| **Timeliness** | Australian Government approved child care services data are collected weekly, available since services transitioned to reporting under the CCMS between 2008 and June 2009. Data are reported on a quarterly basis. |
| **Accuracy** | Includes expenditure for some children aged greater than 12 years, including Indigenous children and children with special needs. Children can use more than one type of care. Children are counted once for each type of care they use. |
| **Coherence** | Australian government approved child care services has been consistent since the introduction of the CCMS. The definitions remain unchanged. |
| **Accessibility** | The Australian Government approved child care data at the service level is protected under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act legislation. To date data have only been released for purposes of RoGS reporting. |
| **Interpretability** | 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 remain unchanged, lower expenditure per child can indicate greater efficiency of government expenditure. |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:   * All Australian Government recurrent expenditure reported for this indicator is provided for child care services. * Government expenditure includes recurrent expenditure on child care. Unit cost data for early childhood education and care do not yet contain an estimate of user cost of capital. |

### Family work-related needs

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Secretariat in consultation with the ABS, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Outcome |
| **Indicator** | Family work-related needs |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition:  The proportion of children aged 0–12 years, who currently required any or additional formal child care where the main reason was work-related.  Numerator:  Number of children aged 0–12 years with the single parent, or both parents in a couple family, who currently required any or additional formal child care where the main reason for care was ‘work-related’.  Denominator:  All children aged 0–12 in families participating in the labour force.  Computation:  The number of children aged 0–12 years in families participating in the labour force who required any or additional formal child care for mainly work-related reasons, divided by all children aged 0–12 in families participating in the labour force. |
| **Data source/s** | Numerator/denominator  ABS (unpublished) *Childhood Education and Care, Australia, June 2011* (cat. no. 4402.0). |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |
| **Institutional environment** | Data are collected and compiled by the ABS through the Childhood Education and Care Survey (CEaCS), conducted throughout Australia in June 2011 as a supplement to the ABS monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS). Information was obtained through interviews conducted over a two-week period between 5‑18 June 2011.  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, which cover this collection, please see ABS Institutional Environment. |
| **Relevance** | The proportion of children aged 0–12 years in families participating in the labour force who required any or additional formal child care for mainly work related reasons are available by state/territory disaggregation. Data for Tasmania and the NT were not available for publication, but are included in the total for Australia.  All data are collected to standard classifications as stated in the CEaCS see ABS Explanatory notes |
| **Timeliness** | The reference period for the 2011 CEaCS data is June 2011 and was published in May 2012. From 1969 to 2005 the ABS conducted 12 Child Care Surveys (CCS) and from 1993 the survey has been run every three years. The ABS plans to conduct this survey again in June 2014. |
| **Accuracy** | Survey information was obtained through interviews with occupants of  5670 dwellings across Australia. The survey sample size for each jurisdiction was: NSW: 1332; Victoria: 1143; Queensland: 1010; SA: 641; WA: 768; Tasmania: 345; NT: 194 and the ACT: 237.  Since the estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of dwellings, they are subject to sampling variability. That is, they may differ from those estimates that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey.  Data that have relative standard errors above 25 per cent are indicated (by italics), and need to be used with caution. Data with relative standard errors greater than 50 per cent are considered too unreliable for general use and are not published here. The 95 per cent confidence interval (a reliability estimate) associated with each proportion estimate is reported (for example, 80.0 per cent ± 2.7 per cent). See section 2.5 of the ‘Statistical context’ for more information on confidence intervals and relative standard errors.  The survey was conducted in both urban and rural areas in all states and territories, but excluded persons living in very remote parts of Australia who would otherwise have been within scope of the survey. The exclusion of these persons will have only a minor impact on any aggregate estimates that are produced for individual states and territories, except in the NT where such persons account for around 23 per cent of the population.  Non-sampling errors include inaccuracies that occur because of imperfections in reporting by respondents and interviewers, and errors made in coding and processing data. These inaccuracies may occur in any enumeration whether it be a full count or a sample. Every effort is made to reduce the non-sampling error to a minimum by careful design of questionnaires, intensive training and supervision of interviewers, and efficient processing procedures. |
| **Coherence** | The survey excluded people living in very remote parts of Australia which may impact on data from the NT where this accounts for approximately 23 per cent of the total population. |
| **Accessibility** | Predominantly national level information are published in the CEaCS (cat. no. 4220.0) on the ABS website. A range of data cubes, with a focus on state/territory level information, is also available on the ABS website. Additional data can be accessed from the ABS. Costs are associated with additional data and vary depending on the type of request. |
| **Interpretability** | CEaCS (cat. no. 4402.0) includes Explanatory notes and a Glossary available on the ABS website. |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:   * Excludes persons living in very remote parts of Australia who would otherwise have been within scope of the survey. This affects the comparability of the NT results where such persons account for around 23 per cent of the population. * Since the estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of dwellings, they are subject to sampling variability. |

### Demand for formal care

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Secretariat in consultation with the ABS, with additional Steering Committee comments.\

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| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Outcome |
| **Indicator** | Demand for formal care |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  The proportion of children aged 0–12 years who required any or additional formal child care or preschool services currently or in the next 12 months.  Numerator:  All children aged 0–12 years who required any or additional formal child care or preschool services currently or in the next 12 months.  Denominator:  All children aged 0–12 years.  Computation:  The number of children aged 0–12 years who required any or additional formal child care or preschool currently or in the next 12 months divided by all children aged 0–12 years. |
| **Data source/s** | Numerator/denominator:  ABS (unpublished) *Childhood Education and Care, Australia, June 2011  (*cat. no. 4402.0) |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |
| **Institutional environment** | Data are collected and compiled by the ABS through the CEaCS, conducted throughout Australia in June 2011 as a supplement to the ABS monthly LFS. Information was obtained through interviews conducted over a two-week period between 5‑18 June 2011.  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, which cover this collection, please see ABS Institutional Environment. |
| **Relevance** | The proportion of children aged 0–12 years who required any or additional formal care or preschool services currently or in the next 12 months are available by state/territory disaggregation.  All data are collected to standard classifications as stated in the CEaCS see ABS Explanatory notes |
| **Timeliness** | The reference period for the 2011 CEaCS data is June 2011 and was published in May 2012. From 1969 to 2005 the ABS conducted 12 CCS and from 1993 the survey has been run every three years. The ABS plans to conduct this survey again in June 2014. |
| **Accuracy** | Survey information was obtained through interviews with occupants of  5670 dwellings across Australia. The survey sample size for each jurisdiction was: NSW: 1332; Victoria: 1143; Queensland: 1010; SA: 641; WA768; Tasmania: 345; NT: 194 and the ACT: 237.  Since the estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of dwellings, they are subject to sampling variability. That is, they may differ from those estimates that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey.  Data that have relative standard errors above 25 per cent are indicated (by italics), and need to be used with caution. Data with relative standard errors greater than 50 per cent are considered too unreliable for general use and are not published here. The 95 per cent confidence interval (a reliability estimate) associated with each proportion estimate is reported (for example, 80.0 per cent ± 2.7 per cent). See section 2.5 of the ‘Statistical context’ for more information on confidence intervals and relative standard errors.  The survey was conducted in both urban and rural areas in all states and territories, but excluded persons living in very remote parts of Australia who would otherwise have been within scope of the survey. The exclusion of these persons will have only a minor impact on any aggregate estimates that are produced for individual states and territories, except in the NT where such persons account for around 23 per cent of the population.  Non-sampling errors include inaccuracies that occur because of imperfections in reporting by respondents and interviewers, and errors made in coding and processing data. These inaccuracies may occur in any enumeration whether it be a full count or a sample. Every effort is made to reduce the non-sampling error to a minimum by careful design of questionnaires, intensive training and supervision of interviewers, and efficient processing procedures. |
| **Coherence** | In 2005, the Child Care Survey collected data based on additional care required in the previous 4 weeks. In 2008, the CEaCS collected this data item on the basis of currently required, while the 2011 data are for current requirements or in the next 12 months. Data are not directly comparable across time, and care should be taken in interpreting these data.  The survey excluded people living in very remote parts of Australia which may impact on data from the NT where this accounts for approximately 23 per cent of the total population. |
| **Accessibility** | Predominantly national level information are published in the CEaCS  (cat. no. 4220.0) on the ABS website. A range of data cubes, with a focus on state/territory level information, is also available on the ABS website. Additional data can be accessed from the ABS. Costs are associated with additional data and vary depending on the type of request. |
| **Interpretability** | CEaCS (cat. no. 4402.0) includes Explanatory notes and a Glossary available on the ABS website. |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:   * Excludes persons living in very remote parts of Australia who would otherwise have been within scope of the survey. This affects the comparability of the NT results where such persons account for around 23 per cent of the population. * Since the estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of dwellings, they are subject to sampling variability. |

### Out-of-pocket costs of child care

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Australian Government Department of Education, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Efficiency |
| **Indicator** | Out-of-pocket costs of child care |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  Out-of-pocket costs of child care is the proportion of weekly disposable income that families spend on child care services before and after the payment of child care subsidies (against gross annual income of $35 000; $55 000; $75 000; $95 000; $115 000 and $135 000).  Numerator:  Out-of-pocket cost  Denominator:  Disposable income  Computation:  The average cost of long day care for 1 child using 45 or more hours of care  (pro-rated to 50 hours) is calculated. Applicable rates of CCB are deducted, then the 50% CCR deduction is applied. The remaining figure is the out of pocket cost. This is then expressed as a percentage of disposable income for families in the various income ranges (Income is assumed to be split between 2 people on a 60:40 basis). |
| **Data source/s** | Numerator/denominator:  Department of Education (unpublished). |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |
| **Institutional environment** | Australian government approved child care services data are collected through the CCMS by the DSS under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act. These data are compiled for RoGS by the Department of Education. |
| **Relevance** | Australian government approved child care services data are collected at the service level and geocoded and boundary tagged, so all geographies are available. |
| **Timeliness** | Australian government approved child care services data are collected weekly, available since services transitioned to reporting under the CCMS between 2008 and June 2009. Data are reported on a quarterly basis. |
| **Coherence** | Australian government approved child care services has been consistent since the introduction of the CCMS. The definitions remain unchanged. |
| **Accessibility** | The Australian government approved child care data at the service level is protected under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act legislation. To date data have only been released for purposes of RoGS reporting. |
| **Interpretability** | 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 (including for example rates, rental costs, localised living costs) can influence child care costs. |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:   * Lower out-of-pocket cost 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 (including for example rates, rental costs and localised costs of living) can influence child care costs. |