# 3 Early childhood education and care

CONTENTS

3.1 Profile of ECEC 3.2

3.2 Framework of performance indicators 3.19

3.3 Key performance indicator results 3.22

3.4 Future directions in performance reporting 3.82

3.5 Jurisdictions’ comments 3.83

3.6 Definitions of key terms 3.93

3.7 List of attachment tables 3.98

3.8 References 3.104

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| Attachment tables |
| Attachment tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by a ‘3A’ prefix (for example, table 3A.1). A full list of attachment tables is provided at the end of this chapter, and the attachment tables are available from the Review website at www.pc.gov.au/gsp. |
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Early childhood education and care (ECEC) aims to meet the care, educational and developmental needs of children. In this chapter, child care services are those provided to children aged 0–12 years, usually by someone other than the child’s parents or guardian(s). Preschool services are provided to children, mainly in the year or two before they begin full time schooling.

Most of the data in this chapter relate to services that are supported by the Australian, State and Territory governments. Local governments also plan, fund and deliver ECEC. Due to data limitations, the only local government data included are those which involve Australian, State and Territory government funding and/or licensing.

Improvements to the reporting of ECEC in this edition include:

* the addition of counts of the number of services by service types, including counting preschool services delivered by long day care centres
* the addition of service information for the Australian Government Department of Education’s Budget Based Funded services
* additional measures for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children for the ‘children enrolled in preschool’ and ‘children attending preschool’ indicators, reporting data from the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection (NECECC)
* the addition of an overall National Quality Standard (NQS) quality rating measure in the ‘achievement of the NQS’ indicator. Data for this new measure and seven existing measures are reported for each State and Territory
* the addition of a new indicator ‘ECEC outcomes’. The indicator reports data from the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) on the proportion of children developmentally vulnerable on one or more AEDC domains, disaggregated by whether children received ECEC
* data quality information (DQI) for the new indicator ‘ECEC outcomes’.

## 3.1 Profile of ECEC

### Service overview

The ECEC sector provides families with access to a range of services for children based on children’s age and educational and care needs. The service types are grouped into the following broad categories, although each service (i.e. individual location or establishment) may offer more than one service type. For example, a single service may offer two different types of child care or a single service may offer a child care service type – long day care and the preschool service type.

1. *Long day care* — centre based child care services providing full time or part time care for children. Long day care primarily provides services for children aged 0–5 years. Some long day care may also provide preschool and kindergarten services (i.e. a preschool program) and outside school hours care (see below). The service may operate from stand‑alone or shared premises, including on school grounds.
2. *Family day care* — services providing small group care for children in the home environment of a registered carer. Care is primarily aimed at children aged 0–5 years, but primary school children may also receive care before and after school, and during school holidays. Carers work in partnership with scheme management and coordination unit staff.
3. *Outside school hours care* (OSHC) — services that provide care for school aged children before school, after school, during school holidays and on pupil free days. OSHC may use stand‑alone facilities, share school buildings and grounds and/or share facilities such as community halls. OSHC services may also provide other child care services such as occasional care.
4. *Occasional care* — services usually provided at a centre on an hourly or sessional basis for short periods or at irregular intervals for parents who need time to attend appointments, take care of personal matters, undertake casual and part time employment, study, attend sports and leisure centres or have temporary respite from full time parenting. These services provide developmental activities for children and are primarily aimed at children aged 0–5 years. Centres providing these services usually employ a mix of qualified and other staff.
5. *Other care* — government funded services to support children with additional needs or in particular situations (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from non‑English speaking backgrounds (NESB), children with disability or of parents with disability, and children living in regional and remote areas). Other care services may include mobile services, playschools and nannies. The Australian Government also funds and reports on a specific service type called in home care. In home care includes services where an approved carer provides care in the child’s home.
6. *Preschool* — services which deliver a preschool program. Preschool services may be stand‑alone preschools or kindergartens, preschools attached to a school or a child care service which also delivers preschool services, such as long day care centres. Long day care centres are the most numerous of the other ECEC service types that also deliver preschool services. In some states and territories more children participate in preschool programs delivered within a long day care setting than attend other preschools. Preschool services are counted and reported in addition to child care service types (see above). In some jurisdictions, preschool services are also delivered through distance education.

#### Preschool programs

A preschool program is defined in this Report as a structured, play‑based learning program, delivered by a degree qualified teacher, aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling. This definition of a preschool program is the same for all types of institutions which provide it, for all service settings and includes both government funded and privately provided preschool programs. Although varying delivery models of preschool programs exist across the different jurisdictions, the year before full time schooling (YBFS) is the term used to describe the ‘preschool’ program cohort that will transition to full time schooling in the following year.

Preschool programs delivered to children in the year or two before full time schooling are intended to be available for a minimum of 600 hours per calendar year (or 15 hours per week for 40 weeks). Children aged 3 to 6 years may be enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS, although the programs are typically delivered to 4 and 5 year old children. States and territories provide some 3 year old children with free or subsidised access to preschool programs. In some jurisdictions, 3 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children or disadvantaged children are entitled to free or subsidised access to a preschool program 2 years before they enter full time schooling, in addition to provision in the YBFS. In some jurisdictions, unfunded (except for some operational subsidies in the NT) preschool programs exist specifically for 3 year olds (i.e. earlier than the YBFS), which are delivered for fewer hours per week. These programs may be known as 3 year old kindergarten/preschool.

Preschool program names and starting ages for each State and Territory are presented in table 3.1.

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| Table 3.1 Preschool programs in Australia**a, b** |
| |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | State/Territory | Program name | Age of entry – preschool program | Age of entry ‑ school | | NSW | Preschool | Generally aged 4 and 5 | 5 by 31 July | | Vic | Kindergarten | 4 by 30 April | 5 by 30 April | | Qld | Kindergarten | 4 by 30 June | 5 by 30 June | | WA | Kindergarten | 4 by 30 June | 5 by 30 June | | SA | Preschool | 4 by 1 May | 5 by 1 May | | Tas | Kindergarten | 4 by 1 January | 5 by 1 January | | ACT | Preschool | 4 by 30 April | 5 by 30 April | | NT | Preschool | 4 by 30 June in urban areas and 3 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in remote areas | 5 by 30 June | |
| a Preschool programs can be delivered by services other than a stand‑alone preschool – for example in some jurisdictions the majority of preschool programs are delivered by long day care centres. See  table 3.6 for more information on preschool program delivery by service type.b This table specifically refers to programs designed for children in the year or two before full time schooling and does not include preschool programs designed for 3 year olds. |
| *Source*: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 3A.1. |
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#### Integrated Services

Integrated services fit along a continuum from cooperation (with some information sharing between services) to full integration (where services are merged). All states and territories provide ECEC in an integrated way, but the range of services offered, extent and model of integration differs across states and territories and between service providers.

The most common type of integrated service is preschool programs delivered within a long day care centre. The NECECC provides information on service numbers and usage of preschool programs. Box 3.1 contains more information on the NECECC.

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| Box 3.1 National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection |
| The National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection (NECECC) was conducted for the fourth time in 2013. The collection date is the first Friday in August each year, with a reference period of a week including the collection date. Some jurisdictions incorporate a reference period of two weeks that includes the collection date, to better reflect their preschool program delivery model.  The aim of the NECECC is to provide comparable state and territory statistics on early childhood education. Data have been compiled according to the national standards outlined in the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS). Improvements to the NECECC have been made since 2012, however, alignment with these standards has not yet been completely achieved by all jurisdictions, and care should be taken when making comparisons across jurisdictions.  The NECECC is derived from data provided by State and Territory and Australian government departments with responsibility for early childhood education and care (ECEC).  The scope of the collection consists of all service providers delivering a preschool program. A preschool program is defined as a structured, play‑based learning program, delivered by a degree qualified teacher, aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling, irrespective of the type of institution that provides the program, 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 not included. The Australian Bureau of Statistics’ (ABS) Preschool Provider Frame project, and subsequent 2013 Australian Government supplementary communication and collection activities, have improved the coverage of long day care service providers reported as delivering a preschool program within the Child Care Management System (CCMS). There is still an unknown level of under‑coverage of long day care services which are delivering a preschool program and are not currently captured in CCMS or state and territory ECEC collections.  All children who were aged between 3 and 6 years (inclusive) on 1 July in the collection year are included in the collection if they were enrolled in a preschool program during the reference period. 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.  All paid employees delivering a preschool program at an in‑scope service provider during the reference period are included in the collection.  Data from the NECECC were experimental until 2012. This Report has included NECECC data since 2012. |
| *Source*: ABS (2014). |
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Nationally in 2013 according to the NECECC there were 4283 preschools and 4371 long day care centres providing a preschool program. These long day care centres delivered half of all preschool programs in Australia (table 3.2).

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| Table 3.2 Summary of service types delivering a preschool program, August 2013 |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  |  | NSWc | Vic | Qld | WA | SA | Tas | ACT | NTd | Aust | | Service type (no.) | | | | | | | | | |  | | Preschoola | | 859 | 1 161 | 565 | 884 | 372 | 216 | 83 | 143 | 4 283 | | Long day careb | | 1 728 | 983 | 1 203 | 130 | 203 | 12 | 79 | 33 | 4 371 | | **Total preschool services** | | **2 587** | **2 144** | **1 768** | **1 014** | **575** | **228** | **162** | **176** | **8 654** | | Service type (proportion) | | | | | | | | | |  | | Preschoola | | 33.2 | 54.2 | 32.0 | 87.2 | 64.7 | 94.7 | 51.2 | 81.3 | 49.5 | | Long day careb | | 66.8 | 45.8 | 68.0 | 12.8 | 35.3 | 5.3 | 48.8 | 18.8 | 50.5 | | **Total preschool services** | | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | |
| a Preschool includes stand‑alone services and those attached to a school.b There is an undercount of long day care services that delivered a preschool program as those services are not mandated to provide data through the Child Care Management System (CCMS). There may also be some services delivering preschool programs which are not captured if they are not funded by the Australian Government (i.e. not Child Care Benefit [CCB] approved) and do not receive State or Territory government funding. c In response to the undercount issue, NSW completed a supplementary data report which indicated that 2136 long day care services delivered a preschool program to 55 187 children in 2013. This would increase the NSW proportion of preschool services delivering a preschool program from a long day care service to 71.3 per cent. d No long day care services are registered as a preschool service in the NT, although some services do deliver an education and care program specifically for preschool aged children. |
| *Source*: ABS (2014) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2013*, Cat. no. 4240.0. |
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Continuous improvements to the methodology and coverage of the NECECC are being made to capture the full range of preschool programs delivered within integrated settings.

More recently, a broader range of integrated services are being provided to children and families, including maternal and child health and family support services in addition to preschool and child care. The range of integrated services differs according to community need, and integrated ECEC services are more commonly placed in disadvantaged communities, and also provide particular specialised services.

### Roles and responsibilities

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

#### Australian Government

The Australian Government’s roles and responsibilities for ECEC include:

* paying Child Care Benefit (CCB) to eligible families using approved child care services or registered carers
* paying Child Care Rebate (CCR) to eligible families using approved child care services
* providing funding to State and Territory governments through the *National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education* (NP UAECE) to support the achievement of universal access to early childhood education
* providing funding and support to implement the National Quality Framework (NQF) through the *National Partnership Agreement on the National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care* (NP NQAECEC)
* funding organisations to provide information, support and training to service providers
* providing operational and capital funding to some providers.

#### State and Territory governments

State and Territory governments’ roles and responsibilities vary across jurisdictions. Generally, State and Territory governments are responsible for funding and/or providing preschool services. They may also fund or license child care services which are not funded by the Australian Government or approved under the NQF and are responsible for regulating services under the NQF.

State and Territory governments’ roles and responsibilities can include:

* providing a legislative framework in which ECEC services not approved under the NQF are registered, licensed and/or approved to provide selected services
* approval or licensing, monitoring and quality assessment of services in accordance with the NQF and other relevant regulations
* monitoring and resourcing licensed and approved ECEC providers
* providing operational and capital funding to non‑government service providers
* delivering services directly (especially preschool services)
* developing new ECEC services
* providing information, support, training and development opportunities for ECEC providers
* providing curriculum and policy support and advice, as well as training and development for management and staff
* planning to ensure the appropriate mix of services is available to meet the needs of the community
* providing information and advice to parents and others about operating standards and the availability of services
* providing dispute resolution and complaints management processes.

The arrangements for departmental responsibility for ECEC vary across State and Territory governments. Table 3A.1 provides information on child care and preschool programs, such as agency responsibility, program names and starting ages.

The Australian Government and State and Territory governments are working cooperatively to undertake national reforms in ECEC. Through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), governments have endorsed a number of major funding agreements and initiatives as part of a wider early childhood reform agenda (box 3.2).

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| Box 3.2 The COAG Early Childhood Reform Agenda |
| The main Council of Australian Governments (COAG) national reform initiatives linked specifically to early childhood development, education and care include:   * the *National Early Childhood Development Strategy — Investing in the Early Years*, is a collaboration between the Australian, State and Territory governments. The strategy broadly covers children from before birth to 8 years of age, and aims to improve outcomes for all children and their families, including reducing inequalities in outcomes between groups of children. The strategy, endorsed by COAG in July 2009, includes a range of long term national reform initiatives in the areas of education and care, health, protection, family support and housing * the NP UAECEfor the period July 2013 to December 2014 supporting universal access to and improved participation by children in quality early childhood education in the year before full time schooling (YBFS), with a focus on vulnerable and disadvantaged children. These include a range of performance indicators against which progress is measured. Performance measurement results published for these agreements may differ in some cases to those presented in this Report, due to differing definitions adopted for calculating national indicators. The *National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education* (NP ECE) preceded the NP UAECE and was implemented progressively from 2009 to June 2013 * the *National Indigenous Reform Agreement* (NIRA) which includes a target to ensure all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 4 years in remote communities have access to early childhood education by 2013. These reforms have been implemented progressively from 2009 * the *National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development* which aimed to establish 35 new Children and Family Centres (CFCs). The locations for 38 CFCs were agreed, exceeding the original target of 35. These reforms were implemented progressively until June 2014 * national workforce initiatives to improve the quality and supply of the ECEC workforce * the *National Partnership Agreement on the National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care* (NP NQAECEC). This incorporates a National Quality Framework(NQF) for Early Childhood Education and Care and a National Quality Standard (NQS) to ensure high quality and consistent ECEC across Australia, including streamlined regulatory approaches, an assessment and rating system and an *Early Years Learning Framework* and a *Framework for School Age Care*   The Australian Government is implementing these changes in partnership with each of the State and Territory governments. |
| *Source*: COAG (2009a and 2009b); Australian Government Department of Education (unpublished). |
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### Quality of services

Governments seek to ensure that ECEC services are of a satisfactory quality through:

* approvals, licensing, quality assurance, measuring performance against standards, and funding linked to outcomes
* monitoring compliance with the legislation
* providing curriculum and policy support and advice
* information sessions and sector engagement opportunities.

##### Service approval and licensing

Service approval and licensing requirements establish the foundations for quality of care by stipulating enforceable standards to support the health, safety, welfare and developmental needs of children in approved or licensed education and care services. State and Territory governments are responsible for regulating most ECEC services. These regulatory responsibilities include the approval or licensing, monitoring, assessment and rating of services in accordance with the relevant regulations.

Most long day care, preschool/kindergarten, family day care and OSHC services are approved services that fall within the scope of the NQF. To operate as an approved education and care service under the NQF, a person or entity must first apply to the relevant State or Territory regulatory authority to become an approved provider. An approved provider must then apply for a service approval to operate an education and care service.

To obtain a service approval or license to operate, providers of ECEC services must meet legislative and regulatory requirements in relation to the premises, policies and procedures.

NQF approved services are regulated in accordance with the requirements of the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations. A small number of services continue to be licensed through other relevant legislation in each jurisdiction, for example mobile preschools. In addition, some services may require State or Territory based registration to operate (not NQF approval or State or Territory licensing). Approval and licensing requirements vary across service types and jurisdictions (table 3.3).

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| Table 3.3 Approval and licensing of ECEC services, by jurisdiction, June 2014 |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Service type | NSW | Vic | Qld | WA | SA | Tas | ACT | NT | | Long day carea | N | N, L | N | N | N | N | N | N | | Family day care | N | N, L | N | N | N | N | N | N | | OSHCa | N | N | N | N | N | N | N | N | | Occasional careb | L | N, L | R | L | R | L | L | X | | Home‑based care | L | .. | X | X | R | L | na | X | | Other carec | L | L | X | X | R | L | L | N | | Preschoold | N | N, L | N | G | N | G/R | N | N | |
| N = Services are approved under the National Quality Framework (NQF) and require a Provider Approval, Service Approval and a Nominated Supervisor who holds a Supervisor Certificate to operate. L = Services are licensed under State/Territory based legislation. R = Services require State/Territory based registration or approval to operate. G = Services are provided by State/Territory governments. X = Services do not require a licence, registration or approval to operate, but can be required to meet State/Territory based regulatory standards.  **a** In Victoria a small number of long day care and outside school hours care (OSHC) services have been exempted from the NQF and are licensed under Victorian law. **b**In Victoria occasional care services can be part of an NQF approval and regulated under Victorian law as approved associated services, or be licensed and regulated under Victorian law. **c** Other care refers to all other government regulated care, for example, nannies, playschools, and in home care. Jurisdictions can licence some, but not all, types of other care services. In Victoria other care refers to early intervention and short‑term services. In SA other care includes rural and mobile care services. In Tasmania other care includes in home care services (which are licensed under family day care services). Not all other care services require registration or licensing. The NT currently does not have any other care services (3 year old kindergartens were previously reported as other care). **d**In Victoria two preschool services are exempted from the NQF and are licensed under Victorian law. In Queensland preschool services are licensed under state‑based legislation. In Tasmania, kindergartens not in government schools are registered with the Schools Registration Board. **na** Not available. .. Not applicable. |
| *Source*: State and Territory governments (unpublished). |
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##### Quality improvement

Since 1 January 2012, the NQF has determined the approach to quality improvement. The previous quality assurance system (National Childcare Accreditation Council) ceased on 31 December 2011. Box 3.16 provides additional information on the NQF.

The NQS is a key aspect of the NQF and sets a national benchmark for the quality of services, in seven key quality areas. Across these seven quality areas there are 18 standards. Each standard contains a number of elements that describe the outcomes that contribute to the standard being achieved. There are 58 elements in total.

The NQS is accompanied by a national assessment and rating process reporting the quality of each service, against the five rating levels ‘Significant Improvement Required’, ‘Working Towards NQS’, ‘Meeting NQS’, ‘Exceeding NQS’ and ‘Excellent’. The ‘Excellent’ rating can only be awarded by the national body, the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), on application by the Approved Provider. The other four ratings result from the assessment and ratings process. Until a service is assessed and rated, it is taken to have the prescribed provisional rating of ‘Provisional – Not Yet Assessed’.

##### Funding performance standards and outcomes

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

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

### Funding

Total Australian, State and Territory government expenditure on ECEC services was   
$7.7 billion in 2013‑14, compared with $6.8 billion (an increase of $857.8 million, or   
12.5 per cent in real terms) in 2012‑13. Nationally, the average annual growth rate of real expenditure was 10.6 per cent between 2009‑10 and 2013‑14 (table 3A.3).

Australian Government expenditure accounted for 80.9 per cent ($6.2 billion) of total government expenditure on ECEC services in 2013‑14 (tables 3A.3 and 3A.4). State and Territory government expenditure on ECEC services in 2013‑14 was $1.5 billion (tables 3A.3 and 3A.5). Total Australian, State and Territory government expenditure reporting on ECEC services is also available by jurisdiction (tables 3A.3–6, 3A.59, 3A.66, 3A.73, 3A.80, 3A.87, 3A.94, 3A.101 and 3A.108).

The Australian Government provided $273.6 million in 2013‑14 to State and Territory governments through the NP UAECE (table 3A.6). This expenditure is included in the data for State and Territory government recurrent expenditure (table 3A.5).

In 2013‑14, the provision of preschool services accounted for the largest proportion of total State and Territory government ECEC expenditure (84.0 per cent, or $1.2 billion nationally) (table 3A.5).

The Australian Government provides supplementary funding to support the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in eligible preschool programs. In 2013, $14.8 million was provided on a per person and project basis to 1821 government and non‑government preschool programs. The funding covered 10 926 full time equivalent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander preschool program enrolments (Australian Government Department of Education unpublished).

### Size and scope

#### ECEC services by service type

This chapter reports the number of ECEC services approved or licensed to operate by service type and management type. Data on operational approval numbers are sourced from the National Quality Agenda Information Technology System (NQAITS) (via ACECQA) and State and Territory governments. Specifically, these services are NQF approved or State and Territory government licensed or registered. The chapter also provides information on the number of child care services by service type which are Australian Government CCB approved or Budget Based Funded (usually non‑CCB approved) services (figure 3.1).

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| Figure 3.1 Extent of relationship between ECEC services reported in this chapter**a** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.1 Extent of relationship between ECEC services reported in this chapter  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a Budget Based Funded services are not NQF approved and not CCB approved. This means they may be licensed or registered by State or Territory governments. |
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At 30 June 2014 there were 10 711 NQF approved and State and Territory licensed or registered child care services and 5964 preschool services in Australia (table 3.4).   
Table 3.4 identifies the number of services providing each type of child care. It also identifies the total number of child care services (which may each offer more than one type of child care), and the total number of preschool services (which may also offer some types of child care). Detailed data on how many long day care centres deliver preschool programs are provided in table 3.2.

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| Table 3.4 Number of NQF approved and State and Territory government licensed or registered ECEC services, by service type, June 2014**a, b, c** |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  |  | NSW | Vic | Qld | WA | SA | Tas | ACT | NT | Aust | | *Child care services* | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | Long day care | | 2 649 | 1 260 | 1 404 | 625 | 318 | 115 | 116 | 74 | 6 561 | | Family day care | | 246 | 333 | 109 | 57 | 34 | 12 | 9 | 5 | 805 | | Vacation care | | 891 | 461 | 916 | 326 | 282 | 109 | 58 | 38 | 3 081 | | OSHC | | 1 296 | 1 064 | 954 | 371 | 358 | 134 | 87 | 46 | 4 310 | | Occasional care | | 49 | 397 | 41 | na | 94 | 28 | 1 | na | 610 | | Other care | | 150 | 145 | .. | 19 | 55 | 2 | 15 | na | 386 | | **Total child care services**d | | **5 083** | **3 110** | **2 153** | **1 040** | **833** | **258** | **239** | **125** | **12 841** | | *Preschool services*e | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | **Total preschool services**f | | **964** | **2 170** | **1 053** | **914** | **442** | **216** | **96** | **123** | **5 978** | |
| a Data are the sum of services approved under the NQF and services licensed or registered by State and Territory governments (i.e. services not approved under the NQF). Preschool services includes services which are stand‑alone, part of a school or delivered within a long day care centre (or other service type). Preschool services include both services delivering preschool programs for children in the year before full time schooling (YBFS) and preschool programs specifically for 3 year old children. Services are only counted once if they provide both types of preschool programs (except for Victoria where 9 preschool services deliver both 3 year old kindergarten and a YBFS preschool program. This is because the services are not licensed to the same provider. bThis table presents information on all service types delivered by child care and preschool services. NQF approval is for either a centre‑based or a family day care service. Counts of types of centre‑based services from the NQAITS are based on the nominated classification of the service approval holder. Reporting is based on counting each service by each service type it operates. This means a service may be counted more than once (i.e. in both long day care and total preschool or long day care and OSHC) if they provide more than one service type. c Data on NQF approved services are sourced from the NQAITS and provided by ACECQA. State and Territory governments add data on licensed or registered services (i.e. not NQF approved services) to form the totals reported in this table. Service type totals include unknown or not stated management type. d Total child care may not equal the breakdown by child care service types as services may provide multiple service types. For example, a child care centre which delivers OSHC and vacation care is counted separately by service type, but only once in total child care services. e Preschool services include stand‑alone services, services attached to a school and preschool services delivered by a long day care centre (or other child care service type).  f Total preschool services for NSW and ACT does not include long day care centres delivering a preschool program. **na** Not available. .. Not applicable. |
| *Source*: ACECQA NQAITS (unpublished) and State and Territory governments (unpublished); tables 3A.64, 3A.71, 3A.78, 3A.85, 3A.92, 3A.99, 3A.106 and 3A.113. |
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CCB approved services are approved by the Australian Government for the purpose of administering CCB payments because they meet certain standards and requirements. These requirements include having NQF approval or State and Territory government licensing to operate, qualified and trained staff, being open certain hours, and meeting health, safety and other quality standards.

Box 3.3 provides information on Australian Government Budget Based Funded services.

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| Box 3.3 Budget Based Funded services |
| These services are part of the Australian Government’s Budget Based Funded Programme which provides an Australian Government contribution to the operational costs of child care and early learning and school aged care services in a limited number of approved locations. These services are predominantly located in regional, remote and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities where the market would otherwise fail to deliver services to meet the needs of children and their families.  A range of service types are funded across Australia including crèches, mobile services, Multifunctional Aboriginal Children’s Services and outside school hours care (OSHC) services. Services reported as Budget Based Funded services are not approved to administer CCB on behalf of families. State and Territory governments may license or register Budget Based Funded services to operate.  In March 2014 there were 304 Budget Based Funded services nationally (38 in NSW, 14 in Victoria, 72 in Queensland, 28 in WA, 39 in SA, 6 in Tasmania and 107 in the NT. Data on the use of Budget Based Funded services are not reported in this chapter. |
| *Source*: Australian Government Department of Education (unpublished). |
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In the March quarter 2014 there were 16 207 Australian Government CCB approved child care services in Australia (table 3.5).

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| Table 3.5 Number of Australian Government CCB approved child care services, March 2014**a** |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | NSW | Vic | Qld | WA | SA | Tas | ACT | NT | Aust | | Long day care | 2 670 | 1 217 | 1 406 | 517 | 334 | 111 | 123 | 72 | 6 450 | | Family day care | 185 | 268 | 113 | 34 | 21 | 12 | 7 | 4 | 644 | | Vacation care | 750 | 395 | 591 | 240 | 258 | 79 | 52 | 39 | 2 404 | | OSHC | 1 892 | 1 784 | 1 250 | 598 | 627 | 163 | 145 | 61 | 6 520 | | Occasional care | 36 | 55 | 8 | 11 | 2 | 4 | 3 | – | 119 | | In home care | 20 | 16 | 21 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 1 | – | 70 | | **Total CCB approved** | **5 553** | **3 735** | **3 389** | **1 406** | **1 245** | **372** | **331** | **176** | **16 207** | |
| a Data relate to the March quarter 2014. – Nil or rounded to zero. |
| *Source*: Australian Government Department of Education (unpublished. |
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Child care services also exist which are approved or licensed to operate, but not funded by the Australian Government under CCB approval or the Budget Based Funded Programme. These services may receive State and Territory government funding and are predominantly occasional care and vacation care services.

##### ECEC services by management type

ECEC services may be managed by governments (State, Territory and local), the community sector, the private sector and non‑government schools. Data on the management type of NQF approved or State or Territory government licensed child care and preschool services are presented in table 3.6.

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| Table 3.6 Proportion of NQF approved and State and Territory government licensed ECEC services, by management type, June 2014 (per cent)**a, b, c** |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  |  | NSW | Vic | Qld | WA | SA | Tas | ACT | NT | | *Child care services* | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | Community | | 29.9 | 27.6 | 49.5 | 33.2 | 48.0 | 59.7 | 72.0 | 61.6 | | Private | | 34.2 | 50.2 | 44.7 | 62.3 | 25.8 | 22.1 | 22.6 | 23.2 | | Non‑government school | | 1.7 | 3.4 | 4.0 | 0.1 | 12.0 | 3.5 | 5.0 | 15.2 | | **Total non‑government** | | **65.7** | **81.2** | **98.3** | **95.6** | **85.8** | **85.3** | **99.6** | **100.0** | | Government | | 7.6 | 18.8 | 1.7 | 4.4 | 14.2 | 14.7 | 0.4 | – | | **Total child care services**d | | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | | *Preschool services*e | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | Community | | 80.3 | 44.3 | 57.8 | 2.6 | 2.7 | – | na | 1.6 | | Private | | 7.0 | 33.5 | 35.6 | 0.8 | 1.4 | – | na | na | | Non‑government school | | 2.4 | 4.9 | 3.6 | 27.5 | 7.9 | 26.9 | 19.8 | 3.3 | | **Total non‑government** | | **89.6** | **82.7** | **97.1** | **30.9** | **12.0** | **26.9** | **19.8** | **4.9** | | Government | | 10.4 | 16.1 | 2.9 | 69.1 | 88.0 | 73.1 | 80.2 | 95.1 | | **Total preschool services**d | | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | |
| a Data used to calculate the proportions are the sum of services approved under the NQF and services licensed or registered by State and Territory governments (i.e. services not approved under the NQF). Child care services include long day care, family day care, vacation care, OSHC, occasional care and other care services. Child care services are only counted once even where they provide more than one child care service type. Preschool services may be stand‑alone preschools, part of a school or long day care centres (or another service type) that delivers preschool programs for children in the YBFS or preschool programs specifically for 3 year old children. Long day care centres that also deliver a preschool service are reported as both a child care service and a preschool service. bManagement type relates to the legal status of the child care or preschool service and not to whether the service is for‑profit or not‑for‑profit. cData on services approved under the NQF are sourced from the NQAITS and provided by ACECQA. Each jurisdiction adds any State and Territory government licensed registered services to produce final data. dAs not all services in the NQAITS include a stated management type, the sum of management type categories may not equal 100 per cent. ePreschool services in this table refers to services which are stand‑alone preschools, part of a school or delivered within a long day care centre (or other child care service type). Preschool services data for NSW and ACT do not include long day care centres delivering a preschool program. **na** Not available. – Nil or rounded to zero. |
| *Source*: ACECQA NQAITS (unpublished) and State and Territory governments (unpublished); tables 3A.64, 3A.71, 3A.78, 3A.85, 3A.92, 3A.99, 3A.106 and 3A.113. |
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##### Preschool services in receipt of State and Territory government funding by service delivery setting

Non‑government managed preschool services are those managed by community organisations, private not‑for‑profit and commercial organisations and non‑government schools and may be delivered in a range of service delivery settings. Government managed preschool services may also be delivered in a range of service delivery settings. Information on the service delivery settings for non‑government and government managed preschool services in receipt of State and Territory government funding is presented in table 3.7.

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| Table 3.7 Preschool services in receipt of State and Territory government funding by service delivery setting, 2014 |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | | NSW | Vica | Qldb | WA | SA | Tasc | ACTd | NTe | | Non‑government managed preschool services by service delivery setting | | | | | | | | | | |  | Stand‑alone preschool | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | .. | .. | ✓ | |  | Non‑government school | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | x | ✓ | |  | Government school | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | x | .. | .. | .. | .. | |  | Long day care centre | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | x | ✓ | .. | .. | ✓ | | Government managed preschool services by service delivery setting | | | | | | | | | | |  | Stand‑alone preschool | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | x | ✓ | .. | .. | .. | |  | Non‑government school | .. | .. | .. | x | .. | .. | .. | .. | |  | Government school | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |  | Long day care centre | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | .. | .. | .. | |
| ✓ = Services exist of this specification (management type and delivery setting) and receive State and Territory government funding. X = Services exist of this specification (management type and delivery setting) and do not receive State and Territory government funding.  a Victoria includes local government services as government managed preschool services.  b Non‑government managed preschool programs include preschool programs with management type of community, private or non‑government school. The service delivery setting does not indicate the management type, for example, in Queensland a non‑government kindergarten program may be delivered on a government school site but is not operated by the school.cTasmania funds preschools with a management type of community in a range of settings, if the preschool is registered as a non‑government school. d Non‑government preschools in the ACT are licensed, but not government funded. e In the NT, only 4 remote Catholic schools receive NT Government funding for preschool services. .. Not applicable. |
| *Source*: State and Territory governments (unpublished). |
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##### Child care service usage

It is important to distinguish the number of child care places provided from the number of children who attend services, because of the episodic nature of some services. For example, many children attend on a part time basis, for some sessions or on some days, so it is possible for one place to accommodate more than one child. Therefore, it is difficult to measure accurately how many children access multiple services.

There are no restrictions on the number of CCB approved child care services or places in long day care, family day care and OSHC (including vacation care) that can be approved for the purposes of CCB. There are also no restrictions in most State and Territory government child care services on the number of supported places. Data on the number of child care places supported by State and Territory governments are presented in tables 3A.60, 3A.67, 3A.74, 3A.81, 3A.88, 3A.95, 3A.102 and 3A.109.

In the March quarter of 2014, 1 111 532 children aged 12 years or younger attended Australian Government CCB approved child care services, an increase of   
7.6 per cent from 2013 (table 3A.8). For jurisdictions who could report child care usage data there were 5380 children attending State and Territory funded and/or provided child care services in 2013‑14 (table 3A.10). Information on service usage in non‑government funded child care services (e.g. State/Territory government licensed, but not funded services) is not included in this Report.

Child care usage is not consistent throughout the year as children enter and leave care at different points of the year, depending on the child’s situation. The number of children that have utilised child care across a given year is greater than the number using care at any point in time. Child care flow data counted across an entire year illustrate the variability of child care usage. For example, in the 2013 calendar year over 1.3 million children aged 12 years or younger attended Australian Government CCB approved child care services (Australian Government Department of Education unpublished), compared with 1 033 214 in the March quarter of 2013 (table 3A.8).

#### Preschool program usage

Preschool services provide a range of preschool programs (generally on a sessional basis) to children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling. Data on preschool program usage in this Report include preschool programs delivered in stand‑alone preschools, preschools attached to a school and long day care centres. Long day care centres which deliver preschool programs also provide a long day care (child care) service and usage of long day care services is also reported in this chapter.

The age from which children can or must attend full time schooling, and therefore the age from which children can attend preschool programs, varies across jurisdictions and information for each State and Territory is presented in table 3.1. Differences in the age from which children can access preschool programs reduces the comparability of data across jurisdictions. Data on the age of children enrolled in preschool programs are presented in this chapter, and to improve comparability, data are also presented for:

* children enrolled in preschool programs in the year before they commence full time schooling
* 3 year old children enrolled in preschool programs.

In 2013, 44 996 children aged 3 years were enrolled in a preschool program. These data may include both 3 year old children receiving a YBFS preschool program (including early entry enrolments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and disadvantaged children, and children who are aged 3 years in their YBFS) and 3 year old children receiving a specific 3 year old preschool program. Overall, data reported for 3 year olds enrolled in a preschool program may be incomplete due to different reporting arrangements in each jurisdiction.

In 2013, there were 239 663 children aged 4 years and 48 387 children aged 5 years enrolled in a preschool program. Overall, 272 810 children aged 4 and 5 years were enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS (excluding enrolled children aged 5 years who were also enrolled in the previous year as a 4 year old and 3 year old children) (table 3A.16).

## 3.2 Framework of performance indicators

COAG has agreed six National Agreements (NAs) to enhance accountability to the public for the outcomes achieved or outputs delivered by a range of government services   
(see chapter 1 for more detail on reforms to federal financial relations).

There are no service specific NAs that relate to ECEC services. The National Indigenous Reform Agreement (NIRA) includes an indicator relevant to this service area an performance indicators reported in this chapter are aligned with relevant performance indicators in the NIRA. The Steering Committee collates NIRA performance information for analysis by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

The framework of performance indicators for ECEC is based on common objectives for ECEC and is endorsed by the Steering Committee (box 3.4).

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| Box 3.4 Objectives for ECEC services |
| ECEC services aim to:   * meet the education and care needs of all children in developmentally appropriate ways, in a safe and nurturing environment * provide quality services across a range of settings delivered in an equitable and efficient manner, meeting individual need. |
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The performance indicator framework provides information on equity, efficiency and effectiveness, and distinguishes the outputs and outcomes of ECEC services (figure 3.2). The performance indicator framework shows which data are complete and comparable in the 2015 Report. For data that are not considered directly comparable, text includes relevant caveats and supporting commentary. Chapter 1 discusses data comparability and data completeness from a Report‑wide perspective (section 1.6).

The Report’s statistical context chapter contains data that may assist in interpreting the performance indicators presented in this chapter. These data cover a range of demographic and geographic characteristics, including age profile, geographic distribution of the population, income levels, education levels, tenure of dwellings and cultural heritage (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and ethnic status) (chapter 2).

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| Figure 3.2 ECEC performance indicator framework |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.2 ECEC performance indicator framework  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
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## 3.3 Key performance indicator results

Different delivery contexts, locations and types of clients can affect the equity, effectiveness and efficiency of ECEC. Definitions of key terms are in section 3.6.

DQI is being progressively introduced for all indicators in the Report. The purpose of DQI is to provide structured and consistent information about quality aspects of data used to report on performance indicators, in addition to material in the chapter or sector overview and attachment tables. DQI in this Report cover the seven dimensions in the Australian Bureau of Statistics’ (ABS) data quality framework (institutional environment, relevance, timeliness, accuracy, coherence, accessibility and interpretability) in addition to dimensions that define and describe performance indicators in a consistent manner, and key data gaps and issues identified by the Steering Committee. All DQI for the 2015 Report can be found at www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2015.

### Outputs

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

### Equity

#### Access — Participation rates for special needs groups in child care

‘Participation rates for special needs groups in child care’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that services are provided in an equitable manner to all special needs groups in the community, and that there is consideration of the needs of those groups that can have special difficulty in accessing services (box 3.5).

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| Box 3.5 Participation rates for special needs groups in child care |
| ‘Participation rates for special needs groups in child care’ is defined as the proportion of children using child care services who are from targeted special needs groups, compared with the representation of these groups in the community. Data are reported for children in child care aged 0–5 and 6–12 years.  Targeted special needs groups include children from non‑English speaking backgrounds (NESB), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from low income families, children with disability, and children from regional and remote areas.  A high or increasing participation rate is desirable. If the representation of special needs groups among child care services users is broadly similar to their representation in the community, this suggests more equitable access.  Data reported for this indicator are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions, but a break in series means that data prior to 2010 are not comparable to data from 2010 * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2013 or 2014 data are available for all jurisdictions.   Data quality information for this indicator is under development. |
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Data for participation by special needs groups using Australian Government CCB approved child care services for 2013 were drawn from the *National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census* (NECECWC) *2013* and Department of Education administrative systems. Box 3.6 contains more information on the census.

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| Box 3.6 Australian Government National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census |
| The *National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census* (NECECWC) was conducted in 2010 and 2013. The census aims to provide comprehensive and nationally consistent data on access to ECEC services, and staff qualifications and experience. This chapter presents data from the 2013 NECECWC, which was an initiative of the Australian Government.  The NECECWC replaced the Australian Government Child Care Provider Survey (AGCCPS) conducted in 2008‑09 and the Australian Government Census of Child Care Services (AGCCC) conducted in earlier years.  The NECECWC collected similar information to the AGCCPS and the AGCCC, although variations in collection methods and different weighting methods affect the comparability of data across the collections. Therefore comparisons across time should be made with caution. |
| *Source*: Australian Government Department of Education (unpublished). |
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Representation of children from special needs groups were lower than their representation in the community nationally, but the extent of the difference varied:

* Children from NESB aged 0–12 years had a lower representation in child care in 2013 (17.3 per cent) than this group’s representation in the community in 2011   
  (20.0 per cent). This was the case for both the 0–5 years age group and the 6–12 years age group.
* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0–12 years had a lower representation in child care services in 2014 (2.4 per cent) than their representation in the community in 2013 (5.6 per cent). This was the case for both the 0–5 years age group and the 6–12 years age group.
* Children aged 0–12 years from low income families had a lower representation in child care services in 2014 (12.6 per cent) compared with their representation in the community in 2011‑12 (20.7 per cent). This was the case for both the   
  0–5 years age group and the 6–12 years age group.
* Children aged 0–12 years with disability had a lower representation in child care services in 2013 (3.0 per cent) compared with their representation in the community in 2012 (6.7 per cent). This was the case for both the 0–5 years age group and the 6‑12 years age group.
* Children aged 0–12 years from regional areas had a lower representation in child care services in 2014 (22.9 per cent) compared with their representation in the community in 2013 (27.9 per cent). This was the case for both the 0–5 years age group and the 6‑12 years age group.
* Children aged 0–12 years from remote areas had a lower representation in child care in 2014 (0.9 per cent) compared with their representation in the community in 2013   
  (2.7 per cent). This was the case for both the 0–5 years age group and the 6–12 years age group (tables 3.8 and 3A.12).

Data on representation of special needs groups in State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care for children aged 0–12 years are presented in table 3A.14.

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| Table 3.8 Proportion of children aged 0–12 years attending Australian Government CCB approved child care services from special needs groups (per cent)**a, b, c** |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | NSW | Vic | | Qld | | WA | | SA | | Tas | ACT | NT | Aust | | *Children from NESB* | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | In child care services, 2013 | 21.3 | 24.8 | 9.0 | | | 13.4 | | 10.4 | | 3.5 | 16.0 | 10.6 | 17.3 | | In the community, 2011 | 23.7 | 23.4 | 13.2 | | | 18.0 | | 15.7 | | 7.3 | 19.2 | 40.0 | 20.0 | | *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children* | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | In child care services, 2014 | 2.6 | 0.8 | 3.8 | | | 2.5 | | 1.6 | | 5.3 | 1.2 | 9.7 | 2.4 | | In the community, 2013 | 5.4 | 1.6 | 7.9 | | | 6.4 | | 4.5 | | 9.3 | 2.8 | 41.6 | 5.6 | | *Children from low income families* | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | In child care services, 2014 | 13.4 | 11.8 | 13.5 | | 11.1 | | 12.4 | | 14.3 | | 4.7 | 8.3 | 12.6 | | In the community, 2011‑12 | 22.5 | 20.4 | 21.4 | | 13.8 | | 21.9 | | 26.9 | | 7.8 | 22.5 | 20.7 | | *Children with disability* | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | In child care services, 2013 | 3.8 | 2.5 | 2.4 | | | 2.1 | | 4.2 | | 2.4 | 2.8 | 4.7 | 3.0 | | In the community, 2012 | 6.8 | 6.3 | 6.4 | | | 7.4 | | 6.7 | | 9.3 | 7.0 | 4.0 | 6.7 | | *Children from regional areas* | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | In child care services, 2014d | 21.4 | 17.6 | 28.9 | | | 14.2 | | 14.8 | | 100.5 | 77.0 | 78.5 | 22.9 | | In the community, 2013 | 25.4 | 24.1 | 36.1 | | | 17.7 | | 24.0 | | 98.1 | 0.2 | 50.5 | 27.9 | | Children from remote areas | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | In child care services, 2014 | 0.2 | – | 1.0 | | | 3.7 | | 1.9 | | 0.7 | .. | 20.4 | 0.9 | | In the community, 2013 | 0.6 | 0.1 | 3.5 | | | 7.1 | | 3.9 | | 1.9 | .. | 49.5 | 2.7 | |
| a Data on children from NESB and children with disability in child care services represent the population of children attending child care in 2013 from those special needs groups. These 2013 data are from the *2013 National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census*. Data for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from low income families and children from remote and regional areas are from administrative data for the March quarter 2014. Refer to box 3.6 and table 3A.13 for more information*.* b Data on representation in the community are reported for different years due to the availability of data and are sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS): *2011 Census of Population and Housing*; *Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2001 to 2026; Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia, 2011‑12, Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia, 2012 and Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, 2013.* c See table 3A.13 for complete footnotes and definitions. d The proportion of children from regional areas attending child care services can exceed 100 per cent. This may occur because although the number of children in child care services is a unique count for each state and territory, children can attend, and be counted in, services located in more than one remoteness area. .. Not applicable. – Nil or rounded to zero. |
| *Source*: Australian Government Department of Education (unpublished) administrative data collection and *National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census, 2013;* ABS (unpublished) *2011 Census of Population and Housing;* *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia, 2011‑12,* Cat. no. 6523.0; *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia, 2012* TableBuilder, Cat. no. 4430.0 and *Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2001 to 2026* *(Series B),* Cat. no. 3238.0; table 3A.13. |
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#### Access — participation rates for special needs groups in preschool

‘Participation rates for special needs groups in preschool’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that services are provided in an equitable manner to all special needs groups in the community, and that there is consideration of the needs of those groups that can have special difficulty in accessing services (box 3.7).

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| Box 3.7 Participation rates for special needs groups in preschool |
| ‘Participation rates for special needs groups in preschool’ is defined by two measures:   * the proportion of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in a preschool program who are from targeted special needs groups, compared with the representation of these groups in the community. Targeted special needs groups include children from NESB, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability and children from regional and remote areas * the proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS who are disadvantaged, compared with the representation of children who are disadvantaged in the community. 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. The SEIFA IRSD quintile of 1 is used as a proxy for the most disadvantaged. 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.   A high or increasing proportion of children from special needs groups and children who are disadvantaged enrolled in a preschool program is desirable. If the representation of special needs groups and disadvantage among children enrolled in a preschool program is broadly similar to their representation in the community, this suggests equitable access.  Data reported for these measures are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions for the special needs groups: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from regional and remote areas. Data are not comparable across jurisdictions for the special needs groups: NESB and children with disability. Data are comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time for children who are disadvantaged * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period for children who are disadvantaged and most special needs groups. All required 2013 data are available for all jurisdictions for children who are disadvantaged but incomplete for the current reporting period for the NESB special needs group. All required NESB data were not available for WA and the NT.   Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2015. |
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##### Proportion of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in a preschool program who are from targeted special needs groups

Data for participation by special needs groups in preschool programs are provided by State and Territory governments for children from NESB and children with disability. Data for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from regional and remote areas are drawn from the NECECC 2013.

Data on the representation of special needs groups for children in a preschool program are provided in table 3.9. For jurisdictions that were able to provide data, the patterns for children from special needs groups in preschool varied:

* For jurisdictions where data are available (NSW, Victoria, Queensland, SA, Tasmania and the ACT), the representation of children aged 3–5 years from NESB in preschool was 10.6 per cent. Nationally, 20.0 per cent of children aged 3–5 years in the community were children from NESB.
* Nationally, the representation of children with disability aged 3–5 years in a preschool program (5.6 per cent) was lower than their representation in the community   
  (6.2 per cent) though this varies across jurisdictions.
* Nationally, the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged   
  3­–5 years in a preschool program (4.7 per cent) was lower than their representation in the community (5.6 per cent) though this varies across jurisdictions.
* Nationally, the representation of children aged 3–5 years in a preschool program from regional areas was 28.5 per cent. This is higher than their representation in the community (27.6 per cent).
* Nationally, the representation of children aged 3–5 years in preschool from remote areas (2.5 per cent) was slightly lower than their representation in the community   
  (2.7 per cent) (table 3.9).

Data on the representation of special needs groups in a preschool program in the YBFS are presented in table 3A.14.

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| Table 3.9 Proportion of children (aged 3–5 years) enrolled in a preschool program from special needs groups, 2013  (per cent)**a, b, c, d** |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | NSW | Vice | Qld | WA | SAf | Tas | ACT | NTg | Austh | | Children from NESB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | In a preschool program | 17.0 | 12.8 | 8.1 | na | 10.5 | 2.9 | 27.6 | na | 10.6 | | In the community, 2011 | 23.7 | 23.4 | 13.2 | 17.7 | 15.4 | 7.4 | 19.6 | 39.3 | 20.0 | | Children with disability |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | In a preschool programi | 9.6 | 4.1 | 2.6 | 3.1 | 13.2 | 4.6 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 5.6 | | In the community, 2012 | 6.2 | 6.9 | 4.2 | 7.1 | 9.2 | 9.0 | 4.7 | np | 6.2 | | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children | | | | | | | | | | | In a preschool program | 4.5 | 1.3 | 5.2 | 6.6 | 7.6 | 8.3 | 2.8 | 39.7 | 4.7 | | In the community, 2013 | 5.3 | 1.7 | 8.0 | 6.3 | 4.6 | 9.8 | 2.7 | 40.0 | 5.6 | | Children from regional areas |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | In a preschool program | 29.9 | 23.7 | 33.2 | 17.8 | 23.5 | 98.5 | 3.0 | 50.7 | 28.5 | | In the community, 2013 | 25.1 | 23.9 | 35.7 | 17.3 | 23.9 | 98.2 | 0.2 | 50.3 | 27.6 | | Children from remote areas |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | In a preschool program | 0.8 | – | 3.0 | 7.5 | 4.2 | 1.5 | .. | 47.2 | 2.5 | | In the community, 2013 | 0.6 | 0.1 | 3.7 | 7.2 | 3.9 | 1.8 | .. | 49.7 | 2.7 | |
| a Preschool program data for children from NESB and children with disability are from State and Territory governments (for July/August 2013) and include only State and Territory government funded and/or provided services. These data for NSW do not include children receiving a preschool program from a long day care centre. Preschool program data for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from regional and remote areas are from the NECECC (August 2013). Data from the NECECC include children receiving a preschool program from a long day centre and relate to both Government funded and unfunded programs. Not all children undertaking a preschool program in a long day care setting in NSW are captured in the NECECC. Different sources are used for representation in the community. As a result of the different data sources for preschool and community data for special needs groups, caution should be used when making comparisons across special needs groups. b Data on children enrolled in preschool programs are for July/August 2013. An exception to this is SA data for children from NESB and children with disability which are reported for May 2014 due to the transition from a quarterly intake of preschool enrolments causing abnormal enrolment numbers in 2013. c Includes children aged 3–5 years on 1 July. However, some 3 year old children attending a preschool program may not be included in the NECECC and therefore data may represent an under count. d See table 3A.14 for complete footnotes and definitions. e Victorian data for children from NESB and with disability in preschool programs only include 3 year old children who have been approved to attend funded 4 year old kindergarten programs, and so do not include children in programs for 3 year olds. f SA data should be used with caution as enrolment numbers in Government funded preschools in 2013 were affected by the transition from a quarterly intake to a single annual intake. gNT preschool data for children with disability may include some children aged over 5 years. h Data for Australia for children from NESB and children with disability enrolled in a preschool program, are the total of the sum of the states and territories for which data are available, and should not be interpreted as national data. i Data on children with disability are not directly comparable because the definition of disability varies across jurisdictions. **na** Not available... Not applicable. – Nil or rounded to zero. **np** Not published. |
| *Source*: ABS (unpublished TableBuilder) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2013*, Cat. no. 4240.0; State and Territory governments (unpublished); ABS (unpublished) *2011 Census of Population and Housing*; *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia 2012 TableBuilder*, Cat. no. 4430.0, *Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2001 to 2026 (Series B),* Cat. no. 3238.0 and *Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, 2013,* Cat. no. 3235.0; table 3A.14. |
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##### Proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS who are disadvantaged

Nationally in 2013, 17.9 per cent of children enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS resided in an area with a SEIFA IRSD quintile of 1 (figure 3.3). These proportions varied across jurisdictions.

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| Figure 3.3 Proportion of children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS who are disadvantaged, 2013**a, b, c, d, e, f** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.3 Proportion of children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS who are disadvantaged, 2013  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a Data for children enrolled in the YBFS include children aged 4 and 5 years on 1 July and exclude children aged 5 years old who were enrolled in a preschool program in the previous year as a 4 year old. The YBFS population is an estimate of a single year cohort for the population that will transition to full time schooling in the following year. b Disadvantage is defined for this measure to be children residing in an area with a SEIFA IRSD quintile of 1. Areas with a SEIFA IRSD quintile of 1 are not evenly distributed across Australia. c Data on representation in the community are reported using the same definition as the measure of enrolment. That is, of children residing in an area with a SEIFA IRSD quintile of 1. Data are based on the 30 June 2013 population of 4 and 5 year olds. d Not all children undertaking a preschool program in a long day care setting in NSW are captured in the collection. e Queensland and WA have a large proportion of children with not stated SEIFA IRSD. f SA data should be used with caution as enrolment numbers in Government funded preschools in 2013 were affected by the transition from a quarterly intake to a single annual intake. |
| *Source*: Derived from ABS (2014) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2013,* Cat. no. 4240.0; (unpublished) *Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, 2013* (Cat. no. 3235.0); table 3A.15. |
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Data on the proportion of children attending a preschool program who are disadvantaged are presented in table 3A.15.

### Effectiveness

#### Access — children using child care

‘Children using child care’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that all families have equitable access to child care services (box 3.8).

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| Box 3.8 Children using child care |
| ‘Children using child care’ is defined by three measures:   * the proportion of children using Australian Government CCB approved plus State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care, by age group (0–5, 6–12 and  0–12 years) * the proportion of children aged 0–12 years using Australian Government CCB approved child care * average hours of attendance at Australian Government CCB approved child care services by service type.   A higher or increasing proportion of children using the services can indicate a higher level of service availability. This indicator does not provide information on parental preferences for using child care, or other factors, such as school starting age, which can affect use of child care.  Data reported for these measures are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) within jurisdictions over time but are not comparable across jurisdictions for Australian Government CCB approved plus State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care. Data are comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time for children aged 0–12 years using Australian Government CCB approved child care and average hours of attendance * incomplete for the current reporting period. All required 2013‑14 data were not available for State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care services for NSW, Vic, WA, the ACT and the NT. All required 2014 data are available for all jurisdictions for children aged 0–12 years using Australian Government CCB approved child care and average hours of attendance.   Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2015. |
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The employment status of parents can influence children’s access to services, depending on the service type. Those services eligible for CCB, for example, must follow the Australian Government’s ‘priority of access’ guidelines when filling vacant places. The guidelines give a high priority to children at risk and children of parents with work‑related child care needs (section 3.6 contains more detail). Details of the employment status of parents whose children use these services, for 2008 and 2011, are shown in table 3A.20.

##### Proportion of children using Australian Government CCB approved plus State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care

Nationally, 29.1 per cent of children aged 0–12 years attended Australian Government CCB approved or State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care in 2013‑14. Amongst children aged 0–5 years, 41.3 per cent attended and amongst children aged 6–12 years, 18.0 per cent attended (figure 3.4). Of those children aged 0–12 years that attended child care, nearly all (99.5 per cent) attended Australian Government CCB approved child care services. This result is due to the majority of State and Territory governments not being able to report child care usage in State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care (table 3A.10).

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| Figure 3.4 Proportion of children using Australian Government CCB approved plus State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care, 2013‑14**a, b** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.4 Proportion of children using Australian Government CCB approved plus State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care, 2013-14  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a The population measure is the estimated resident population as at 31 December 2013. Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are reported for the March quarter 2014. Only Queensland, SA and Tasmania could report child care usage of State and Territory funded and/or provided services. These data are reported for July/August 2013.bWhere data could be reported by State and Territory governments (Queensland, SA and Tasmania) there may be some double counting of children across State and Territory and Australian, government collections. For NSW, Victoria, WA, ACT and the NT, the total number of children attending child care services represents an undercount as data for State and Territory Government funded and/or provided services could not be reported. |
| *Source*: ABS (unpublished) *Australian Demographic Statistics*, Cat. no. 3101.0; Australian Government Department of Education (unpublished); State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 3A.10. |
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##### Proportion of children aged 0–12 years using Australian Government CCB approved child care

Nationally in 2014, 29.0 per cent of all children aged 0–12 years attended Australian Government CCB approved child care (figure 3.5). This is an increase from 27.5 per cent in 2013 (table 3A.8). The majority of children attending Australian Government CCB approved child care in 2014 (749 408, or 67.4 per cent) were aged 0–5 years (table 3A.8). In 2014, 54.1 per cent of all children aged 2 years, 60.7 per cent of all children aged 3 years, and 52.8 per cent of all children aged 4 years attended Australian Government CCB approved child care (table 3A.9).

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| Figure 3.5 Proportion of children aged 0–12 years using Australian Government CCB approved child care**a, b, c** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.5 Proportion of children aged 0-12 years using Australian Government CCB approved child care  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a The population measure is the estimated resident population as at 31 December of the previous calendar year. b Children can use more than one type of care. Children are counted once for each type of care they use. c Attendance data relate to the March quarter. |
| *Source*: Australian Government Department of Education (unpublished); ABS (unpublished) *Australian Demographic Statistics*, Cat. no. 3101.0; tables 3A.2 and 3A.8. |
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##### Average hours of attendance at Australian Government CCB approved child care services by service type

The average hours of attendance in Australian Government CCB approved child care in 2014 varied considerably across jurisdictions, for all service types. Nationally, average attendance per child at long day care centres was 27.7 hours per week, while the average attendance per child at family day care was 29.5 hours per week. Nationally, the average attendance per child at occasional care was 11.4 hours per week and the average attendance at in home care was 25.7 hours per week. Nationally, the average attendance per child at OSHC was 9.3 hours per week, and the average attendance at vacation care during school holidays was 28.4 hours per week (figure 3.6). Nationally, average hours of attendance increased from 2013 to 2014 for family day care and OSHC, whilst average hours decreased for in home care. Average hours remained the same or changed marginally from 2013 for long day care vacation care and occasional care (table 3A.11).

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| Figure 3.6 Average hours of attendance at Australian Government CCB approved child care, 2014**a, b** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.6 Average hours of attendance at Australian Government CCB approved child care, 2014  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a Average attendance hours are defined as the total hours attended within each sector divided by the number of children who attended in the reference week (excludes allowable absences). b Average hours of attendance at occasional care and in home care in the NT was zero during March 2014. |
| *Source*: Australian Government Department of Education (unpublished) administrative data collection; table 3A.11. |
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#### Access — children enrolled in preschool

‘Children enrolled in preschool’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that all families have equitable access to preschool services (box 3.9).

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| Box 3.9 Children enrolled in preschool |
| ‘Children enrolled in preschool’ is defined by three measures:   * the proportion of children who are enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS, calculated as the number of children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS as a proportion of children aged 4 years. * the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS, calculated as the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS as a proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 4 years. * the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS by remoteness area (national only), calculated as the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS as a proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 4 years.   Children enrolled in the YBFS include 4 and 5 year old children and exclude children aged 5 years old who were enrolled in a preschool program in the previous year as a 4 year old. The YBFS population is an estimate of a single year cohort for the population that will transition to full time schooling in the following year and is a proxy for the actual YBFS population. 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 4 year old population estimates used in these measures are sourced from ABS projected population estimates.  A high or increasing proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program can indicate a high or increasing level of service availability, and is desirable. However, this indicator can be difficult to interpret as:   * the preschool program starting age for children varies across states and territories. A higher proportion of children enrolled at a particular age can reflect the preschool program starting age in a particular jurisdiction * participation in a preschool program is not compulsory. This indicator does not provide information on parental preferences for using preschool programs, or other factors, which can affect use of preschool programs * an overestimation of enrolment in some states and territories (for example, where enrolment rates exceed 100 per cent) may occur due to children: moving interstate during a preschool program year; attending multiple providers to access an appropriate amount of care; attending multiple service types and/or attending a preschool program for more than one year. Overestimation may also result from children enrolled in a preschool program in a jurisdiction different to the one in which they live, for example, between the ACT and NSW or because the measures are based on the number of 4 and 5 year olds who are enrolled as a proportion of the number of 4 year olds in the population.   Data reported for these measures are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time. Data are not on a jurisdiction basis (national only) for data by remoteness area so comparability is not |
| (continued next page) |
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| Box 3.9 (continued) |
| applicable for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS, by remoteness area   * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2013 data are available for all jurisdictions.   Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2015. |
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##### Proportion of children who are enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS

Nationally in 2013, 90.9 per cent of 4 year old children were enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS. This is an increase from 86.2 in 2012 (figure 3.7).

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| Figure 3.7 Proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS**a, b, c, d, e, f, g** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.7 Proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a Data for children enrolled in the YBFS include children aged 4 and 5 years on 1 July and exclude children aged 5 years old who were enrolled in a preschool program in the previous year as a 4 year old. The YBFS population is an estimate of a single year cohort for the population that will transition to full time schooling in the following year. b The preschool program starting age varies across jurisdictions (table 3.1). c To calculate the proportions in this figure, enrolment data (from the August NECECC which includes some 5 year old children) are divided by the number of children aged 4 years in each jurisdiction (using ABS estimated resident population at 30 June). As a result the proportion may exceed 100 per cent. d 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. e 2012 child level enrolment data for Queensland were not available. Episode of enrolment data were used instead for Queensland. An episode is a record of enrolment at a preschool program. Children may be enrolled in more than one preschool program so in these cases will be counted more than once in episode data. These data are included in the national total. f SA 2013 data may not be fully comparable with 2012 data. Enrolment numbers in Government funded preschools in 2013 were affected by the transition from a quarterly intake to a single annual intake. g 2012 totals for the ACT exclude data for preschools within independent schools, which were unavailable. |
| *Source*: Derived from ABS (2013 and 2014) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 and 2013,* Cat. no. 4240.0;ABS (2012 and 2013) *Australian Demographic Statistics*, *Jun 2012 and Jun 2013,* Cat. no. 3101.0; table 3A.16. |
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Although the preschool program starting age varies across jurisdictions (table 3.1), the majority of children enrolled in a preschool program in 2013 were 4 years of age for each jurisdiction (table 3A.16). Nationally in 2013, 79.9 per cent of 4 year olds were enrolled in a preschool program. The proportion of 5 year olds enrolled in a preschool program   
(16.2 per cent) was higher than for 3 year olds (14.9 per cent) (table 3A.16). These proportions varied across jurisdictions.

Data are included on children enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS by weekly hour ranges. Nationally, the majority of children (82.0 per cent) were enrolled for at least   
15 hours per week (table 3A.17). Data are included on all children aged 4 and 5 years who were enrolled in a preschool program in 2013. Nationally, 288 052 children aged 4 and 5 years were enrolled in a preschool program (table 3A.23).

##### Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS

Nationally in 2013, 73.9 per cent of 4 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS. This proportion has increased from 65.0 per cent in 2012 (figure 3.8).

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| Figure 3.8 Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS**a, b, c, d, e. f, g** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.8 Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a Data for children enrolled in the YBFS include children aged 4 and 5 years on 1 July and exclude children aged 5 years old who were enrolled in a preschool program in the previous year as a 4 year old. The YBFS population is an estimate of a single year cohort for the population that will transition to full time schooling in the following year. b To calculate proportions, enrolment data (from the August NECECC which includes some 5 year olds) are divided by the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 4 years (using ABS population projections as at 30 June). Other conceptual differences between the two data sources also affect their coherence. As a result, the proportion may exceed 100 per cent. Also, the projected population denominator may have particular limitations for smaller jurisdictions. d Not all children undertaking a preschool program in a long day care setting in NSW are captured in the NECECC, resulting in an undercount for NSW. e 2012 child level enrolment data for Queensland were not available. Episode of enrolment data were used instead for Queensland. An episode is a record of enrolment at a preschool program. Children may be enrolled in more than one preschool program so in these cases will be counted more than once in episode data. These data are included in the national total. Care should be taken when comparing Queensland data from 2012 to 2013. f SA 2013 data may not be fully comparable with 2012 data. Enrolment numbers in Government funded preschools in 2013 were affected by the transition from a quarterly intake to a single annual intake. g 2012 totals for the ACT exclude data for preschools within independent schools, which were unavailable. |
| *Source*: Derived from ABS (2013 and 2014) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 and 2013,* Cat. no. 4240.0;ABS (2014) *Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2001–2026,* Cat. no. 3238.0; table 3A.19. |
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Contextual data are provided for all jurisdictions on the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program and enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS. These data are also presented by remoteness areas (table 3A.19).

###### Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS by remoteness area

National data on the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS are presented by remoteness areas (major cities; inner/outer regional areas; remote/very remote areas) in table 3A.18. In 2013, amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in major cities, 66.7 per cent were enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS. In regional areas, 73.9 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS. In remote areas, 85.0 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS (table 3A.18). The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS is higher in 2013 than 2012 for each of the remoteness areas (table 3A.18).

#### Access — children attending preschool

‘Children attending preschool’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that all families have equitable access to preschool services (box 3.10).

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| Box 3.10 Children attending preschool |
| ‘Children attending preschool’ is defined by three measures:   * the proportion of children who are attending a preschool program in the YBFS, calculated as the number of children aged 4 and 5 years attending a preschool program in the YBFS as a proportion of children aged 4 years. The 4 year old population data are sourced from ABS population estimates. * the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are attending a preschool program in the YBFS by remoteness area (national only), calculated as the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 4 and 5 years attending a preschool program in the YBFS as a proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 4 years. The 4 year old population data are sourced from ABS projected population estimates. * the proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS who are attending by Indigenous status.   Children attending in the YBFS include 4 and 5 year old children and exclude children aged 5 years old who attended a preschool program in the previous year as a 4 year old. The YBFS population is an estimate of a single year cohort for the population that will transition to full time schooling in the following year and is a proxy for the actual YBFS population. A child is considered to be attending a preschool program if the child was enrolled and present for at least one hour during the reference period.  A high or increasing proportion of children attending a preschool program can indicate a high or increasing level of service availability, and is desirable. However, this indicator should be interpreted with caution, as:   * the preschool program starting age for children varies across states and territories. A higher proportion of children attending at a particular age can reflect the preschool program starting age in a particular jurisdiction * participation in a preschool program is not compulsory. This indicator does not provide information on parental preferences for using preschool programs, or other factors, which can affect use of preschool programs * an overestimation of attendance in some states and territories (for example, where attendance rates exceed 100 per cent) may occur due to children: moving interstate during a preschool program year; attending multiple providers to access an appropriate amount of care; attending multiple service types and/or attending a preschool program for more than one year. Overestimation may also result from children attending a preschool program in a jurisdiction different to the one in which they live, for example, between the ACT and NSW or because measures are based on the number of 4 and 5 year olds attending as a proportion of the number of 4 year olds in the population.   Data reported for these measures are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time. Data are not on a jurisdiction basis (national only) for data by remoteness area so comparability is not applicable for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are attending a preschool program in the YBFS, by remoteness area * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2013 data are available for all jurisdictions.   Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2015. |
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##### Proportion of children who are attending a preschool program in the YBFS

Nationally in 2013, 88.7 per cent of 4 year old children were attending a preschool program in the YBFS. This is an increase from 83.8 in 2012 (figure 3.9).

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| Figure 3.9 Proportion of children attending a preschool program in the YBFS**a, b, c, d, e, f, g** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.9 Proportion of children attending a preschool program in the YBFS   More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a Data for children enrolled in the YBFS include children aged 4 and 5 years on 1 July and exclude children aged 5 years old who were enrolled in a preschool program in the previous year as a 4 year old. The YBFS population is an estimate of a single year cohort for the population that will transition to full time schooling in the following year. b The preschool starting age varies across jurisdictions (table 3.1). c To calculate the proportions in this figure, attendance data (from the August NECECC which includes some 5 year old children) are divided by the number of children aged 4 years in each jurisdiction (using ABS estimated resident population at 30 June). As a result the proportion may exceed 100 per cent. d 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. e 2012 child level attendance data for Queensland were not available. Episode of attendance data were used instead for Queensland. An episode is a record of attendance at a preschool program. Children may attend more than one preschool program so will be counted more than once in episode counts where they attend more than one preschool program. These data are included in the national total. f SA 2013 data may not be fully comparable with 2012 data. Enrolment numbers in Government funded preschools in 2013 were affected by the transition from a quarterly intake to a single annual intake. g 2012 totals for the ACT exclude data for preschools within independent schools, which were unavailable for 2012. |
| *Source*: Derived from ABS (2013 and 2014) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012 and 2013,* Cat. no. 4240.0;ABS (2012 and 2013) *Australian Demographic Statistics,* Cat. no. 3101.0; table 3A.21. |
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Across all jurisdictions in 2013, the average attendance of children at a preschool program in the YBFS was between 14.0 and 23.6 hours per week (table 3A.22). Data are included on all children aged 4 and 5 years who attended a preschool program in 2013. Nationally, 280 908 children aged 4 and 5 years attended a preschool program (table 3A.23). Of these, the largest number (199 664 children) attended more than 15 hours per week (table 3A.24).

Details of the employment status of parents whose children attended preschool services are shown in table 3A.20.

##### Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are attending a preschool program in the YBFS by remoteness area

National data on the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children attending a preschool program in the YBFS are presented by remoteness areas (major cities; inner/outer regional areas; remote/very remote areas) in table 3A.25. In 2013, amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in major cities, 65.1 per cent attended a preschool program in the YBFS. In regional areas, 70.7 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children attended a preschool program in the YBFS. In remote areas,   
74.9 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children attended a preschool program in the YBFS (table 3A.25). The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children attending a preschool program in the YBFS is higher in 2013 than 2012 for each of the remoteness areas (table 3A.25).

Contextual data are provided for all jurisdictions on the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 4 and 5 years who attended a preschool program and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 4 and 5 years who attended a preschool program in the YBFS. These data are also presented by remoteness areas (table 3A.26).

##### Proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS who are attending by Indigenous status

Nationally in 2013, 94.5 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS were attending. In comparison, 97.7 per cent of non‑Indigenous children enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS were attending   
(figure 3.10).

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| Figure 3.10 Proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS who are attending, by Indigenous status, 2013**a, b, c, d** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.10 Proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS who are attending, by Indigenous status, 2013  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a Data for children enrolled in the YBFS include children aged 4 and 5 years on 1 July and exclude children aged 5 years old who were enrolled in a preschool program in the previous year as a 4 year old. The YBFS population is an estimate of a single year cohort for the population that will transition to full time schooling in the following year. b Enrolment and attendance data are very similar for some jurisdictions because enrolment requires the child to have attended that program for at least one hour during the reference period, or were absent due to illness or extended holiday leave and are expected to return. A child is considered to be attending a preschool program if he or she is enrolled and has attended for at least one hour during the reference period. In WA attendance rates have been applied to enrolment counts to estimate the number of children attending. This results in the proportion equalling 100 per cent.  c Non‑Indigenous data exclude children for whom Indigenous status is not stated/inadequately described. d SA data should be used with caution as enrolment numbers in Government funded preschools in 2013 were affected by the transition from a quarterly intake to a single annual intake. |
| *Source*: Derived from ABS (2014) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2013,* Cat. no. 4240.0; table 3A.27. |
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#### Access — Non‑standard hours of care in child care services

‘Non‑standard hours of care in child care services’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that government funded and/or provided child care services meet the needs of all users (box 3.11).

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| Box 3.11 Non‑standard hours of care in child care services |
| ‘Non‑standard hours of care in child care services’ is defined as the number of Australian Government CCB approved child care services providing non‑standard hours of care as a proportion of the total number of services. Data are reported by service type. Definitions of ‘standard hours’ and ‘non‑standard hours’ are provided in section 3.6.  A high or increasing proportion of services providing non‑standard hours of care can suggest a greater flexibility of services to meet the needs of families.  This indicator does not provide information on the demand for non‑standard hours of care. Further, it provides no information on whether available non‑standard hours services meet the needs of users.  Data reported for this indicator are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions but a break in series means that data for 2014 are not comparable to data for 2013 (in the previous Report) * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2014 data are available for all jurisdictions.   Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2015. |
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Provision of non‑standard hours of care can be influenced by a range of factors, such as costs to services and parents, demand for care, availability of carers, and compliance with occupational and health and safety requirements. Figure 3.11 shows the proportion of Australian Government CCB approved services that provided non‑standard hours of care by service type. Nationally in 2014, 35.1 per cent of long day care services, 15.1 per cent of family day care services, 19.2 per cent of vacation care services, 15.1 per cent of OSHC services and 44.2 per cent of in home care services provided non‑standard hours of care. No CCB approved occasional care services provided non‑standard hours of care in August 2014.

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| Figure 3.11 Australian Government CCB approved child care services providing non‑standard hours of care, by service type,  2014**a, b** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.11 Australian Government CCB approved child care services providing non-standard hours of care, by service type, 2014  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a Data are for the August 2014 quarter. bNT data for occasional care are not available. All available jurisdictions are nil for occasional care. |
| *Source*: Australian Government Department of Education (unpublished); table 3A.28. |
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Limited data are available on State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care services that offer non‑standard hours of care (table 3A.29).

#### Access — Service availability

‘Service availability’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that all families have equitable and adequate access to ECEC services (box 3.12).

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| Box 3.12 Service availability |
| The Steering Committee has identified ‘service availability’ for development and future reporting, to replace the ‘utilisation’ indicator from earlier reports. Data are not currently available for ‘service availability’. |
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### Appropriateness

#### Service affordability — child care service costs

‘Child care service costs’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that all families have equitable access to ECEC, irrespective of their financial circumstances (box 3.13).

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| Box 3.13 Child care service costs |
| ‘Child care service costs’ is defined as the median weekly cost for 50 hours of Australian Government CCB approved long day care and family day care. 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 set independently by service providers. Charging practices, including fees, are commercial decisions made by individual services, so there is significant variation in the fees 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 reported for this indicator are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2014 data are available for all jurisdictions.   Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2015. |
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Nationally, the median weekly cost for 50 hours of care in 2014 was higher for long day care ($385) than for family day care ($375) (figure 3.12). The median weekly cost for long day care increased by 4.9 per cent in real terms from 2013 to 2014 and by 9.7 per cent for family day care (table 3A.30).

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| Figure 3.12 Median cost of Australian Government CCB approved child care services, 2014 ($/week)**a, b, c** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.12 Median cost of Australian Government CCB approved child care services, 2014 ($/week)  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a Median costs are based on 50 hours of care in the reference week. Data are based on cost to parents as reported in administrative data, and may not represent the fee quoted by individual services, but are before fee reduction due to CCB and CCR. b Family day care data exclude in home care. c Family day care fee includes the parent levy. |
| *Source*: Australian Government Department of Education (unpublished); table 3A.30. |
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Median weekly costs paid to Australian Government CCB approved long day care services, by remoteness area are presented in table 3A.31. Nationally in 2014, the median weekly cost of long day care in major cities and inner regional areas ($388) was higher than in other regions ($352). The median weekly costs varied across jurisdictions.

#### Service affordability — preschool service costs

‘Preschool service costs’ is an indicator of governments’ objective that all families have equitable access to ECEC irrespective of their financial circumstances (box 3.14).

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| Box 3.14 Preschool service costs |
| ‘Preschool service costs’ is defined as the median per hour preschool program cost per child, after subsidies received by families. Median costs represent the middle value of the range of costs.  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 programs 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.   Data reported for this indicator are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2013 data are available for all jurisdictions.   Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2015. |
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Further detail about the mix of preschool services by management type (community, private, non‑government school and government) is provided in tables 3A.64, 3A.71, 3A.78, 3A.85, 3A.92, 3A.99, 3A.106 and 3A.113.

Nationally, the median cost per hour for a preschool program (after subsidies) per child was $2.10 in 2013 (table 3.10).

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| Table 3.10 Median hourly cost (after subsidies) per child enrolled in a preschool program, 2013**a, b** |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | NSW | Vic | Qldc | WAc | SA | Tas | ACT | NT | Aust | |  | | | | | | | | | | | Median cost per hour ($) | 3.20 | 2.10 | 2.20 | – | – | – | – | – | 2.10 | |
| a Median costs are calculated for 4 and 5 year old children who were enrolled in a preschool program, including those for whom the hourly cost was no cost, but excluding those for whom the hourly cost was not stated. b Data include children aged 4 and 5 years on 1 July. c For Queensland and WA data provided in aggregate, fees were calculated using averages at the provider level. – Nil or rounded to zero. |
| *Source*: ABS (unpublished TableBuilder) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2013*; Cat. no. 4240.0; table 3A.33. |
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Additional information on the costs of preschool programs for children by cost range for 2013 is presented in table 3A.32.

Data on the median hourly cost of preschool programs by remoteness area are presented in table 3A.34. Nationally in 2013, the median hourly cost of preschool in major cities was $2.40 (after subsidies), compared to $1.60 in regional areas and zero in remote areas. These median hourly costs varied across jurisdictions.

### Quality

An important focus of Australian, State and Territory governments is to set and maintain appropriate quality standards in child care and preschool services.

Data for indicators relating to quality in this Report need to be treated with caution because there are differences in reporting across jurisdictions.

#### Staff — staff quality in ECEC

‘Staff quality in ECEC’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that staff employed by ECEC services are able to provide services that reflect national qualification requirements under the NQF and in doing so meet the needs of children, although not all services fall in scope of the NQF (box 3.16). In particular, this means ensuring staff have the training and experience to provide a safe and nurturing environment that fulfils the educational and developmental needs of children (box 3.15).

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| Box 3.15 Staff quality in ECEC |
| ‘Staff quality in ECEC’ is defined by two measures:   * the proportion of paid primary contact staff employed by Australian Government CCB approved child care services, by relevant formal qualifications, or three or more years of relevant experience. A relevant formal qualification relates to the highest level of qualification that a staff member has completed in an ECEC related field at a Certificate level III or above * the proportion of workers delivering preschool programs who are at least three year university trained and early childhood qualified. Workers delivering preschool programs are defined as ECEC workers who are employed, and paid, by an ECEC service provider as a principal/director/coordinator/teacher‑in‑charge, group leader/teacher, assistant/aide or other contact worker to deliver a preschool program. Workers who are early childhood qualified include the fields of qualification: teaching (early childhood related), teaching (primary), teaching (other) and other early childhood related.   Some studies and research (for example, OECD 2006) have shown a link between a higher proportion of qualified and experienced primary contact staff and a higher quality service, suggesting that a high or increasing proportion is desirable.  Data reported for these measures are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time for paid primary contact staff employed by Australian Government CCB approved child care services. Data are not comparable across jurisdictions and a break in series means that data for 2013 are not comparable to data for 2012 (in the previous Report) for workers delivering preschool programs * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2013 data are available for all jurisdictions.   Data quality information for paid primary contact staff employed by Australian Government CCB approved child care services is under development. Data quality information for workers delivering preschool programs is at www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2015. |
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##### Proportion of paid primary contact staff employed by Australian Government CCB approved child care services, by relevant formal qualifications, or three years or more relevant experience

Data on full time equivalent staff, family day carers and unpaid staff employed by Australian Government CCB approved child care services are presented in table 3A.35.

Nationally, there were 99 655 paid primary contact staff employed by Australian Government CCB approved child care services in 2013 (table 3A.36). The proportion of paid primary contact staff with a relevant formal qualification or three or more years relevant experience was 82.6 per cent nationally in 2013 but varied across jurisdictions. Of this proportion, 74.1 per cent of paid primary contact staff held a relevant formal qualification at or above Certificate level III, and 8.5 per cent held no relevant formal qualification, but had three or more years of relevant experience (figure 3.13).

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| Figure 3.13 Paid primary contact staff employed by Australian Government CCB approved child care services, by relevant qualification, 2013**a** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.13 Paid primary contact staff employed by Australian Government CCB approved child care services, by relevant qualification, 2013  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a Data are from the 2013 *National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census*. Refer to box 3.6 and table 3A.36 for more information. |
| *Source*: Australian Government Department of Education, *National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census*, *2013;* table 3A.36. |
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Nationally in 2013, the majority of paid primary contact staff with relevant formal qualifications in Australian Government CCB approved child care services held a certificate III or IV, or a diploma or advanced diploma (44.4 per cent and 40.1 per cent, respectively) (table 3A.37). Of the 11 477 (or 15.5 per cent) paid primary contact staff with a bachelor degree or above, 82.8 per cent held university qualifications in the field of early childhood education (table 3A.37).

Nationally in 2013, 80.9 per cent of paid primary contact staff in Australian Government CCB approved child care services undertook relevant in‑service training in the previous   
12 months (figure 3.14).

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| Figure 3.14 Proportion of paid primary contact staff in Australian Government CCB approved child care services who undertook relevant in‑service training in previous 12 months, 2013**a** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.14 Proportion of paid primary contact staff in Australian Government CCB approved child care serivces who undertook relevant in-service training in previous 12 months, 2013  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a Data for from the *National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census*. Refer to box 3.6 and table 3A.38 for more information. |
| *Source*: Australian Government Department of Education (unpublished) *National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census, 2013*;table 3A.38. |
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Additional contextual data to support the staff‑quality performance information on staff tenure in Australian Government approved child care services are reported in table 3A.39.

##### Proportion of workers delivering preschool programs who are at least three year university trained and early childhood qualified

Nationally, there were 42 464 workers delivering preschool programs in 2013. The proportion of these workers nationally delivering preschool programs who were at least three year university trained and early childhood qualified in 2013 was 41.2 per cent (figure 3.15).

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| Figure 3.15 Proportion of workers delivering preschool programs who are at least three year university trained and early childhood qualified, 2013 |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.15 Proportion of workers delivering preschool programs who are at least three year university trained and early childhood qualified, 2013  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a Worker level data in the NECECC do not include a unique identifier and as a consequence they can only be reported as episodes of workers delivering preschool programs. These data should be used with caution as there is a high likelihood of worker duplication across and within source data files, due to the same worker delivering preschool programs at multiple service providers during the reference period.  b Workers who are early childhood qualified include the fields of qualification: teaching (early childhood related), teaching (primary), teaching (other) and other early childhood related. Workers who have a non‑early childhood related qualification are not included. |
| *Source*: ABS (unpublished TableBuilder) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2013,* Cat. no. 4240.0, Canberra; table 3A.40. |
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Data on workers who are four year university trained and early childhood qualified are presented in table 3A.39. Nationally, the proportion of workers delivering preschool programs who are four year university trained and early childhood qualified was   
27.6 per cent.

NSW, Victoria, Queensland and SA provided data on the proportion of preschool staff undertaking training in 2013‑14 (tables 3A.63, 3A.70, 3A.77 and 3A.91).

### Standards

Under the NP NQAECEC, COAG has established a jointly governed NQF for ECEC, which replaced previous separate licensing and quality assurance processes (box 3.16).

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| Box 3.16 National Quality Framework |
| On 7 December 2009 COAG endorsed a *National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care* (NQF) (see also box 3.2). The NQF is a uniform national system jointly governed by the Australian Government and States and Territory governments.  The new framework aims to raise quality and enable continuous improvement in ECEC through a national applied law regulatory scheme that includes:   * a National Quality Standard (NQS) * a new rating system to complement the NQS * a streamlined regulatory system * the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) — the new national body responsible for providing oversight of the new system and ensuring consistency of approach.   The NQF came into effect from 1 January 2012 and applies to long day care, family day care, and OSHC services and preschools, with the gradual introduction over subsequent years of improved ratios and qualifications. The NQS comprises guiding principles, quality areas, standards and elements. There are seven quality areas:   * Educational program and practice * Children’s health and safety * Physical environment * Staffing arrangements * Relationships with children * Partnerships with families and communities * Leadership and service management.   The NQF creates a jointly governed uniform national approach to the regulation and quality assessment of education and care services. It replaces the previously separate State and Territory licensing and national quality assurance processes for those services under the NQF. ACECQA oversees the NQS and its application across jurisdictions to ensure that it is implemented in a nationally consistent way. |
| *Source*: COAG (2009a); Australian Government Department of Education (2013a and unpublished). |
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#### Standards — service approvals and licensing

‘Service approvals and licensing’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that ECEC services meet the minimum standards deemed necessary to provide a safe and nurturing environment, and to meet the educational and developmental needs of children. State and Territory governments are responsible for service approvals of ECEC services under the NQF and for licensing those out of scope of the NQF in their jurisdictions (box 3.17).

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| Box 3.17 Service approvals and licensing |
| ‘Service approvals and licensing’ is defined as complying with regulations covering operational requirements, such as the number of children services can care for, safety standards and the qualification of carers. It has been identified for development and reporting in future. Descriptive information is reported in the interim on State and Territory monitoring and inspection regimes for NQF approved and State and Territory government licensed or registered services. The profile section also includes descriptive information on the number and type of services approved and licensed by State and Territory governments.  This indicator does not provide information on the degree to which service approvals and licensing translates into higher quality service outcomes above the minimum standards of care. State and Territory governments also undertake other activities aimed at the promotion of quality, such as publishing curriculum materials and other resources, and providing education to the sector.  Data for this indicator are not available for the 2015 Report. |
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State and Territory governments monitor and inspect NQF approved and State and Territory government licensed or registered ECEC services. Table 3.11 provides an overview of the monitoring and inspection regimes that operate across jurisdictions.

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

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| Table 3.11 State and Territory monitoring and inspection regimes, for NQF approved and State and Territory government licensed or registered ECEC services, 2013‑14 |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Monitoring activities | Unit | NSW | Vic | Qld | WA | SA | Tas | ACT | NT | | Proactive monitoringa |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | Required frequency of inspections |  | Annual | Risk based | .. | 1‑3 years depending on prior rating | na | Various based on the principle of earned autonomy | Yearly | Biannual | | Estimated share announced visitsb | % | 32 | 41 | 69 | 23 | 49 | 70 | 75 | 70 | | Estimated share unannounced inspectionsc | % | 69 | 59 | 31 | 77 | 51 | 30 | 25 | 30 | | Reactive monitoringd |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | Data on substantiated breaches arising from complaintse |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | Sanctions for breachesf |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | Under‑performing services incur  follow‑up or more frequent inspections |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | Prosecutions initiated against services during 2013‑14g | no. | 2 | – | – | 7 | na | – | – | – | |
| a Proactive monitoring refers to the ongoing program of visits/inspections to services that are determined by legislation and/or the monitoring policies in each jurisdiction. b Announced visits are scheduled with the service provider including but not limited to consultative and advisory meetings. Assessment and rating visits under the NQS are included. c Unannounced inspections of services are used to assess performance against licence conditions including, but not limited to, investigations of complaints. Unannounced inspections allow the operation of the service to be monitored under normal operational circumstances. d A reactive monitoring regime can be triggered by either a complaint or a service’s failure to comply with legislative requirements.e See detailed data in attachment tables 3A.65, 3A.72, 3A.79, 3A.86, 3A.93, 3A.100, 3A.107 and 3A.114. f Jurisdictions can apply a range of actions to underperforming services, which can include administrative and/or statutory sanctions including prosecution. Not all sanctions are included. g Prosecutions refer to all prosecutions against services that are brought under the National Law or the relevant children’s services Act in each jurisdiction. **na**Not available. –Nil or rounded to zero. |
| *Source*: State and Territory governments (unpublished). |
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#### Standards — achievement of the National Quality Standard

‘Achievement of the National Quality Standard’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that ECEC services meet the standards deemed necessary to provide a safe and nurturing environment, and to meet the educational and developmental needs of children (box 3.18).

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| Box 3.18 Achievement of the National Quality Standard |
| ‘Achievement of the National Quality Standard’ is defined as the proportion overall and for each of the seven quality areas under the NQF, of NQF approved services with a rating of Meeting NQS or Exceeding NQS. There are two types of approved services under the NQF:   * Centre‑based care service: an education and care service other than a family day care service. This includes most long day care, preschool and OSHC services that are delivered at a centre * Family day care service: an education and care service delivered through the use of two or more educators to provide education and care for children in residences, whether or not the service also provides education and care to children at a place other than the residence.   The eight measures reported are:   * 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 * Overall.   To determine a rating for each quality area within a service, firstly all 58 elements, located across the 18 standards, are assessed as being ‘met or not met. If all elements in a standard are met, the standard will be rated as Meeting NQS or Exceeding NQS. Each quality area is then rated by calculating the rating of all of the standards within that quality area. If all standards are met, the quality area will be rated as Meeting NQS. If at least two of the standards are rated Exceeding NQS and all other standards are met, the quality area will be rated Exceeding NQS. A large number of services have a rating of Working Towards NQS as the NQS sets a higher benchmark for all children’s education and care services. Services are expected to work towards meeting the higher benchmark.  Services that receive an overall rating of Meeting NQS can be rated as Meeting NQS in all seven quality areas or have a mix of quality areas rated Meeting NQS and Exceeding NQS. Services receive an overall rating of Exceeding NQS if four or more quality areas are rated as Exceeding NQS, including two of the four following quality areas: Quality Area 1, Quality Area 5, Quality Area 6 and Quality Area 7 (ACECQA 2013). Services with an overall rating of Exceeding NQS can apply to ACECQA to be awarded an Excellent rating. Services with an overall rating of Excellent are included in data for services with an Exceeding NQS rating.  A high proportion of services overall with quality areas meeting or exceeding NQS suggests a high quality of service to children and parents. Data reported for these measures are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required data as at 30 June 2014 are available for all jurisdictions.   Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2015. |
| *Source*: ACECQA (2013). |
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Data on the numbers and proportions of NQF approved services with a quality rating by service type are provided in table 3.12. Nationally, 40.3 per cent of services had received a quality rating at 30 June 2014. The majority of services with a quality rating were centre‑based care services. State and Territory data are presented in table 3A.41.

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| Table 3.12 NQF approved services with a quality rating, by service type, Australia, 30 June 2014**a, b** |
| |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | Number of NQF approved services with a quality rating | Number of NQF approved services | Proportion of NQF approved services with a quality rating | | Centre‑based care | 5 598 | 13 633 | 41.1 | | Family day care | 223 | 802 | 27.8 | | **Total** | **5 821** | **14 435** | **40.3** | |
| a Data as at 30 June 2014 are cumulative of services with a quality rating since ratings began in June 2012. At 30 June 2014 this represents 40.3 per cent of all NQF approved services. Data for the number and proportion of NQF approved services with a quality rating are available at a national level only for centre‑based care and family day care services. b 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. |
| *Source*: ACECQA (2014) *NQF Snapshot Q2 2014;* table 3A.41. |
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##### Ratings by quality area

Nationally, the proportion of NQF approved services assessed from June 2012 to   
June 2014 with a rating level of meeting or exceeding the NQS varied by quality area:

* 71.4 per cent of services met or exceeded the NQS in Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice (47.8 per cent met, 23.6 per cent exceeded)
* 77.5 per cent of services met or exceeded the NQS in Quality Area 2: Children’s health and safety (55.8 per cent met, 21.7 per cent exceeded)
* 75.7 per cent of services met or exceeded the NQS in Quality Area 3: Physical environment (52.3 per cent met, 23.4 per cent exceeded)
* 89.7 per cent of services met or exceeded the NQS in Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements (61.0 per cent met, 28.7 per cent exceeded)
* 88.2 per cent of services met or exceeded the NQS in Quality Area 5: Relationships with children (50.7 per cent met, 37.5 per cent exceeded)
* 87.0 per cent of services met or exceeded the NQS in Quality Area 6: Partnerships with families and communities (53.8 per cent met, 33.3 per cent exceeded)
* 77.6 per cent of services met or exceeded the NQS in Quality Area 7: Leadership and service management (49.1 per cent met, 28.5 per cent exceeded) (table 3.13 and   
  tables 3A.42–48).

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| Table 3.13 Proportion of NQF approved services with a quality rating, by quality rating level and quality area, 30 June 2014**a, b, c, d** |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | NSW | Vic | Qld | WA | SA | Tas | ACT | NT | Aust | | **QA 1 Educational program and practice** | | | | | | | | | | | Meeting NQS | 48.2 | 54.5 | 47.7 | 33.3 | 32.9 | 45.5 | 29.9 | 20.2 | 47.8 | | Exceeding NQS | 17.8 | 29.5 | 28.5 | 20.2 | 37.1 | 11.4 | 15.0 | 12.3 | 23.6 | | Total Meeting or Exceeding NQS | 66.0 | 84.0 | 76.2 | 53.6 | 70.0 | 56.8 | 44.9 | 32.5 | 71.4 | | **QA 2 Children’s health and safety** | | | | | | | | | | | Meeting NQS | 55.0 | 69.5 | 42.4 | 41.0 | 59.9 | 38.6 | 49.7 | 23.7 | 55.8 | | Exceeding NQS | 15.4 | 20.0 | 40.4 | 22.4 | 25.3 | 19.3 | 21.1 | 7.9 | 21.7 | | Total Meeting or Exceeding NQS | 70.4 | 89.5 | 82.8 | 63.4 | 85.2 | 58.0 | 70.7 | 31.6 | 77.5 | | **QA 3 Physical environment** | | | | | | | | | | | Meeting NQS | 51.5 | 61.3 | 48.8 | 42.6 | 45.6 | 39.8 | 34.7 | 29.8 | 52.3 | | Exceeding NQS | 17.9 | 28.4 | 29.8 | 16.4 | 31.2 | 15.9 | 16.3 | 17.5 | 23.4 | | Total Meeting or Exceeding NQS | 69.4 | 89.6 | 78.7 | 59.0 | 76.8 | 55.7 | 51.0 | 47.4 | 75.7 | | **QA 4 Staffing arrangements** | | | | | | | | | | | Meeting NQS | 62.3 | 68.3 | 48.6 | 55.7 | 64.1 | 56.8 | 57.8 | 39.5 | 61.0 | | Exceeding NQS | 23.8 | 26.2 | 44.7 | 29.5 | 30.0 | 27.3 | 33.3 | 19.3 | 28.7 | | Total Meeting or Exceeding NQS | 86.2 | 94.5 | 93.3 | 85.2 | 94.1 | 84.1 | 91.2 | 58.8 | 89.7 | | **QA 5 Relationships with children** | | | | | | | | | | | Meeting NQS | 58.4 | 51.7 | 37.9 | 50.3 | 32.1 | 54.5 | 36.7 | 39.5 | 50.7 | | Exceeding NQS | 27.9 | 42.7 | 49.7 | 34.4 | 59.1 | 22.7 | 37.4 | 27.2 | 37.5 | | Total Meeting or Exceeding NQS | 86.3 | 94.4 | 87.7 | 84.7 | 91.1 | 77.3 | 74.1 | 66.7 | 88.2 | | **QA 6 Partnerships with families and communities** | | | | | | | | | | | Meeting NQS | 57.0 | 58.7 | 43.7 | 48.1 | 44.7 | 43.2 | 38.8 | 55.3 | 53.8 | | Exceeding NQS | 27.5 | 37.5 | 41.8 | 27.9 | 40.5 | 31.8 | 23.8 | 23.7 | 33.3 | | Total Meeting or Exceeding NQS | 84.6 | 96.2 | 85.4 | 76.0 | 85.2 | 75.0 | 62.6 | 78.9 | 87.0 | | **QA 7 Leadership and service management** | | | | | | | | | | | Meeting NQS | 50.3 | 57.3 | 39.1 | 43.2 | 43.9 | 29.5 | 44.2 | 30.7 | 49.1 | | Exceeding NQS | 20.9 | 29.7 | 43.8 | 29.5 | 36.7 | 29.5 | 29.9 | 14.0 | 28.5 | | Total Meeting or Exceeding NQS | 71.2 | 87.0 | 82.9 | 72.7 | 80.6 | 59.1 | 74.1 | 44.7 | 77.6 | |
| a Data as at 30 June 2014 are cumulative of services with a quality rating since ratings began in  June 2012. At 30 June 2014 this represents 40.3 per cent of all NQF approved services b Services with more than one quality rating are reported by their most recent quality rating. c Regulatory authorities in each jurisdiction differ in their approach to selecting services for quality rating. 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. Caution should also be taken when making comparisons between jurisdictions. d Regulatory authorities received differential levels of funding to support implementation of the new assessment and rating function. Assessment and rating is one component of the NQF and jurisdictions must also address complex licensing and/or compliance matters. The time invested by authorised officers in compliance to maximise the safety, health and wellbeing of children has an impact on the number of services that have received a quality rating. |
| *Source*: ACECQA (2014 and unpublished) *NQF Snapshot Q2 2014*; tables 3A.42–48. |
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##### Overall quality rating for services

Data on NQF approved services with a quality rating by overall quality rating level and service type are provided in table 3.14. Services that receive an overall rating of Meeting NQS can be rated as Meeting NQS in all seven quality areas or have a mix of quality areas rated Meeting NQS and Exceeding NQS. Services receive an overall rating of Exceeding NQS if four or more quality areas are rated as Exceeding NQS, including two of the four following quality areas: Quality Area 1, Quality Area 5, Quality Area 6 and Quality Area 7 (ACECQA 2013). Nationally, centre‑based and family day care services are more likely to be rated as Working Towards NQS (37.5 per cent and 41.2 per cent respectively) than the other quality rating levels. State and Territory data are presented in table 3A.41.

National data on NQF approved services with a quality rating by overall quality rating level and service type are provided in table 3.14.

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| Table 3.14 Approved services with a quality rating, by quality rating level and service type, Australia, 30 June 2014**a, b, c, d** |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | Significant Improvement required | | Working Towards NQS | | Meeting NQS | | Exceeding NQS | | Total | |  | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % | no. | % | no. | | Centre‑based care | 5 | 0.1 | 2 098 | 37.5 | 2 023 | 36.1 | 1 472 | 26.3 | 5 598 | | Family day care | 1 | 0.4 | 92 | 41.2 | 72 | 32.3 | 58 | 26.0 | 223 | | **Total** | **6** | **0.1** | **2 190** | **37.6** | **2 095** | **36.0** | **1 530** | **26.3** | **5 821** | |
| a Data as at 30 June 2014 are cumulative of services with a quality rating since ratings began in June 2012. At 30 June 2014 this represents 40.3 per cent of all NQF approved services. Data are available at a national level only for centre‑based care and family day care. b Services with more than one quality rating are reported according to their most recent quality rating. c 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. d Exceeding NQS includes services awarded an Excellent rating by ACECQA. There were 14 services nationally at 30 June 2014 with an Excellent rating. |
| *Source*: ACECQA (2014) *NQF Snapshot Q2 2014;* table 3A.41*.* |
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Nationally, 62.3 per cent of services that have received a quality rating met or exceeded the NQS overall (36.0 per cent met, 26.3 per cent exceeded). These proportions varied by jurisdiction (figure 3.16).

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| Figure 3.16 Proportion of NQF approved services with a quality rating, by overall quality rating level, 30 June 2014**a, b, c, d, e, f, g** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.16 Proportion of NQF approved services with a quality rating, by overall quality rating level, 30 June 2014  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a Data as at 30 June 2014 are cumulative of services with a quality rating since ratings began in  June 2012. At 30 June 2014 this represents 40.3 per cent of all NQF approved services. b The percentages for Significant Improvement Required are zero for NSW, Tasmania, the ACT and the NT, 0.1 per cent for Victoria, Queensland and Australia, 0.4 per cent for SA and 1.1 per cent for WA. c Exceeding NQS includes services awarded an Excellent rating by ACECQA. There were 14 services nationally at 30 June 2014 with an Excellent rating. d Services with more than one quality rating are reported by their most recent quality rating. e Services that receive an overall rating of Meeting NQS can be rated as Meeting NQS in all seven quality areas or have a mix of quality areas rated Meeting NQS and Exceeding NQS. Services receive an overall rating of Exceeding NQS if four or more quality areas are rated as Exceeding NQS, including two of the four following quality areas: Quality Area 1, Quality Area 5, Quality Area 6 and Quality Area 7 (ACECQA 2013). f 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. Caution should also be taken when making comparisons between jurisdictions.g Regulatory authorities received differential levels of funding to support implementation of the new assessment and rating function. Assessment and rating is one component of the NQF and jurisdictions must also address complex licensing and/or compliance matters. The time invested by authorised officers in compliance to maximise the safety, health and wellbeing of children has an impact on the number of services that have received a quality rating. |
| *Source*: ACECQA (2014) *NQF Snapshot Q2 2014;* table 3A.41. |
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#### Standards — substantiated breaches arising from complaints

‘Substantiated breaches arising from complaints’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that government funded or provided ECEC services meet the needs and expectations of users (box 3.19).

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| Box 3.19 Substantiated breaches arising from complaints |
| ‘Substantiated breaches arising from complaints’ is defined as the number of substantiated breaches arising from complaints divided by the total number of NQF approved and State and Territory government licensed or registered services. Results are presented by service type.  All else being equal, a low or decreasing rate of substantiated breaches arising from complaints can suggest a higher quality service. A high or increasing rate of substantiated breaches does not necessarily mean that a jurisdiction has lower service safety and quality, it might mean it has a more effective reporting and monitoring regime.  Breaches data need to be interpreted with care, because:   * one complaint can include multiple breaches. Breaches identified as a result of normal monitoring and inspection visits are excluded from these data * clients who are well informed can be more likely to make a complaint than less informed clients. Some jurisdictions give priority to developing client groups who are well informed, as part of improving their service delivery * the number of approved care providers or parent users per service differs in each service across states and territories * complaints management systems vary across jurisdictions.   Data reported for this indicator are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) within some jurisdictions over time but are not comparable across jurisdictions * incomplete for the current reporting period. All required 2013‑14 data were not available for Queensland.   Data quality information for this indicator is under development. |
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Breaches of legislation, regulations or conditions vary in circumstance and severity. Some breaches can have serious implications for the quality of care provided to children (such as requirements to undertake criminal record checks for staff and requirements to install smoke detectors). Other breaches do not necessarily directly affect the quality of care (such as requirements to display licensing information). Similarly, action taken by regulatory authorities in response to a breach can range from a requirement to comply within a specified time frame through to licensing action or prosecution.

Most jurisdictions provided data on the number of substantiated breaches arising from complaints in 2013‑14 (tables 3A.65, 3A.72, 3A.79, 3A.86, 3A.93, 3A.100, 3A.107 and 3A.114). The proportion of substantiated breaches arising from complaints against which action was taken is also presented.

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

‘Hospital separations for external causes of injury’ (occurring in ECEC) is a proxy indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that ECEC services meet the care, educational and developmental needs of children in a safe and nurturing environment (box 3.20).

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| Box 3.20 Hospital separations for external causes of injury |
| ‘Hospital separations for external causes of injury’ is defined as the number of hospital separations for children aged 0–4 years resulting from an external cause of injury occurring in ‘school’ as a proportion of total hospital separations for children aged 0–4 years resulting from an external cause of injury. For children aged 0–4 years, ‘school’ incorporates a range of formal ECEC settings including kindergarten, preschool and centre‑based child care services.  Low or decreasing hospitalisations for external causes of injury for children aged 0–4 years occurring in a ‘school’ can indicate better performance towards achieving the objective of providing the care, educational and developmental needs of children in a safe and nurturing environment.  All hospital separation data need to be interpreted with care. Nationally, no place of occurrence was reported for some hospitalisations of children aged 0–4 years. As a result, this indicator should be interpreted as the minimum number of hospital separations for an external cause of injury that occurred in ECEC services.  Data reported for this indicator are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2012‑13 data are available for all jurisdictions.   Data quality information for this indicator is under development. |
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Limiting the data to children aged 0–4 years reduces the likelihood that the ‘school’ place of occurrence includes children in full time compulsory schooling, which children generally attend when they are aged 5 years or over. For children in the older age group, it is not possible to separate injuries that occur in ECEC from those that occur in a full time school setting, so they are excluded from the indicator.

The data can capture children who were injured at these ‘school’ services without necessarily attending them. Family day care services, which are typically provided in the carer’s home, are not likely to be covered under ‘schools’. External cause refers to the environmental event, circumstance or condition that causes the injury. People admitted to hospital as a result of a pre‑existing illness or condition (such as asthma) are excluded.

Nationally, in 2012‑13, there were 35 151 injuries to children aged 0–4 years that resulted in a hospital admission (table 3A.49). Males accounted for approximately 58.6 per cent of these admissions. In total, the most common causes of injury to children aged 0–4 years were falls (29.9 per cent), complications of medical and surgical care (27.6 per cent) and exposure to mechanical forces (21.1 per cent) (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare [AIHW] unpublished). Males and females generally experienced similar causes of injury.

Nationally, in 2012‑13, 33.6 per cent of injuries requiring hospitalisation occurred in the child’s home. This reflects that children in this age group spend the majority of their time in the home and about half do not attend formal care. Across jurisdictions, on average   
2.4 per cent of injuries were reported as occurring at a ‘school’ (which includes day nursery, centre‑based child care, and public or private kindergartens and preschools) (figure 3.17).

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| Figure 3.17 Hospital separations for external causes of injury for children aged 0–4 years, proportion by place of occurrence, 2012‑13**a, b, c, d** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.17 Hospital separations for external causes of injury for children aged 0-4 years, proportion by place of occurrence, 2012-13  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a External cause refers to the environmental event, circumstance or condition that causes the injury. People admitted to hospital as a result of a pre‑existing illness or condition, such as asthma, are excluded. bA hospital separation is an episode of care for a person admitted to a hospital. c Separations without an external cause and those for which care type was reported as newborn with no qualified days, and records for hospital boarders or posthumous organ procurement are excluded. dDue to the high levels of non‑reporting for place of occurrence, all hospital separations data need to be interpreted with care.eThe definition of school will include a range of different formal early childhood education and care (ECEC) services’ settings including kindergarten, preschool and child care services. |
| *Source*: AIHW (unpublished) *Australian Hospital Statistics 2012‑13*; table 3A.49. |
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### Efficiency

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

#### Inputs per output unit — total government recurrent expenditure on ECEC per child in the community

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

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| Box 3.21 Total government recurrent expenditure on ECEC per child in the community |
| ‘Total government recurrent expenditure on ECEC per child in the community’ is defined as Australian Government recurrent expenditure and State and Territory government recurrent expenditure on ECEC per child aged 0–12 years in the community.  All efficiency data should 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.  All Australian Government recurrent expenditure reported for this indicator is provided for 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.  Government expenditure includes recurrent expenditure on child care and preschool services. Unit cost data for ECEC do not yet contain an estimate of user cost of capital.  Data reported for this indicator are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) within jurisdictions over time but are not comparable across jurisdictions * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2013‑14 data are available for all jurisdictions.   Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2015. |
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Nationally, the average annual growth rate of Australian Government real recurrent expenditure was 9.3 per cent between 2009‑10 and 2013‑14 (figure 3.18).

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| Figure 3.18 Australian Government real recurrent expenditure on child care services per child aged 0–12 years in the community (2013‑14 dollars)**a, b, c, d, e** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.18 Australian Government real recurrent expenditure on child care services per child aged 0-12 years in the community (2013-14 dollars)  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a Includes recurrent expenditure on child care services. Due to machinery of Government changes, 2013‑14 recurrent expenditure only includes 9.5 months of Department of Education expenses. Departmental expenses are a small component of recurrent expenditure. b Estimated resident population as at 31 December in each year, based on the *2011 Census of Population and Housing.* The Australian total includes children in other territories. c Time series financial data are adjusted to 2013‑14 dollars using the General Government Final Consumption Expenditure (GGFCE) chain price deflator (2013‑14 = 100) (table 2A.51). See chapter 2 (section 2.5­6) for details. d The Australian total includes a component of expenditure that cannot be disaggregated by State and Territory. eExpenditure includes payment of Child Care Tax Rebate. |
| *Source*: Australian Government Department of Education (unpublished); ABS (unpublished) *Australian Demographic Statistics*, Cat. no. 3101.0; table 3A.50. |
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Additional time series data from 2004‑05 are presented for Australian Government real recurrent expenditure on child care services per child in table 3A.50.

Data were supplied by all State and Territory governments on their expenditure for both child care and preschool services. Differing collection methods and changes to policies make it difficult to compare expenditure across jurisdictions and over time. Nationally in 2013‑14, State and Territory government recurrent expenditure was $348 per child (figure 3.19), increasing from $246 in 2009‑10.

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| Figure 3.19 State and Territory government real recurrent expenditure on ECEC per child aged 0–12 years in the community (2013‑14 dollars)**a, b, c** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.19 State and Territory government real recurrent expenditure on ECEC per child aged 0-12 years in the community (2013-14 dollars)  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a Includes State and Territory recurrent expenditure on child care and preschool services. b Estimated resident population as at 31 December in each year, based on the *2011 Census of Population and Housing.* c Time series financial data are adjusted to 2013‑14 dollars using the GGFCE chain price deflator (2013‑14 = 100) (table 2A.51). See chapter 2 (section 2.5­6) for details. |
| *Source*: State and Territory governments (unpublished); ABS (unpublished) *Australian Demographic Statistics*, Cat. no. 3101.0; table 3A.51. |
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Additional time series data from 2004‑05 are presented for State and Territory government real expenditure on ECEC in table 3A.51.

Figure 3.20 shows the combined recurrent expenditure from both the Australian Government and the State and Territory governments per child in the community aged   
0–12 years over the period 2009‑10 to 2013‑14. Nationally, the combined recurrent expenditure was $1969 in 2013‑14, an increase of $585 since 2009‑10.

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| Figure 3.20 Total government real recurrent expenditure on ECEC per child aged 0–12 years in the community (2013‑14 dollars)**a, b, c, d** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.20 Total government real recurrent expenditure on ECEC per child aged 0-12 years in the community (2013-14 dollars)  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a Includes recurrent expenditure on child care and preschool services from both Australian Government (for child care services only) and State and Territory governments (for child care services and preschool services). b See notes to figures 3.18 and 3.19 for further detail on the Australian Government’s and State and Territory governments’ recurrent expenditure data. c Estimated resident population as at 31 December in each year, based on the *2011 Census of Population and Housing.* d Time series financial data are adjusted to 2013‑14 dollars using the GGFCE chain price deflator (2013‑14 = 100) (table 2A.51). See chapter 2 (section 2.5‑6) for details. |
| *Source*: Australian Government Department of Education (unpublished); State and Territory governments (unpublished); ABS (unpublished) *Australian Demographic Statistics*, Cat. no. 3101.0; tables 3A.50 and 3A.51. |
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#### Inputs per output unit — Australian Government recurrent expenditure per child attending CCB approved child care

‘Australian Government recurrent expenditure per child attending CCB approved child care’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to maximise the availability and quality of services through the efficient use of taxpayer resources (box 3.22).

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| Box 3.22 Australian Government recurrent expenditure per child attending CCB approved child care |
| ‘Australian Government recurrent expenditure per child attending CCB approved child care’ is defined as Australian Government recurrent expenditure per child aged 0–12 years attending Australian Government CCB approved child care services.  All efficiency data should 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 recurrent expenditure per child can indicate greater efficiency of government expenditure.  Data reported for this indicator are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2014 data are available for all jurisdictions.   Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2015. |
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Figure 3.21 shows Australian Government recurrent expenditure on each child aged 0–12 years attending Australian Government CCB approved child care services. Nationally in 2013‑14, Australian Government recurrent expenditure per child attending CCB approved child care services was $5589.

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| Figure 3.21 Australian Government recurrent expenditure per child aged  0–12 years attending Australian Government CCB approved child care services, 2013‑14**a, b, c** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.21 Australian Government recurrent expenditure per child aged 0-12 years attending Australian Government CCB approved child care services, 2013-14  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a Includes recurrent expenditure for some children aged over 12 years, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children with special needs. b Children can use more than one type of care. Children are counted once for each type of care they use. c Attendance data relate to March quarter 2014. |
| *Source*: Australian Government Department of Education (unpublished); table 3A.52. |
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### Outcomes

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

#### Family work‑related needs for child care

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

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| Box 3.23 Family work‑related needs for child care |
| ‘Family work‑related needs for child care’ is defined as the proportion of children aged 0–12 years in families for whom additional formal child care was currently required for work‑related reasons.  Additional care currently required refers to children who were already attending formal child care and parents wished for them to attend more, as well as children who did not attend any formal child care and parents wished for them to attend.  A low or decreasing proportion may indicate more families’ work‑related needs for additional formal child care, are being met. Caution should be used when interpreting these data as they are not intended to represent the ‘unmet demand’ for formal child care.  Data reported for this indicator are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2011 data are available for all jurisdictions.   Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2015. |
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Data for this indicator were obtained from the ABS *2011 Childhood Education and Care Survey* (CEaCS). Box 3.24 includes further information about the 2011CEaCS.

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| Box 3.24 ABS Childhood Education and Care Survey |
| The *Childhood Education and Care Survey* (CEaCS) was conducted for the first time in June 2008, integrating the ABS Child Care Survey (last conducted in 2005) with a new topic on Early Years Learning, and was conducted again in 2011. In 2011, the CEaCS collected information on children aged 0–12 years living in a sample of private dwellings.  The CEaCS collected a range of information, including on families’ usual care arrangements, requirements for additional formal child care or preschool services for their children and whether the families would have used additional formal child care or preschool services if they became available.  Estimates from the surveys are subject to sampling variability. Estimates for the smaller jurisdictions are based on small sample sizes and are subject to higher sampling error, in particular data for Tasmania, the ACT and the NT. Aggregated survey data also need to be interpreted with care, because oversupply and undersupply of child care places can be specific to particular areas, including small and remote communities.  In addition, the CEaCS is a household survey, with parents responding to questions on use of services. Some children attend a preschool program within a child care setting, for example in a long day care service, where the costs would generally be higher than in a stand‑alone preschool. It is expected that the parent would report the service type as a long day care centre, rather than preschool, but the parent might report the service type as preschool. |
| *Source*: ABS (2012). |
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Nationally in 2011, additional formal child care was currently required for mainly work‑related reasons for 2.7 per cent of children aged 0–12 years (figure 3.22).

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| Figure 3.22 Proportion of children aged 0–12 years for whom additional formal child care was currently required for mainly work‑related reasons, 2011**a, b, c, d** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.22 Proportion of children aged 0-12 years for whom additional formal child care was currently required for mainly work-related reasons, 2011  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a Data for the NT are not published due to small numbers, but are included in the Australian total. b As data for this indicator are from a survey, the *2011 CEaCS,* they are subject to error. Error bars represent the 95 per cent confidence interval associated with each point estimate. c Current requirements for additional formal child care includes: children attending formal child care and parents wished for them to attend more and children who do not currently use formal child care and parents wished for them to attend. These data are not intended for use as a measure of ‘unmet demand’. d The main reason for currently requiring additional formal child care was work related. Work‑related reasons include ‘work’, ‘looking for work’ and ‘work‑related study or training’**.** |
| *Source*: ABS (unpublished TableBuilder) *Childhood Education and Care, Australia, June 2011*, Cat. no. 4402.0; table 3A.53. |
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#### Demand for ECEC

**‘**Demand for ECEC’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that ECEC services meet the requirements of all Australian families (box 3.25).

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| Box 3.25 Demand for ECEC |
| ‘Demand for ECEC’ is defined as the proportion of children aged 0–12 years for whom additional formal child care or preschool services were currently required.  Additional care currently required refers to children who were already attending formal child care and parents wished for them to attend more, as well as children who did not attend any formal child care and parents wished for them to attend.  Caution should be used when interpreting these data as they are not intended to represent the ‘unmet demand’ for formal child care or preschool services. Expressed need for additional formal child care or preschool services currently does not necessarily indicate whether the current additional need has been met or will be met. An increasing proportion of children with expressed need for additional ECEC may suggest that additional service availability will be required in the future.  Data reported for this indicator are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2011 data are available for all jurisdictions.   Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2015. |
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Nationally in 2011, additional formal child care or preschool services were currently required for 5.5 per cent of children aged 0–12 years (figure 3.23). In 2011, additional formal child care services were required for approximately 149 400 children aged 0–12 years, and additional preschool services were required for 67 000 children (table 3A.54). This table also provides data on additional formal child care or preschool services currently required for 0–5 year olds.

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| Figure 3.23 Proportion of children aged 0–12 years who currently required additional formal child care or preschool, 2011**a, b, c, d** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.23 Proportion of children aged 0-12 years who currently required additional formal child care or preschool, 2011  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a As data for this indicator are from a survey, the *2011 CEaCS,* they are subject to error. Error bars represent the 95 per cent confidence interval associated with each point estimate. b Data for this indicator are not intended for use as a measure of unmet demand (box 3.24). c Includes current requirements for additional formal child care or preschool for: children attending formal child care or preschools and parents wished for them to attend more; and children who did not attend formal child care or preschool and parents wished for them to attend. dThe *2011 CEaCS* excluded people living in very remote parts of Australia. In the NT this accounts for approximately 23 per cent of the population. |
| *Source*: ABS (unpublished TableBuilder) *Childhood Education and Care, Australia, June 2011*, Cat. no. 4402.0; table 3A.54. |
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Data reporting the main reason for currently needing additional formal child care or preschool in 2011 are included in table 3A.55. This table also provides information on the main reason why families did not apply for the additional care required or did not use the additional care after applying.

#### Out‑of‑pocket costs of child care

‘Out‑of‑pocket costs of child care’ is an indicator of governments’ objective that all Australian families have equitable access to ECEC irrespective of their financial circumstances (box 3.26).

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| Box 3.26 Out‑of‑pocket costs of child care |
| ‘Out‑of‑pocket costs of child care’ is defined as the proportion of weekly disposable income that families spend on child care services before and after the payment of child care subsidies, for families with a 60:40 income split and gross annual income of $35 000, $55 000, $75 000, $95 000, $115 000, $135 000 and $150 000. Families are assumed to have either one or two children who attend full time care (equal to 50 hours per child per week) in centre‑based long day care and family day care.  Lower out‑of‑pocket 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.  Data reported for this indicator are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2014 data are available for all jurisdictions.   Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2015. |
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Nationally, out‑of‑pocket costs of full time long day care as a proportion of weekly family income after subsidies in 2014 showed less variation across income bands than before subsidies were taken into account (figure 3.24).

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| Figure 3.24 Out‑of‑pocket costs of child care for families with children in full time long day care, as a proportion of weekly disposable income, by gross annual family income, 2014**a** |
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| a Data relate to the March quarter 2014. |
| *Source*: Australian Government Department of Education (unpublished); table 3A.56. |
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Nationally, for long day care, the out‑of‑pocket costs (after subsidies) for families with one child were between 9.5 per cent and 11.1 per cent of weekly disposable income, and between 15.9 per cent and 24.3 per cent of weekly disposable income for families with two children (figure 3.25).

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| Figure 3.25 Out‑of‑pocket costs for long day care (after subsidies), as a proportion of weekly disposable income, by gross annual family income, 2014**a** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.25 Out-of-pocket costs for long day care (after subsidies), as a proportion of weekly disposable income, by gross annual family income, 2014  (a) Families with one child  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | | Figure 3.25 Out-of-pocket costs for long day care (after subsidies), as a proportion of weekly disposable income, by gross annual family income, 2014  (a) Families with two children   More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a Data relate to the March quarter 2014. |
| *Source*: Australian Government Department of Education (unpublished); table 3A.56. |
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Nationally, for family day care, the out‑of‑pocket costs (after subsidies) for families with one child were between 9.3 per cent and 11.0 per cent of weekly disposable income, and between 14.0 per cent and 24.0 per cent of weekly disposable income for families with two children (figure 3.26).

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| Figure 3.26 Out‑of‑pocket costs for family day care (after subsidies), as a proportion of weekly disposable income, by gross annual family income, 2014**a** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.26 Out-of-pocket costs for family day care (after subsidies), as a proportion of weekly disposable income, by gross annual family income, 2014  (a) Families with one child  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | | Figure 3.26 Out-of-pocket costs for family day care (after subsidies), as a proportion of weekly disposable income, by gross annual family income, 2014  (a) Families with two children  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a Data relate to the March quarter 2014. |
| *Source*: Australian Government Department of Education (unpublished); table 3A.57. |
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#### ECEC outcomes

‘ECEC outcomes’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide ECEC that meets the care, educational and developmental needs of children, in a safe and nurturing environment (box 3.27).

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| Box 3.27 ECEC outcomes |
| ‘ECEC outcomes’ is defined as the proportion of children who have had ECEC experience that are developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains of the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC).  Developmental vulnerability is an outcome reported by the AEDC. Children classified as developmentally vulnerable score below the 10th percentile (in the lowest 10 per cent) of the national AEDC population for an AEDC domain. These domains are: language and cognitive skills; physical health and well‑being; social competence; emotional maturity and communication skills and general knowledge. ECEC experience refers to any formal child care or preschool/kindergarten.  A low proportion of children reported as developmentally vulnerable who received ECEC is desirable. In particular, a lower proportion of children reported as developmentally vulnerable who received some ECEC compared to children who did not receive any ECEC may indicate more positive development outcomes for children who receive some ECEC.  ECEC experience is just one factor contributing to AEDC results. A range of other factors also have an impact on development outcomes including parental and family circumstances and the take‑up of services such as health, allied health and parenting support. Also, the quality of data reported for whether a child attended an ECEC service is dependent on the teacher’s knowledge of the child’s previous experience. The data do not account for the extent to which children received ECEC (i.e. how many hours per week) or over how many years it was provided.  Data reported for this indicator are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2012 data are available for all jurisdictions.   Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2015. |
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Data for the development outcomes indicator were drawn from the AEDC 2012. Box 3.28 contains information on the AEDC.

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| Box 3.28 Australian Early Development Census |
| The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) is a population based measure of how children have developed by the time they start school across five areas of early childhood development: physical health and wellbeing; social competence; emotional maturity; language and cognitive skills; and communication skills and general knowledge. Until 1 July 2014 the AEDC was known as the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI).  The AEDC results provide a snapshot of how children in the local area have developed by the time they start school. They can help governments and communities understand what is working well and what needs to be improved or developed to better support children and their families. Together with other socio demographic and community information, the AEDC results are a powerful tool for influencing planning and policy around early childhood development.  The AEDC has been endorsed by COAG as a national progress measure of early childhood development and all Australian governments have agreed to use the AEDC results to inform early development policy and investments.  The Australian Government and State and Territory governments are working in partnership with The Royal Children’s Hospital Centre for Community Child Health in Melbourne, the Murdoch Children’s Research Institute and the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research in Perth, to deliver the AEDC. The Social Research Centre managed the 2012 data collection. In 2011, the Australian Government made a commitment to collect these data every three years, representing an investment of $28 million per collection cycle.  The first national collection of the AEDC took place between May and July 2009, with data collected on 97.5 per cent of the estimated five year old population (261 203 children) in their first year of full time school. The 2012 data collection took place from 1 May 2012 to 31 July 2012. Data were collected on 289 973 children, covering almost 7500 schools and almost 16 500 teachers. AEDC 2012 results represent 96.5 per cent of Australian children enrolled to begin school in 2012.  The 2012 results showed that the majority of children were doing well against each of the five developmental domains. However, 22.0 per cent of children were developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains in 2012, compared with 23.6 per cent in 2009. Nationally, 10.8 per cent of children were developmentally vulnerable on two or more domains in 2012, compared with 11.8 per cent in 2009.  The Child care, education and training sector overview in this Report includes AEDC data on the proportion of children on track in at least four domains as they entered school in 2012.  Additional information on the AEDC, including access to the 2012 National Report, 2012 Summary Report, community maps and community profiles, are available on the AEDC website www.aedc.gov.au |
| *Source*: Australian Government Department of Education (2013b and unpublished). |
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Nationally in 2012, 19.8 per cent of children who received some ECEC were developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains of the AEDC. In comparison,   
35.1 per cent of children who did not receive any ECEC were developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains of the AEDC (figure 3.27).

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| Figure 3.27 Proportion of children developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains of the AEDC by ECEC experience, 2012**a** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 3.27 Proportion of children developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains of the AEDC by ECEC experience, 2012  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a Received some ECEC includes any formal child care or preschool/kindergarten. |
| *Source*: Australian Government Department of Education (unpublished) *Australian Early Development Census 2012*; table 3A.58. |
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Further measures may be developed in the future using data from the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC) (box 3.29).

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| Box 3.29 Longitudinal Study of Australian Children |
| The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC) is a longitudinal study on a discrete cohort of children that aims to examine the impact of Australia’s unique social, economic and cultural environment on children growing up in Australia today (AIFS 2005a).  The LSAC was initiated and is funded by the Department of Social Services, with the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) having responsibility for the design and management of the study.  The sampling unit for the LSAC is the child. During 2004, the study recruited a sample of 5107 infants (children aged 0–1 year at the time) and 4983 children (children aged 4–5 years at the time) (see AIFS 2005a for more details).  LSAC and outcomes for children  The LSAC Outcome Index, attached to each infant and child in the study, is a composite measure that indicates how children are developing across physical, social/emotional and learning domains of competence. It provides a means of summarising the development of children across multiple domains and, wherever possible, incorporates both positive and negative outcomes (see AIFS 2005b for more details).  The LSAC Outcome Index is currently being investigated as a possible measure of the developmental outcomes of infants/children in child care and preschool, compared with those infants/children who are not in child care or preschool. |
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#### Cost‑effectiveness

‘Cost‑effectiveness’ is an indicator of ECEC being provided in an effective and efficient manner (box 3.30).

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| Box 3.30 Cost effectiveness |
| ‘Cost effectiveness’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide ECEC in an effective and efficient manner.  This indicator has been identified for development and reporting in future. Data are not available for the 2015 Report. |
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## 3.4 Future directions in performance reporting

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

### Improving reporting of existing indicators

Further work is planned to improve the consistency and comparability of performance information across jurisdictions. Possible improvements in data quality may occur from future developments in the NECECC and an increasing proportion of approved services assessed and rated against the NQS.

### Future indicator development

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

* reporting on child care and preschool service availability
* developing indicators to measure the extent to which ECEC services meet children’s needs
* developing a cost effectiveness indicator.

#### Potential sources of information

Data developments in future reports may be influenced by:

* developments under the *National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care* (NIA ECEC) that commenced on 6 November 2009. The Agreement provides a framework for cooperation between the Australian, State and Territory governments and information agencies to develop the information base required for the COAG early childhood reform agenda. The Agreement is an important step in national efforts to improve the quality and reliability of ECEC data
* developments under the COAG agreed NP NQAECEC
* development of ongoing national data collections, including the LSAC (box 3.29).

## 3.5 Jurisdictions’ comments

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

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| **“** | Australian Government comments | **”** |
| The Australian Government is committed to improving access to quality services, providing almost $31 billion over the four years to 2017‑18 for child care and early learning. Major initiatives include:   * $13.6 billion in Child Care Benefit and $14.9 billion in Child Care Rebate to help more than 900 000 Australian families annually with the cost of child care * establishing a Productivity Commission inquiry into how the child care and early learning system can be made more flexible, affordable and accessible – a draft report was released in July 2014 for public comment and the final report was provided to the Government on 30 October 2014 * providing in excess of $200 million to assist more than 5000 eligible services with the cost of up skilling their educators through the Long Day Care Professional Development Programme * providing $9.8 million for the Early Learning Languages Australia (ELLA) trial, to test the effectiveness of providing preschool children with early exposure to a language other than English through online learning programmes * the restoration of the $12.6 million National Occasional Care Programme as part of the Government’s election commitment under its “Policy for Better Child Care and Early Learning” framework * providing $406 million to extend the *National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education* for a further 12 months to provide certainty for parents and preschools for the 2015 calendar year * undertaking a review of the National Quality Framework in consultation with all states and territories to ensure the goal of improving quality in child care and early learning services is efficient and effective – with a Consultation Regulation Impact Statement released for comment on 7 November 2014 * completing the review into the Budget Based Funded Programme and implementing changes to further embed quality improvement in Budget Based Funded services * launching the new Australian Early Development Census (formerly known as the Australian Early Development Index) website (www.aedc.gov.au) and committing to a third national collection in 2015, following national collections in 2009 and 2012 * continuing the expansion of the Home Interaction Programme for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) to a total of 100 locations * establishing a Child Care Compliance Taskforce to monitor and respond to non‑compliant services and deter inappropriate activities. |

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| **“** | New South Wales Government comments | **”** |
| The NSW Government recognises that early learning begins at birth and that the early years of a child’s life are crucial to a child’s development and learning. The NSW Government is committed to supporting a sector that provides quality early childhood education programs aligned with the Early Years Learning Framework and which is responsive to the needs of children and their families, whatever their circumstances may be. The Government remains committed to maintaining universal access for all children to a quality early childhood education program in the 12 months before full time schooling.  The structure of the Report continues to pose difficulties in accurately reporting NSW data, and when comparing the performance of NSW with that of other jurisdictions, resulting in underreporting of preschool participation in NSW. The chapter continues to distinguish preschool services from child care services, whereas in NSW many children participate in preschool programs delivered by qualified early childhood teachers in long day care settings.  In 2013‑14, the NSW Government continued its reform of the early childhood education sector. In January 2014 a new Preschool Funding Model was implemented, making $150 million available to the community preschool sector, a 20 per cent increase on previous funding levels. Under the new model  95 per cent of preschools received an increase in their base funding rate, with the highest increases directed to children from disadvantaged backgrounds. The new model better aligns with the Government’s universal access goals by targeting children in the year before full time school and three year old Aboriginal, vulnerable and disadvantaged children.  Significant further progress was made in 2013‑14 to increase preschool participation of all children, and especially of those from Aboriginal and disadvantaged backgrounds. This progress is further enhanced through initiatives now being implemented as part of the new *National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education*, including:   * trials of cluster management for community preschools, focusing on consolidating administrative functions to improve service sustainability * operational support for community preschools to adjust to the new Preschool Funding Model and further improve sector sustainability in the longer term * a transition to school statement to support children moving from early childhood education settings to school * 102 scholarships for early childhood educators to upgrade their qualification.   Assessment and rating visits under the National Quality Framework (NQF) commenced in June 2012. A total of 2370 assessments, or 48 per cent of the sector, were completed by the end of 2013‑14, which also saw the commencement of a national review of the NQF. As part of this review, NSW led a project to further streamline and fine tune processes for conducting and reviewing assessment and rating processes. |

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| **“** | Victorian Government comments | **”** |
| During 2013‑14 Victoria successfully completed implementation of universal access to 15 hours of kindergarten, with 99.5 per cent of funded services delivering 15 hour programs in 2014.  Victoria also continued to successfully implement the National Quality Framework. By 30 June 2014, 1693 services had published quality ratings (43 per cent of all services), with 77 per cent of Victorian services rated as Meeting or Exceeding the National Quality Standard, compared with 62 per cent nationally.  Victoria allocated $22 million of State funding in capital grants for early childhood facilities in 2013‑14, including funding to establish 6 integrated children’s centres and 10 new early learning facilities, and to extend and upgrade 22 centres across Victoria.  Work continued to implement the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF), which supports early childhood practitioners to implement high‑quality pedagogy and practice to improve outcomes for all Victorian children. In 2013‑14 the emphasis was on assessment for learning, with a range of resources and low cost professional learning opportunities offered to support the implementation of the VEYLDF. Specific VEYLDF resources were developed and released for the Family Day Care sector, as well as a range of professional learning opportunities for early childhood leaders through the Department’s Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership. |

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| **“** | Queensland Government comments | **”** |
| The Queensland Government has achieved improved outcomes for young children and their families through a strong commitment to every Queensland child having access to quality early childhood education and care (ECEC). Recent highlights and achievements include:   * increased participation in kindergarten programs from 29 per cent to 97 per cent overall participation in 2013 * provided funding to establish 19 new kindergarten services to meet local demand in 2013‑14 with a further 6 to open in 2014‑15 * built and supported the operation of 10 Children and Family Centres in accordance with Queensland’s agreement with the Australian Government under the *National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development* * funded the support of Early Years Centres, which provide Queensland families with access to integrated ECEC, family support, maternal and child health services across 15 communities. * delivered a new online grants management system QGrants to reduce red tape for service providers * introduced a reduced regulatory regime under the Education and Care Services Act 2013 for out of scope services * established the new Division of ECEC in the Department of Education, Training and Employment * streamlined the operation of the National Quality Framework (NQF) through strategies to increase the rate of assessment and rating * continued comprehensive state‑wide professional development for AOs focussing on the ECEC sector’s regulatory requirements under the NQF * over 70 per cent of approved Queensland services with a quality rating are Meeting or Exceeding the National Quality Standard (above the national average of 62 per cent) with 5 services having received a rating of Excellent * Queensland continues to support the sector to deliver quality services that are inclusive and embrace diversity. Queensland has boosted investment to increase the participation of vulnerable and disadvantaged children, by removing barriers to the access of ECEC services through the establishment of new services in rural and remote areas and the development of strong links with community leaders. |

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| **“** | Western Australian Government comments | **”** |
| The WA Government provides all four year old children with access to 15 hours per week of high quality Kindergarten, delivered in accordance with the National Quality Standard (NQS). This universal provision occurs through the school sector and is free of compulsory charges in public schools. In non‑government schools, 75 per cent of the cost of delivery is met by the State. All schools are required to apply the NQS across the early years of schooling to at least Year 2 (around the age of eight years).  In 2013 Pre‑primary, which is the first year of full time schooling and the ‘Foundation’ year of the Australian Curriculum, became compulsory. Children are engaged daily in learning experiences and activities targeted to support and develop cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional and physical capabilities of every child.  Sixteen State‑funded Child and Parent Centres are being established on public school sites in areas of disadvantage to provide a range of programs and services for all families with young children from birth to eight years, with a focus on birth to four years. In addition, three Early Learning and Care Centres and five Children and Family Centres operate on or close to public school sites.  A Local Champions Program 2013‑14 has been implemented to help communities to respond to their Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) results. Local Champions promote collaborative government and community‑driven initiatives in which the AEDC is used to inform local policy, planning and resource allocation to improve outcomes for children. All schools are being re‑engaged to prepare for the 2015 AEDC data collection.  The past 12 months have seen WA continue to improve the quality of education and care through the implementation of the National Quality Framework (NQF) for education and care services. WA progressed amendments to the *Education and Care Regulations 2012* in December 2013 with a second tranche of amendments due to be implemented from 1 December 2014.  Western Australia is participating in the 2014 Review of the *National Partnership Agreement on the National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care*. WA partnered with the Australian Government to host forums in Perth and Bunbury for service providers, families and educators on progress on the implementation of the NQF.  The Education and Care Regulatory Unit continues to undertake assessment and rating of education and care services. An internal review of the Unit has seen more services assessed and rated as the new structure is implemented. WA continues to visit child care services that are out of scope of the *National Law* and regulates them under the *Child Care Services Act 2007.* |
| **“** | South Australian Government comments | **”** |
| The Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) recognises that early learning and childhood development starts at birth to around age five requiring and providing dynamic programs and services whilst working in partnership with parents and carers to achieve the best outcomes possible for children.  As at October 2014 SA has the highest number of ‘Excellent’ rated education and care services nationally. The six state services awarded this highest rating possible under the National Quality Framework (NQF) represent government, private and community provided early childhood education and care (ECEC) services. They demonstrate a cross‑sector commitment to the provision of high quality ECEC.  Since 2005, SA has been developing a network of Children’s Centres for Early Childhood Development and Parenting for children from birth to age eight and their families. Currently there are 42 centres operating, four of which are Aboriginal Children and Family Centres, with a commitment to expand the provision to 47 centres across the state.  The SA Government has also committed to expand the range of services available in existing Children’s Centres to help children and parents get the early childhood development support they need, when they need it. This expansion will provide for increased early childhood allied health services such as speech pathology, occupational therapy and social work and more developmental screening services for young children to increase prevention and early detection of developmental concerns.  In 2014 the *National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education* has continued to support an increased level of service provision from 12 hours per week to 15 hours per week in Department for Education and Child Development preschools and expanded the number of preschool places available by funding the delivery of preschool in child care centres and non‑government preschools.  The State Government has funded the establishment of two sites to work collaboratively across agencies to engage and support first time mothers experiencing challenges that may impact on their parenting. The sites, north and south of metropolitan Adelaide, aim to engage with women during their pregnancy, providing practical support and strategies to enable their children to develop in safe and nurturing environments. |
| **“** | Tasmanian Government comments | **”** |
| The Department of Education continues its support of the early years through the Bright Beginnings priority in its *Learners First* Strategic Plan recognising the importance of the early years for children’s successful learning and development.  The department is involved in many strategies including:   * implementing nationally consistent regulation under the *National Partnership Agreement on the National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care* * continuing to quality assess and rate long day care, family day care and outside school hours care services. By 30 June 2014, 39 per cent of Tasmanian services had a rating result, just below the national average of 40 per cent * continuing its regulatory role under the state *Child Care Act 2001* * supporting the ongoing and consistent implementation of the Early Years Learning Framework in schools through the provision of professional learning opportunities * funding and administering nine Child and Family Centres (CFCs) operating around the state with construction on a tenth underway * continuing the funding of two Aboriginal CFCs, following the end of the *National Partnership Agreement on* *Indigenous Early Childhood Development.* These CFCs have been working closely with Aboriginal Education Services to strengthen educationally and culturally appropriate programme delivery where there are large Aboriginal communities * in government schools, undertaking the Kindergarten Development Check (KDC) and the Performance Indicators in Primary Schools (PIPS) to identify students at risk of not achieving expected outcomes * continuing the successful Launching into Learning (LiL) program for families and young children aged from birth to four years, with a particular emphasis on improving educational outcomes for children from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Data for the 2011 LiL Program cohort of students shows significantly improved educational outcomes for participants as measured by the KDC, PIPS and NAPLAN results. It is also anticipated that, as was shown with the 2012 AEDI, future Tasmanian AEDC results will continue to indicate that the department’s early years programs are helping to reduce the level of vulnerability * completing reviews of two different components of the Education and Care Unit’s grants program; which includes the state funded child care services, capital funding and a range of smaller programs * providing support and advice regarding the quality of ECEC and outside school hours care services to parents, educators, carers and the general public. |
| **“** | Australian Capital Territory Government comments | **”** |
| The ACT Government is committed to providing access to quality early childhood education and care (ECEC) that is responsive to the needs of children and their families. All children in the ACT have access to free, quality early childhood education programs in the year before formal schooling.  Assessments and rating visits under the National Quality Framework (NQF) continued, with nearly half of education and care services in the ACT undertaking assessment and being rated. As at 30 June 2014, a total of 147 assessments had been conducted, with 88 achieving Working Towards the National Quality Standard (NQS) and 59 services meeting or exceeding the NQS. The process was assisted by a reduction of red tape in accordance with nationally agreed approaches.  A key component of the ACT’s commitment to the implementation of the NQF was the development of strong relationships with parents and the community, including strategies and programs that support ECEC. This commitment was supported by ongoing implementation of the *National Early Childhood Development Strategy*.  The effectiveness of the Directorate’s policies and programs within ECEC was shown by growth in the number of approved child care service providers and in the number of children aged 0–5 years attending approved child care services. During the reporting period preschool enrolments in public schools increased by 9 per cent.  The Directorate launched the *Preschool Matters* website, an initiative aimed at increasing engagement and involvement of parents in preschool. Development and support for early childhood services was further demonstrated by the funding allocation of $2.0 million to complete the Stage 2 program of child care upgrade works to provide 66 additional places.  To support the education and care sector workforce the ACT Government continued to fund the Early Childhood (Certificate III) scholarship program, covering course fees and reimbursement of start‑up costs. Places in the program were allocated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Employers were also subsidised to provide study release to students during their work hours. |

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| **“** | Northern Territory Government comments | **”** |
| The NT Department of Education continues to actively engage in the early childhood and school aged education and care sector. The department regulates services; administers financial support to the sector; and provides preschool, play groups and parenting support programs and information.  Key milestones during the 2013‑14 reporting period include:   * the NT regulatory authority, Quality Education and Care NT has maintained an active regulatory presence, working closely with key stakeholders to identify activities to help build capacity across the sector and promote continuous quality improvement * issued approximately 55 per cent of the NT’s regulated services with their final quality rating against the National Quality Standard by 30 June 2014 * held the inaugural NT Education and Care Awards on 18 September 2013 at Parliament House, giving recognition to educators and services who are innovative in their approach and who exhibit an outstanding commitment to ensuring quality outcomes for children and their families * provided approximately $4.9 million in grants and subsidies to the sector via the NT Early Childhood Services Subsidy, Long Day Care Upgrade Grant, Long Day Care Toy and Equipment Grant and a one‑off grant to preschools to improve their natural environments * provided funding for the Community Based Childcare Support Program, delivered by the NT Department of Business, to strengthen parent managed, community based services as independent viable businesses * provided early learning and family support, under the Families as First Teachers (FaFT) program, to 2149 young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (birth to four years) and 2034 parents and care givers in 35 remote communities * employed 59 remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, 19 remote non‑Indigenous staff, six mobile staff and three regional staff in the FaFT program * worked closely with the University of Melbourne to research the effectiveness of the Abecedarian Approach Australia in preparing children for preschool in two of the remote FaFT program communities (Galiwin’ku and Maningrida) * completed construction of five child and family centres at Maningrida, Ngukurr, Yuendumu, Gunbalanya and Palmerston under the *National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development* and will deliver a range of integrated early childhood education and care, child and maternal health and family support services * increased the proportion of preschool aged children enrolled in a preschool program to 96.8 per cent in 2013. |

## 3.6 Definitions of key terms

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| **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children** | Children of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin who self‑identify or are identified by a parent or guardian to be of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were previously reported as Indigenous children in RoGS. |
| **Administration expenditure** | Administration expenditure includes all expenditure by the responsible departments associated with the provision of licensing, advice, policy development, grants administration and training services. Responsible departments include those departments that administer policy for, fund, and license/accredit child care and preschool services in each jurisdiction. |
| **Budget Based Funded services** | These services are part of the Australian Government’s Budget Based Funded Programme which provides an Australian Government contribution to the operational costs of child care and early learning and school aged care services in a limited number of approved locations. These services are predominantly located in regional, remote and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities where the market would otherwise fail to deliver services to meet the needs of children and their families.  A range of service types are funded across Australia including crèches, mobile services, Multifunctional Aboriginal Children’s Services and OSHC services. Services reported as Budget Based Funded services are not approved to administer CCB on behalf of families. State and Territory governments may license or register Budget Based Funded services to operate. |
| **Child Care Benefit (CCB) approved** | A child care service approved by the Australian Government to receive Child Care Benefit (CCB) on behalf of families. |
| **Child care services** | The meeting of a child’s care, education and developmental needs by a person other than the child’s parent or guardian. The main types of child care service are long day care, family day care, OSHC (before/after school hours and ‘pupil free days’ care), vacation care, occasional care and other care. |
| **Children** | All resident male and female Australians aged 12 years or younger at 30 June of each year (unless otherwise stated). |
| **Children from low income families** | Children in families who are receiving the maximum rate of CCB. |
| **Children from non‑English speaking backgrounds** | Children living in situations where the main language spoken at home is not English. |
| **Children with disability** | A child that has a need for additional assistance in any of the following areas (learning and applying knowledge, education; communication; mobility; self‑care; interpersonal interactions and relationships; other‑ including general tasks, domestic life, community and social life) compared to children of a similar age, that is related to underlying long term health condition or disability (long term is longer than six months). |
| **Comparability** | Data are considered comparable if (subject to caveats) they can be used to inform an assessment of comparative performance. Typically, data are considered comparable when they are collected in the same way and in accordance with the same definitions. For comparable indicators or measures, significant differences in reported results allow an assessment of differences in performance, rather than being the result of anomalies in the data. |
| **Completeness** | Data are considered complete if all required data are available for all jurisdictions that provide the service. |
| **Counting rules** | Prescribed standards, definitions and mathematical methods for determining descriptors and performance indicators for monitoring government services. |
| **External cause (of injury)** | The environmental event, circumstance or condition that causes an injury. |
| **Family day care** | Services providing small group care for children in the home environment of a registered carer. Care is primarily aimed at 0–5 year olds, but primary school children may also receive care before and after school, and during school holidays. Carers work in partnership with scheme management and coordination unit staff. |
| **Financial support to families** | Financial support to families includes any form of fee relief paid by governments to the users of ECEC services (for example, CCB). |
| **Formal child care** | Organised care provided by a person other than the child’s parent or guardian, usually outside of the child’s home — for example, long day care, family day care, OSHC, vacation care, occasional care (excluding babysitting) and in home care. |
| **Formal  qualifications** | Early childhood‑related teaching degree (three or four years), a child care certificate or associate diploma (two years) and/or other relevant qualifications (for example, a diploma or degree in child care [three years], primary teaching, other teaching, nursing [including mothercraft nursing], psychology and social work). |
| **Full time equivalent staff numbers** | A measure of the total level of staff resources used. A full time staff member is employed full time and engaged solely in activities that fall within the scope of ECEC services covered in the chapter. The full time equivalent of part time staff is calculated on the basis of the proportion of time spent on activities within the scope of the data collection compared with that spent by a full time staff member solely occupied by the same activities. |
| **Government funded and/or provided** | All government financed services — that is, services that receive government contributions towards providing a specified service (including private services eligible for CCB) and/or services for which the government has primary responsibility for delivery. |
| **Hospital separation** | An episode of care for a person admitted to a hospital. It can be a total hospital stay (from admission to discharge, transfer or death) or portions of hospital stays beginning or ending in a change of type of care (for example from acute to rehabilitation) that cease during a reference period. |
| **Informal child  care** | Child care arrangements provided privately (for example, by friends, relatives, nannies) for which no government assistance (other than the minimum rate of CCB for Registered Care) is provided. Such care is unregulated in most states and territories. |
| **In home care** | Care provided by an approved carer in the child’s home. Families eligible for in home care include those where the parent(s) or child has an illness/disability, those in regional or remote areas, those where the parents are working shift work or non‑standard hours, those with multiple births (more than two) and/or more than two children under school age, and those with a breastfeeding mother working from home. |
| **In‑service training** | Formal training only (that is, structured training sessions that can be conducted in‑house or externally), including training in work or own time but not training towards qualifications included in obtaining formal qualifications. It includes:   * management or financial training * training for additional needs children (such as children with disability, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children and children from a culturally diverse background * other child care‑related training * other relevant courses (such as a first aid certificate). |
| **Long day care** | Centre based child care services providing full time or part time care for children. Long day care primarily provides services for children aged 0–5 years. Some long day care may also provide preschool and kindergarten services (i.e. a preschool program) and outside school hours care (see below). The service may operate from stand‑alone or shared premises, including on school grounds. |
| **National Quality Framework (NQF) approved** | Under the National Quality Framework (NQF) an approved provider must apply for and be granted a service approval for each education and care service it wants to operate. There are two types of approved services under the National Quality Framework:   * Centre‑based service: which includes long day care, preschool or kindergarten and OSHC services * Family day care service: where a number of educators formally linked to an education and care service provide education and care to children in residences or venues. |
| **Net capital expenditure** | Expenditure on the acquisition or enhancement of fixed assets, less trade‑in values and/or receipts from the sale of replaced or otherwise disposed of items. Capital expenditure does not include expenditure on fixed assets which fall below threshold capitalisation levels, depreciation or costs associated with maintaining, renting or leasing equipment. |
| **Non‑standard hours of care** | Defined by service type as:   * long day care — service operates before 7am or after 6.30pm on any day Monday to Friday or on weekends (to be considered a service offering non‑standard hours of care just need to meet 1 of these 3 criteria) * family day care — service operates before 7am, or after 6.30pm on any day Monday to Friday or overnight or on weekends (to be considered a service offering non‑standard hours of care only need to meet 1 of these 4 criteria) * vacation care — service operates before 7am or after 6.30pm on any day Monday to Friday (to be considered a service offering non‑standard hours of care only need to meet 1 of these 2 criteria) * OSHC — service operates before 7am (before school) or after 6.30pm (after school) on any day Monday to Friday (to be considered a service offering non‑standard hours of care only need to meet 1 of these 2 criteria) * occasional care — service operates before 7am or after 6.30pm on any day Monday to Friday or on weekends (to be considered a service offering non‑standard hours of care only need to meet 1 of these 3 criteria) * other — service operates before 7am or after 6.30pm on any day Monday to Friday or on weekends (to be considered a service offering non‑standard hours of care only need to meet 1 of these 3 criteria). |
| **Occasional care** | Services usually provided at a centre on an hourly or sessional basis for short periods or at irregular intervals for parents who need time to attend appointments, take care of personal matters, undertake casual and part time employment, study or have temporary respite from full time parenting. These services provide developmental activities for children, and are primarily aimed at 0–5 year olds. Centres providing these services usually employ a mix of qualified and other staff. |
| **Other care** | Is a category of service type that includes services which support children with additional needs or in particular situations (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from NESB, children with disability or of parents with disability, and children living in regional and remote areas). Other care services are State and Territory licensed (not NQF approved) and may include mobile services, playschools and nannies. The other care service type does not include 3 year old preschool/kindergarten services. Usage of other care services is reported only for State and Territory government funded and/or provided services (i.e. non‑CCB approved services). |
| **Other expenditure on service provision** | Expenditure on service provision includes all recurrent expenditure on government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services except administration and financial support to families. It includes one‑off, non‑capital payments to peak agencies that support child care and preschool service providers |
| **Other territories** | A separate category for data collections, which includes Jervis Bay Territory, the Territory of Christmas Island and the Territory of Cocos (Keeling) Islands. |
| **Outside school hours care** | Services that provide care for school aged children before school, after school, during school holidays, and on pupil free days. OSHC may use stand‑alone facilities, share school buildings and grounds and/or share facilities such as community halls. |
| **Preschool program** | A preschool program is a structured, play‑based learning program, delivered by a degree qualified teacher, aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling. This definition of a preschool program is the same for all types of institutions that provide it, for all service settings and includes both government funded and privately provided preschool programs. Although various delivery models of preschool programs exist across jurisdictions, the YBFS is the term used to describe the ‘preschool’ program cohort.  Preschool programs delivered to children in the year or two before full time schooling are intended to be available for a minimum of 600 hours per calendar year (or 15 hours per week for 40 weeks). Children aged 3 to 6 years may be enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS although the programs are typically delivered to 4 and 5 year olds. |
| **Preschool services** | Services which deliver a preschool program. The preschool service type (i.e. preschool programs) can be delivered from a range of service settings. Service settings include stand‑alone preschools or kindergartens, preschools attached to a school and other service centres, such as long day care centres.  Preschool services are aimed at children in the year before they commence full time schooling (that is when a child is 4 years old), although younger or older children may attend in most jurisdictions. There are also preschool services provided by a qualified teacher that are aimed specifically at 3 year old children in some jurisdictions. See definition of preschool programs for further information. |
| **Primary  contact staff** | Staff whose primary function is to provide child care and/or preschool services to children. |
| **Priority of access** | The Australian Government funds child care with a major purpose of meeting the child care needs of Australian families. However, the demand for child care sometimes exceeds supply in some locations. When this happens, it is important for services to allocate available places to those families with the greatest need for child care support.  The Government has determined Guidelines for allocating places in these circumstances. These Guidelines apply to centre based long day care, in home care, family day care and OSHC services. They set out the following three levels of priority, which child care services must follow when filling vacant places:   * priority 1: a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect * priority 2: a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test under section 14 of the Family Assistance Act * priority 3: any other child.   Within these main categories priority should also be given to the following children:   * children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families * children in families which include a disabled person * children in families on lower incomes * children in families with NESB * children in socially isolated families * children of single parents. |
| **Real expenditure** | Actual expenditure adjusted for changes in prices. Adjustments were made using the GGFCE price deflator and expressed in terms of final year prices. |
| **Recurrent  expenditure** | Expenditure that does not result in the creation or acquisition of fixed assets (new or second hand). It consists mainly of expenditure on wages, salaries and supplements, purchases of goods and services, and the consumption of fixed capital (depreciation). |
| **Regional and  remote areas** | Regional and remote areas refer to remoteness areas based on the ABS’ Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS). The criteria for remoteness areas are based on the Accessibility/Remoteness Index (ARIA+) of Australia, which measures the remoteness of a point based on the physical road distance to the nearest urban centre in each of five size classes. Regional areas includes ‘inner regional’ and ‘outer regional’ areas. Remote areas includes ‘remote’ and ‘very remote’ areas. |
| **Service** | A service refers to an individual location or establishment providing an ECEC service. One service (i.e. location or establishment) may provide more than one ECEC service type, i.e. provide a long day care service and preschool service, or two child care service types. |
| **Service type** | Refers to the following categories of ECEC services:   * long day care * family day care * OSHC * before/after school care * vacation care * occasional care * in home care (for CCB approved services) * other care (for State and Territory government funded and/or provided services) * preschool services.   All service type categories are considered child care services, except for preschool services. |
| **Special needs group** | An identifiable group within the general population who can have special difficulty accessing services. Special needs groups for which data are reported in this chapter include: children from NESB; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children; children from low income families (CCB approved child care services only); children with disability; and children from regional or remote areas. |
| **Standard hours of care** | Defined by service type as:   * long day care — service opens at 7am or later and closes at 6.30pm or earlier every day Monday to Friday (does not operate on weekends or overnight) * family day care — service operates at 7am or later and no later than 6.30pm every day Monday to Friday (does not operate on weekends or overnight) * OSHC — service opens at 7am or later (before school) and closes at 6.30pm or earlier (after school) every day Monday to Friday * vacation care — service operates at 7am or later and no later than 6.30pm every day Monday to Friday * occasional care — service operates at 7am or later and no later than 6.30pm every day Monday to Friday (does not operate on weekends or overnight) * in home care — service operates at 7am or later and no later than 6.30pm every day Monday to Friday (does not operate on weekends or overnight) * other care — service operates at 7am or later and no later than 6.30pm every day Monday to Friday (does not operate on weekends or overnight). |
| **State/Territory government funded and/or provided** | State and Territory government financed services — that is, services that only receive State and Territory government contributions towards providing a specified service (i.e. excluding services which receive Australian Government funding) and/or services for which the State/Territory government has primary responsibility for delivery. |
| **State/Territory government licensed** | Services that comply with the relevant State or Territory licensing regulations. These regulations cover matters such as the number of children whom the service can care for, safety requirements and the required qualifications of carers. State/Territory government licensed services are not NQF approved. |
| **Substantiated breach arising from a complaint** | An expression of concern about a child care or preschool service, made orally, in writing or in person to the regulatory authority, which constitutes a failure by the NQF approved or State and Territory licensed service to abide by the national regulations, State or Territory legislation, regulations or conditions. This concern is investigated and subsequently considered to have substance by the regulatory body. |
| **Vacation care** | Services provided for children enrolled in schools (4–12 year olds) during the school holidays. |

## 3.7 List of attachment tables

Attachment tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an ‘3A’ prefix (for example, table 3A.1). Attachment tables are available on the Review website (www.pc.gov.au/gsp).

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--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | **All jurisdictions data** | | | **Table 3A.1** | Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in Australia, as at 30 June 2014 | | **Table 3A.2** | Estimated resident population (ERP), children aged 12 years and younger (’000) | | **Table 3A.3** | Total government real expenditure on ECEC (2013‑14 dollars) ($’000) | | **Table 3A.4** | Australian Government real expenditure on ECEC (child care) services (2013‑14 dollars) ($’000) | | **Table 3A.5** | State and Territory government real expenditure on child care and preschool services (2013‑14 dollars) ($’000) | | **Table 3A.6** | Australian Government funding to State and Territory governments under the *National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education* | | **Table 3A.7** | Comparability of expenditure — items included, 2013‑14 | | **Table 3A.8** | Children aged 0–12 years attending Australian Government Child Care Benefit (CCB) approved child care services | | **Table 3A.9** | Children attending Australian Government CCB approved child care services, by age, 2014 | | **Table 3A.10** | Children attending Australian Government CCB approved and State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care, 2013‑14 | | **Table 3A.11** | Average attendance at Australian Government CCB approved child care services, children aged 0–12 years | | **Table 3A.12** | Representation of special needs groups attending Australian Government CCB approved child care services (per cent), by age group | | **Table 3A.13** | Representation of special needs groups attending Australian Government CCB approved child care services, children aged 0–12 (per cent) | | **Table 3A.14** | Representation of children from special needs groups in child care and preschool programs, 2013 | | **Table 3A.15** | Children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in and attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling (YBFS) who are disadvantaged | | **Table 3A.16** | Children enrolled in a preschool program, by sector and age | | **Table 3A.17** | Children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS, by weekly hours and sector, 2013 | | **Table 3A.18** | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS, by remoteness area, national only | | **Table 3A.19** | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in a preschool program | | **Table 3A.20** | Children aged 0–12 years using child care and preschool services, by employment status of parents (per cent) | | **Table 3A.21** | Children aged 4 and 5 years attending a preschool program in the YBFS, by sector | | **Table 3A.22** | Average (mean) number of hours of attendance at a preschool program per week, by sector | | **Table 3A.23** | All children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in and attending a preschool program, by sector | | **Table 3A.24** | Children aged 4 and 5 years attending a preschool program, by weekly hours and sector | | **Table 3A.25** | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 4 and 5 years attending a preschool program in the YBFS, by remoteness area, national only | | **Table 3A.26** | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children attending a preschool program | | **Table 3A.27** | Proportion of enrolled children aged 4 and 5 years attending a preschool program in the YBFS, by Indigenous status, 2013 | | **Table 3A.28** | Service availability during non‑standard hours for Australian Government CCB approved child care services (per cent), 2014 | | **Table 3A.29** | Service availability during non‑standard hours for State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care services, 2013‑14 | | **Table 3A.30** | Median weekly service cost of Australian Government CCB approved child care services ($/week) (2013‑14 dollars) | | **Table 3A.31** | Median weekly service cost of Australian Government CCB approved long day care services, by remoteness area, 2014 | | **Table 3A.32** | Hourly cost of a preschool program (after subsidies), per child enrolled, by cost range | | **Table 3A.33** | Median hourly cost of a preschool program (after subsidies), per child enrolled aged 4 and 5 years, by sector ($/hour) (2013­14 dollars) | | **Table 3A.34** | Median hourly cost of a preschool program (after subsidies), per child enrolled aged 4 and 5 years, by remoteness area ($/hour) (2013­14 dollars) | | **Table 3A.35** | Staff employed by Australian Government CCB approved child care services | | **Table 3A.36** | Paid primary contact staff employed by Australian Government CCB approved child care services, by qualification | | **Table 3A.37** | Qualified paid primary contact staff employed by Australian Government CCB approved child care services, by level of qualification and field of study, 2013 | | **Table 3A.38** | Paid primary contact staff in Australian Government CCB approved child care services who undertook relevant in‑service training in previous 12 months | | **Table 3A.39** | Primary contact staff in Australian Government CCB approved child care services, by tenure in the ECEC sector, 2013 | | **Table 3A.40** | Workers delivering preschool programs, by level of qualification, by field of early childhood qualification, 2013 | | **Table 3A.41** | National Quality Framework (NQF) approved services, by service type and quality rating, 30 June 2014 | | **Table 3A.42** | NQF approved services with a quality rating, by rating level Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice, 30 June 2014 | | **Table 3A.43** | NQF approved services with a quality rating, by rating level Quality Area 2: Children’s health and safety, 30 June 2014 | | **Table 3A.44** | NQF approved services with a quality rating, by rating level Quality Area 3: Physical environment, 30 June 2014 | | **Table 3A.45** | NQF approved services with a quality rating, by rating level Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements, 30 June 2014 | | **Table 3A.46** | NQF approved services with a quality rating, by rating level Quality Area 5: Relationships with children, 30 June 2014 | | **Table 3A.47** | NQF approved services with a quality rating, by rating level Quality Area 6: Partnerships with families and communities, 30 June 2014 | | **Table 3A.48** | NQF approved services with a quality rating, by rating level Quality Area 7: Leadership and service management, 30 June 2014 | | **Table 3A.49** | Hospital separations for external cause of injuries, persons aged 0–4 years, all hospitals, by place of occurrence | | **Table 3A.50** | Australian Government real recurrent expenditure on child care services per child in the community aged 0–12 years ($/child) (2013­14 dollars) | | **Table 3A.51** | State and Territory government real recurrent expenditure on ECEC per child in the community aged 0–12 years ($/child) (2013‑14 dollars) | | **Table 3A.52** | Australian Government recurrent expenditure per child aged 0–12 attending CCB approved child care services ($/child) (2013‑14 dollars) | | **Table 3A.53** | Children for whom additional formal child care was currently required for mainly work‑related reasons, 2011 | | **Table 3A.54** | Children aged 0–12 years by whether additional formal child care or preschool was currently required, by current use, 2011 | | **Table 3A.55** | Main reason additional formal child care or preschool was currently required, availability and main reason for not using it if it became available, 2011 | | **Table 3A.56** | Out‑of‑pocket costs of child care for families with children in full time long day care, as a proportion of weekly disposable income, by gross annual family income, 2014 (per cent) | | **Table 3A.57** | Out‑of‑pocket costs of child care for families with children in full time family day care, as a proportion of weekly disposable income, by gross annual family income, 2014 (per cent) | | **Table 3A.58** | Children developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains of the AEDC, by ECEC experience, 2012 | | |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Single jurisdiction data ‑ NSW** | | | **Table 3A.59** | State Government real expenditure on child care and preschool services, New South Wales (2013‑14 dollars) ($’000) | | **Table 3A.60** | Characteristics of State Government funded and/or provided child care services, New South Wales | | **Table 3A.61** | Children aged 0–12 years using State Government funded and/or provided child care services, by age, New South Wales | | **Table 3A.62** | Staff employed by State Government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services, New South Wales | | **Table 3A.63** | Paid staff employed by State Government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services, by qualification and experience, New South Wales | | **Table 3A.64** | NQF approved and State Government licensed or registered services, by service type and management type, New South Wales | | **Table 3A.65** | Substantiated breaches arising from complaints about NQF approved and State Government licensed or registered services, New South Wales | | |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Single jurisdiction data ‑ Vic** | | | **Table 3A.66** | State Government real expenditure on child care and preschool services, Victoria (2013‑14 dollars) ($’000) | | **Table 3A.67** | Characteristics of State Government funded and/or provided child care services, Victoria | | **Table 3A.68** | Children aged 0–12 years attending State Government funded and/or provided child care services, by age, Victoria | | **Table 3A.69** | Staff employed by State Government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services, Victoria | | **Table 3A.70** | Paid staff employed by State Government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services, by qualification and experience, Victoria | | **Table 3A.71** | NQF approved and State Government licensed or registered services, by service type and management type, Victoria | | **Table 3A.72** | Substantiated breaches arising from complaints about NQF approved and State Government licensed or registered services, Victoria | | |
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| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Single jurisdiction data – WA** | | | **Table 3A.80** | State Government real expenditure on child care and preschool services, Western Australia (2013‑14 dollars) ($’000) | | **Table 3A.81** | Characteristics of State Government funded and/or provided child care services, Western Australia | | **Table 3A.82** | Children aged 0–12 years using State Government funded and/or provided child care services, by age, Western Australia | | **Table 3A.83** | Staff employed by State Government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services, Western Australia | | **Table 3A.84** | Paid staff employed by State Government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services, by qualification and experience, Western Australia | | **Table 3A.85** | NQF approved and State Government licensed or registered services, by service type and management type, Western Australia | | **Table 3A.86** | Substantiated breaches arising from complaints about NQF approved and State Government licensed or registered services, Western Australia | | |
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