3 Early childhood education and care

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| **Attachment tables** |
| Attachment tables are identified in references throughout this Indigenous Compendium by an ‘A’ prefix (for example, in this chapter, table 3A.1). As the data are directly sourced from the 2013 Report, the Compendium also notes where the original table, figure or text in the 2013 Report can be found. For example, where the Compendium refers to ‘2013 Report, p. 3.1’ this is page 1 of chapter 3 of the 2013 Report, and ‘2013 Report, table 3A.1’ is attachment table 1 of attachment 3A of the 2013 Report. A list of attachment tables referred to in the Compendium is provided at the end of this chapter, and the full attachment tables are available from the Review website at www.pc.gov.au/gsp. |
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The Early childhood education and care chapter (chapter 3) in the *Report on Government Services 2013* (2013 Report) reports on the performance of early childhood education and care services in each Australian state and territory. Data are reported for Indigenous Australians for a subset of the performance indicators reported in that chapter — those data are compiled and presented here.

Early childhood education and care aims to meet the care, education and development needs of children. In this chapter, child care services are those provided to children aged 0–12 years, usually by someone other than the child’s parents or guardian. Preschool services are 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 and provided for children aged   
0–12 years. Local governments also plan, fund and deliver early childhood education and care. Due to data limitations, the only local government data included are where Australian, State and Territory government funding and/or licensing are involved.

The major improvements to reporting on early childhood education and care this year include:

* the name of the chapter has been changed from ‘Children’s services’, to reflect the scope of the chapter and to align with terminology being used in other Council of Australian Governments (COAG) activities across the early childhood reform agenda
* inclusion of a new measure, the proportion of Indigenous children enrolled and attending preschool, under the indicator ‘Indigenous preschool enrolment and attendance’. This measure aligns with performance data reported for the National Indigenous Reform Agreement (NIRA).

**Indigenous data in the Early childhood education and care chapter**

The Early childhood education and care chapter in the 2013 Report contains the following data items on Indigenous Australians:

* representation of Indigenous children attending Australian Government approved child care services, 2010
* representation of Indigenous children in State and Territory government child care and preschool services, 2011-12
* Indigenous children enrolled in State and Territory Government preschool services, 2006-07 to 2011-12
* Indigenous children absent from non-government preschools, 2011
* proportion of Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years who are enrolled in and attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling, by remoteness, 2011.

The arrangements for departmental responsibility for early childhood education and care vary across State and Territory governments. There are also differences across states and territories in early childhood education program names and starting ages. Table 3A.1 shows basic information on child care and preschool education 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 the area of early childhood education and care. Through COAG, governments have endorsed a number of major funding agreements and initiatives as part of a wider early childhood reform agenda (box 3.1).

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| Box 3.1 The COAG Early Childhood Reform Agenda |
| The main 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,* 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 that seek to improve early childhood outcomes * the *National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education* which aims to achieve universal access to quality early childhood education for all children in the year before full time school by 2013. These reforms are being implemented progressively from 2009–2013 * the *National Indigenous Reform Agreement* which includes a target to ensure all Indigenous children aged 4 years in remote communities have access to early childhood education by 2013. These reforms are being implemented progressively from 2009–2013 * the *National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development* which aims to establish 35 new Children and Family Centres (CFCs). The locations for 38 CFCs have been agreed, exceeding the original target of 35. These reforms are being implemented progressively until June 2014 * national workforce initiatives to improve the quality and supply of the early childhood education and care workforce * the *National Partnership Agreement on the National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care*. This incorporates a *National Quality Framework* (NQF) *for Early Childhood Education and Care* and a *National Quality Standard* to ensure high quality and consistent early childhood education and care 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); Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) (unpublished). |
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The Australian Government provides supplementary funding to support the participation of Indigenous children in eligible preschool programs. In 2011, $13.0 million was provided on a per person and project basis to 1538 government and non-government preschools. The funding covered 9707 full time equivalent Indigenous preschool enrolments (DEEWR unpublished).

**Framework of performance indicators**

The Early childhood education and care performance indicator framework outlined in figure 3.1 identifies the performance indicators reported in the 2013 Report. Data for Indigenous Australians are reported for a subset of the performance indicators and are presented here. It is important to interpret these data in the context of the broader performance indicator framework. The framework shows which data are comparable. For data that are not considered directly comparable, the text includes relevant caveats and supporting commentary.

COAG has agreed to six National Agreements (NAs) to enhance accountability to the public for the outcomes achieved or outputs delivered by a range of government services, (see 2013 Report, chapter 1 for more detail on reforms to federal financial relations).

There are no service specific NAs that relate to early childhood education and care services. However, the NIRA includes an indicator relating to access to quality early childhood education for Indigenous children. Data for this indicator are available at the national level and are presented as supplementary information on ‘Indigenous preschool enrolment and attendance’.

A performance indicator framework consistent with the objectives for early childhood education and care is shown in figure 3.1. The performance indicator framework provides information on equity, efficiency and effectiveness, and distinguishes the outputs and outcomes of early childhood education and care . The framework shows which data are provided on a comparable basis in the2013 Report. For data that are not considered directly comparable, the text includes relevant caveats and supporting commentary. Chapter 1 discusses data comparability from a Report-wide perspective (2013 Report, see section 1.6).

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

Figure 3.1 Early childhood education and care performance indicator framework

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| Figure 3.1: Early childhood education and care performance indicator framework.  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. |

*Source*: 2013 Report, figure 3.1, p. 3.15.

**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 which can have special difficulty in accessing services (box 3.2).

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| Box 3.2 **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, Indigenous 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 not directly comparable.  Data quality information for this indicator is under development. |
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Data for participation by special needs groups using Australian Government approved child care services for 2010 were drawn from the *National ECEC Workforce Census 2010* and DEEWR administrative systems. Box 3.3 contains more information on the census.

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| Box 3.3 **Australian Government National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census** |
| The National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census (National ECEC Workforce Census) was conducted in 2010 and is an initiative of the Australian Government in partnership with State and Territory governments. The census aims to provide comprehensive and nationally consistent data on access to early childhood education and care services, and staff qualifications and experience. This chapter presents data for 2010 from the 2010 National ECEC Workforce Census. The next National ECEC Workforce Census is planned for 2013, and results will be available for the 2014 Report.  The National ECEC Workforce Census 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 National ECEC Workforce Census 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:* DEEWR (unpublished). |
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At a national level, Indigenous children aged 0–12 years had a lower representation in child care services in 2010 (2.0 per cent) than their representation in the community in 2010 (4.7 per cent). This was the case for both the 0–5 years age group and the 6–12 years age group (tables 3.1 and 3A.15).

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.17.

Table 3.1 Proportion of children aged 0–12 years attending Australian Government approved child care services from special needs groups, 2010 (per cent)**a, b, c**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | NSW | Vic | | Qld | | WA | | SA | | Tas | ACT | NT | Aust |
| *Children from non-English speaking backgrounds* | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| In child care services | 19.7 | 17.2 | 6.5 | | | 9.8 | | 7.8 | | 3.2 | 13.1 | 11.0 | 13.7 |
| In the community, 2006 | 23.2 | 21.7 | 11.9 | | | 15.5 | | 13.7 | | 7.2 | 16.2 | 36.8 | 18.8 |
| *Indigenous children* | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| In child care services | 2.1 | 0.6 | 2.9 | | | 2.1 | | 1.4 | | 1.5 | 0.9 | 9.3 | 2.0 |
| In the community, 2010 | 4.4 | 1.2 | 6.5 | | | 5.9 | | 3.6 | | 7.0 | 2.4 | 43.4 | 4.7 |
| *Children from low income families* | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| In child care services | 24.1 | 24.0 | 24.9 | | 22.7 | | 24.1 | | 24.8 | | 8.8 | 14.4 | 23.9 |
| In the community, 2009-10 | 28.4 | 26.6 | 26.9 | | 23.8 | | 23.9 | | 30.5 | | *11.5* | 23.0 | 26.6 |
| *Children with disability* | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| In child care services | 3.3 | 2.2 | 1.9 | | | 2.2 | | 3.6 | | 2.0 | 1.9 | 2.7 | 2.6 |
| In the community, 2009 | 7.4 | 5.7 | 5.8 | | | 8.2 | | 5.9 | | 8.4 | 8.3 | 5.4 | 6.6 |
| *Children from regional areas* | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| In child care services | 26.0 | 23.6 | 32.4 | | | 20.6 | | 18.7 | | 100.4 | 1.1 | 79.9 | 28.0 |
| In the community, 2006 | 28.8 | 28.2 | 45.6 | | | 24.7 | | 26.6 | | 97.7 | 0.2 | 51.0 | 33.0 |
| *Children from remote areas* | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| In child care services | 0.2 | – | 1.2 | | | 3.3 | | 1.8 | | 0.6 | .. | 20.2 | 0.9 |
| In the community, 2006 | 0.7 | 0.1 | 4.4 | | | 8.6 | | 4.4 | | 2.0 | .. | 50.3 | 3.0 |

a Data on children in child care services represent the population of children attending child care in 2010. Data on representation in the community are reported for different years due to the availability of data and are sourced from either the ABS *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2009*, the *2006* *Census of Population and Housing,* the *Survey of Income and Housing 2009-10*, or *Experimental Estimates and Projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population, 1991 to 2009*. b Data on children in child care services for 2010 are not directly comparable with previous years data (presented in table 3A.16) due to a change in data source. 2010 data in this Report are final from the National ECEC Workforce Census. Refer to box 3.4 and table 3A.16 for more information. c See table 3A.16 for complete footnotes and definitions. .. Not applicable. – Nil or rounded to zero.

*Source*: DEEWR (unpublished) administrative data collection and *National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census, 2010;* ABS (unpublished) *Survey of Income and Housing 2009-10*, Cat. no. 6523.0, *2006 Census of Population and Housing,* Cat. no. 2031.0*; Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2009*, Cat no. 4430.0 and *Experimental Estimates and Projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population, 1991 to 2021* (Series B), Cat. no. 3238.0; table 3A.16; 2013 Report, table 3.4, p. 3.19.

*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 difficulty in accessing services (box 3.4).

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| Box 3.4 **Participation rates for special needs groups in preschool** |
| ‘Participation rates for special needs groups in preschool’ is defined as the proportion of children using preschool services who are from targeted special needs groups, compared with the representation of these groups in the community. Data are reported for children aged 3–5 years enrolled in preschool services.  Targeted special needs groups include children from non-English speaking backgrounds, Indigenous children, children with disability, and children from regional, remote and very remote areas.  A high or increasing participation rate is desirable. If the representation of special needs groups among preschool services users is broadly similar to their representation in the community, this suggests more equitable access.  Data reported for this indicator are not directly comparable.  Data quality information for this indicator is under development. |
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Data on the representation of special needs groups for children in State and Territory government funded and/or provided preschools are provided in table 3.2. Nationally, the representation of Indigenous children aged 3–5 years in preschool (5.2 per cent) was higher than their representation in the community (4.8 per cent), although this varies across jurisdictions.

Data on the representation of special needs groups in preschool in the year before full time school are presented in table 3A.17.

Table 3.2 Proportion of children (aged 3–5 years) enrolled in State and Territory government funded or provided preschools from special needs groups, 2011-12 (per cent)**a, b, c**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | NSWd | Vic | Qld | WA | SA | Tas | ACT | NT | Auste |
| Children from non-English speaking backgrounds | | | | | | | | | |
| In preschool services | 12.1 | 14.1 | 8.0 | na | 10.9 | na | 24.6 | na | 12.4 |
| In the community, 2006 | 23.2 | 21.6 | 11.6 | 15.6 | 13.5 | 7.2 | 16.1 | 38.7 | 18.7 |
| Indigenous children | | | | | | | | | |
| In preschool services | 5.2 | 1.7 | 5.9 | 6.5 | 7.3 | 7.4 | 4.7 | 43.0 | 5.2 |
| In the community, 2012 | 4.6 | 1.2 | 6.7 | 5.7 | 3.6 | 7.0 | 2.5 | 40.9 | 4.8 |
| Children with disability | | | | | | | | | |
| In preschool servicesf | 6.7 | 3.9 | 3.0 | 3.6 | 10.1 | na | 3.6 | 4.2 | 5.1 |
| In the community, 2009 | 7.3 | 3.9 | 7.3 | 6.8 | 5.5 | 7.2 | 7.3 | np | 6.3 |
| Children from regional areas | | | | | | | | | |
| In preschool services | 32.3 | 25.1 | 35.0 | 21.4 | 24.8 | 98.4 | 2.1 | 48.4 | 29.7 |
| In the community, 2006 | 28.0 | 27.5 | 45.1 | 24.5 | 26.2 | 97.7 | 0.1 | 48.2 | 32.3 |
| Children from remote areas | | | | | | | | | |
| In preschool services | 1.1 | 0.1 | 5.1 | 7.5 | 5.1 | 1.6 | .. | 51.6 | 3.3 |
| In the community, 2006 | 0.7 | 0.1 | 4.7 | 9.0 | 4.4 | 2.0 | .. | 53.1 | 3.2 |

a Data on children in preschool services represent the population of children enrolled in preschool in 2011‑12. Data on representation in the community are reported for different years due to the availability of data and are sourced from the ABS *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2009*, 2006 *Census of Population and Housing* and the *Experimental Estimates and Projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population, 1991 to 2009*. b See table 3A.17 for complete footnotes and definitions. c Data exclude innovative or flexible services that receive direct funding from the Australian Government and are targeted towards children from these groups. Data on preschool services can include some children aged 3 years or 5 years for all jurisdictions. Preschool data in the NT include some children aged greater than 5 years. d NSW children undertaking a preschool program in a long day care (LDC) centre not in receipt of State government funding are excluded from this table. The majority of NSW children undertake a preschool program in a LDC setting.   
e Data for Australia for children from non-English speaking backgrounds, children with disability and children from remote areas, in preschool, are the total of the sum of the states and territories for which data are available, and should not be interpreted as national data. Data for Australia for Indigenous children in preschool, and data on the representation in the community represent all states and territories and can be interpreted as national data. f Data on children with a disability are not directly comparable because the definition of disability varies across jurisdictions. **na** Not available. **np** Not published. **..** Not applicable.

*Source*: State and Territory governments (unpublished); ABS (unpublished) *2006 Census of Population and Housing,* Cat. no. 2031.0; *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2009*, Cat. no. 4430.0 and *Experimental Estimates and Projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population, 1991 to 2021* (Series B), Cat. no. 3238.0; table 3A.17; 2013 Report, table 3.5, p. 3.21.

*Access — Indigenous preschool enrolment and attendance*

‘Indigenous preschool enrolment and attendance’ 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 **Indigenous preschool enrolment and attendance** |
| Indigenous preschool attendance’ is defined by two measures.  *Enrolled children absent from a non-government preschool*  This measure is defined as the number of Indigenous children absent from non‑government preschools, as a proportion of all Indigenous children enrolled in non‑government preschools. Data are sourced from the National Preschool Census.  Data on Indigenous preschool attendance rates are limited to Indigenous children enrolled in non‑government preschools. Non-government preschools include preschool programs delivered in government funded, registered, licensed and/or approved services, and these arrangements vary across jurisdictions. Preschool programs operated by commercial providers are excluded.  A child is deemed absent if they missed one or more of the sessions they were enrolled in during the reference week. Preschool attendance is not compulsory.  A low or decreasing absentee rate indicates a high or increasing rate of attendance at preschools, and is desirable.  Data reported for this measure are not complete.  Data quality information for this measure is under development.  *Indigenous children enrolled in and attending a preschool program in the year before full time school*  This measure is defined as the number of Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in and attending a preschool program, divided by the number of Indigenous children aged 4 years. Attendance is counted as attending for at least one hour in the reference week.  These data are provided on a national basis by remoteness categories ‘major cities’, ‘inner/outer regional areas’ and ‘remote/very remote’ areas. Data for the numbers of Indigenous children enrolled and attending preschool are from the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection. The data cover government and non‑government preschools and reflect attendance at the August reference period. The number of Indigenous children is derived from ABS population data.  Data for this measure are not provided on a jurisdiction basis.  Data quality information for this measure is at www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs/2013. |
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Indigenous preschool enrolments provide a broad indication of access to preschool. Data on Indigenous preschool enrolments are available for all jurisdictions. Nationally in 2011-12, 12 239 Indigenous children were enrolled in State and Territory government funded and/or provided preschool. Of these Indigenous children, at least 8077 were enrolled in preschool in the year before full time school (table 3A.17). Data on Indigenous children’s representation in preschool compared with their representation in the community are presented in table 3.2. Data on Indigenous children enrolled in preschool for the period 2007-08 to 2011-12 are presented in 3A.18.

*Enrolled children absent from a non-government preschool*

This measure provides a broad indication of the participation of Indigenous children in preschools. These data are sourced from the National Preschool Census (NPC) and relate only to non-government preschools. These data can overlap with the preschools data provided by State and Territory governments and are therefore not directly comparable with other preschool data included in this Report. The NPC collected data from 97.0 per cent of the 3494 non-government preschools in scope for the 2011 NPC (DEEWR unpublished). This represents approximately 69.1 per cent of all government and non-government preschools, though this proportion varies considerably across jurisdictions (table 3A.19). Data for jurisdictions with a small number of non-government preschools should be interpreted with care.

In 2011, non-attendance by Indigenous children was higher than non-attendance by non‑Indigenous children in all jurisdictions and nationally (figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2 Enrolled children absent from non-government preschools, 2011**a, b, c, d**

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| Figure 3.2: Enrolled children absent from non-government preschools, 2011:  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. |

a Data on attendance are limited to non-government preschools. At the national level, approximately 69 per cent of children are in preschools deemed to be non-government, though this percentage varies across jurisdictions: 89.8 per cent in NSW, 100 per cent in Victoria, 93.3 per cent in Queensland, 27.6 per cent in WA, 16.2 per cent in SA, 26.3 per cent in Tasmania, 15.2 per cent in the ACT, and 7.7 per cent in the NT. Preschool attendance data for jurisdictions with a small proportion of non‑government preschools should be interpreted with care. b Preschool attendance is not compulsory. c Attendance was measured during the week of 1‑5 August 2011. Children are counted as absent if they are absent for one or more of the sessions that they were enrolled in during this week. Absences due to illness can be higher during winter than at other times of the year. d Data for non-Indigenous children are derived from data on Indigenous children and all children.

*Source*: DEEWR (unpublished) *National Preschool Census 2011*; table 3A.19; 2013 Report, figure 3.2,   
p. 3.24.

*Indigenous children enrolled in and attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling*

National data are also available on the proportion of Indigenous children enrolled and attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling. These data are presented by remoteness areas (major cities; inner/outer regional areas; remote/very remote areas). At July 2011, amongst Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years in major cities, 63.0 per cent were enrolled in a preschool program, with 62.0 per cent attending for at least one hour in the reference week. In regional areas, 76.0 per cent of Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years were enrolled in a preschool program, with 71.0 per cent attending. In remote and very remote areas, 91.0 per cent of Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years were enrolled in a preschool program, with 82.0 per cent attending for at least one hour in the reference week (table 3A.20).

**Definitions of key terms**

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| **Australian Government approved child care service** | A 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 models of service are centre-based long day care, family day care, outside school hours care (before/after school hours and ‘pupil free days’ care), vacation care, occasional care and other care. |
| **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** | Families who are receiving the maximum rate of Child Care Benefit. |
| **Children from non‑English speaking backgrounds** | Children living in situations where the main language spoken at home is not English. |
| **Children’s services** | All government funded and/or provided child care and preschool services (unless otherwise stated). |
| **Family day care** | Comprises 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. Educators 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 children’s services (for example, Child Care Benefit). |
| **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 Child Care Benefit) and/or services for which the government has primary responsibility for delivery. |
| **Indigenous 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. |
| **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. |
| **Occasional care** | Comprises services usually provided at a centre on an hourly or sessional basis for short periods or at irregular intervals for parents who need time to attend appointments, take care of personal matters, undertake casual and part time employment, study or have temporary respite from full time parenting. These services provide developmental activities for children, and are aimed primarily at 0‑5 year olds. Centres providing these services usually employ a mix of qualified and other staff. |
| **Other services** | Comprise government funded services to support children with additional needs or in particular situations (including children from an Indigenous or non-English speaking background, children with disability or of parents with disability, and children living in regional and remote areas). ‘Other services’ include in-home care which comprises services where an approved carer provides care in the child’s home. |
| **Outside school hours care** | Comprises services that provide care for school aged children before school, after school, during school holidays, and on pupil free days. Outside school hours care may use stand-alone facilities, share school buildings and grounds and/or share facilities such as community halls. |
| **Preschool services** | Comprises services that deliver early childhood education programs provided by a qualified teacher that are aimed at children in the year before they commence full time schooling, although different starting ages occur across jurisdictions. |
| **Regional and  remote areas** | Geographic location is based on the ABS’s Australian Standard Geographical Classification of Remoteness Areas, which categorises areas as ‘major cities’, ‘inner regional’, ‘outer regional’, ‘remote’, ‘very remote’ and ‘migratory’. The criteria for remoteness areas are based on the Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia, which measures the remoteness of a point based on the physical road distance to the nearest urban centre in each of five size classes.  The ‘regional’ classification used in the chapter is derived by adding data for inner regional and outer regional areas. The ‘remote’ classification is derived by adding data for remote, very remote and migratory areas. |
| **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 a non‑English speaking background; Indigenous children; children from low income families (Australian Government child care only); children with disability; and children from regional or remote areas. |

**List of attachment tables**

Attachment tables for data within this chapter are contained in the attachment to the Compendium. These tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by a ‘3A’ prefix (for example, table 3A.1 is table 1 in the Early childhood education and care attachment). Attachment tables are on the Review website (www.pc.gov.au/gsp).

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| **Table 3A.1** | Early Childhood Education and Care in Australia, as at 30 June 2012 |
| **Table 3A.15** | Representation of special needs groups attending Australian Government approved child care services (per cent), by age group, 2010 |
| **Table 3A.16** | Representation of special needs groups attending Australian Government approved child care services, children aged 0–12 (per cent) |
| **Table 3A.17** | Representation of children from special needs groups in State and Territory government child care and preschool services, 2011-12 |
| **Table 3A.18** | Indigenous children enrolled in State and Territory government preschool services, 2006-07 to 2011-12 |
| **Table 3A.19** | Children absent from non-government preschools, 2011 |
| **Table 3A.20** | Proportion of Indigenous children aged 4 and 5 years who are enrolled in and attending a preschool program in the year before full time schooling, by remoteness, 2011 |

**References**

COAG (Council of Australian Governments) 2009a, *Investing in the Early Years — A National Early Childhood Development Strategy*. *An initiative of the Council of Australian Governments,* 2 July 2009, www.coag.gov.au/coag\_meeting\_outcomes/2009-07-02/docs/national\_ECD\_strategy.pdf (accessed 7 October 2011).

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