Australian Early Development Census
An Australian Government Initiative

Our Children
Our Communities
Our Future

AEDC Queensland Report 2024

Early childhood development in Queensland

DELIVERING FOR QUEENSLAND

Queensland Government

This work has been produced by the Queensland Department of Education in consultation with the Australian Government Department of Education.

The data reported in this document is based on the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) data provided by the Australian Government Department of Education. The descriptions of the data are those of the Queensland Department of Education and not the Australian Government Department of Education.

The Queensland Department of Education acknowledges funding received from the Australian Government Department of Education to assist with the production of this publication. Queensland schools, teachers, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Consultants who completed the AEDC are acknowledged for their important contribution.

Comments and suggestions regarding this publication are welcomed and should be forwarded to the Queensland Department of Education at: **aedc@qed.qld.gov.au**

Published by the Queensland Department of Education, PO Box 15033, City East QLD 4002.

www.education.qld.gov.au

Since 2002, the Australian Government has worked in partnership with eminent child health research institutes. These include the Centre for Community Child Health at The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne, the Murdoch Children's Research Institute, Melbourne and The Kids Research Institute Australia to deliver the Australian Early Development Census program to communities nationwide. The Australian Government continues to work with its partners, and with state and territory governments to implement the AEDC.

Visit the **AEDC website** at www.aedc.gov.au

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Executive summary

The Australian Early Development Census

The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) is a national measure of children's development as they enter their first year of full-time school. Data has been collected nationally every 3 years since 2009. This makes the AEDC one of the most comprehensive data collections on early childhood development in the world. The 2024 AEDC is the sixth national data collection.

AEDC results can help to identify and monitor trends in how children in Australia are developing by the time they begin their first year of full-time school. It highlights what is working well and what needs to be improved or developed to support children and their families. The regular collection of AEDC data enables governments, educators, researchers, and communities to better support the wellbeing of children and families.

Each successive collection provides unique insights into the early life experiences of cohorts of children and how these are changing over time. Together, the developmental outcomes of successive cohorts tell the story of how children's development over the first 5 years of life is influenced by local, state or territory, national and international circumstances.

When children thrive in their early years, they have a strong foundation for lifelong learning, health, development and wellbeing.

The AEDC reveals trends in early childhood development. It can indicate what is working well to support children, and where opportunities exist to take further action.

The 2024 AEDC collection

Across the nation, the 2024 AEDC took place between 1 May 2024 and 31 July 2024. It included 288,483 children and 16,723 teachers in 7,368 schools. The children captured in the 2024 AEDC were mostly born in 2018 and 2019.

Around 300,000 children from across Australia are included in each collection of the AEDC, totalling over 1.7 million children since the AEDC began in 2009.

Queensland 2024 AEDC results

Domains

The percentage of children developmentally vulnerable has decreased on the communication skills and general knowledge domain, and remained stable on the physical health and wellbeing, and language and cognitive skills (school-based) domains. Developmental vulnerability has increased on the social competence and emotional maturity domains.

11.4% of children are developmentally vulnerable on the **physical health and wellbeing** domain, a non-significant decrease of 0.2 percentage points since 2021.

11.6% of children are developmentally vulnerable on the **social competence** domain, an increase of 1.0 percentage points since 2021.

11.5% of children are developmentally vulnerable on the **emotional maturity** domain, an increase of 1.5 percentage points since 2021.

8.4% of children are developmentally vulnerable on the **language and cognitive skills (school-based)** domain. This result has not changed since 2021.

8.9% of children are developmentally vulnerable on the **communication skills and general knowledge** domain, a decrease of 0.2 percentage points since 2021.

Summary indicators

OT5

51.7% of children are **developmentally on track on five domains (OT5)**, a non-significant increase of 0.3 percentage points since 2021.

DV1

25.4% of children are **developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains (DV1),** an increase of 0.7 percentage points since 2021.

DV2

13.6% of children are **developmentally vulnerable on two or more domains (DV2),** an increase of 0.4 percentage points since 2021.

Priority groups

First Nations children

The percentage of **First Nations children developmentally on track on five domains (OT5)** stabilised in 2024 with a non-significant increase from 33.8% in 2021 to 34.6% in 2024.

The percentage of First Nations children **developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains (DV1)** has remained stable at 41.8%. There has been a significant decrease of 1.2 percentage points in First Nations children **developmentally vulnerable on two or more domains (DV2),** from 26.9% in 2021 to 25.7% in 2024.

Language diversity and English proficiency

Only 0.5% of children with a language background other than English (LBOTE) who are **not proficient in English are developmentally on track on five domains (OT5).**

Almost all (93.9%) LBOTE children who are not proficient in English are **developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains (DV1),** while 62.1% are **developmentally vulnerable on two or more domains (DV2).**

Geographic location

The percentage of children **developmentally on track on five domains (OT5)** has decreased for children living in remote or very remote areas and increased for children living in major cities since 2021. The largest shift was in remote/very remote areas (1.8 percentage points decrease) followed by children living in major cities (0.4 percentage points increase).

Socio-economic status

In 2024, only 40% of children living in the most disadvantaged communities (SEIFA quintile 1) were **developmentally on track on five domains (OT5).** This has remained stable since 2021.

Queensland results

The AEDC children

Participation in the AEDC

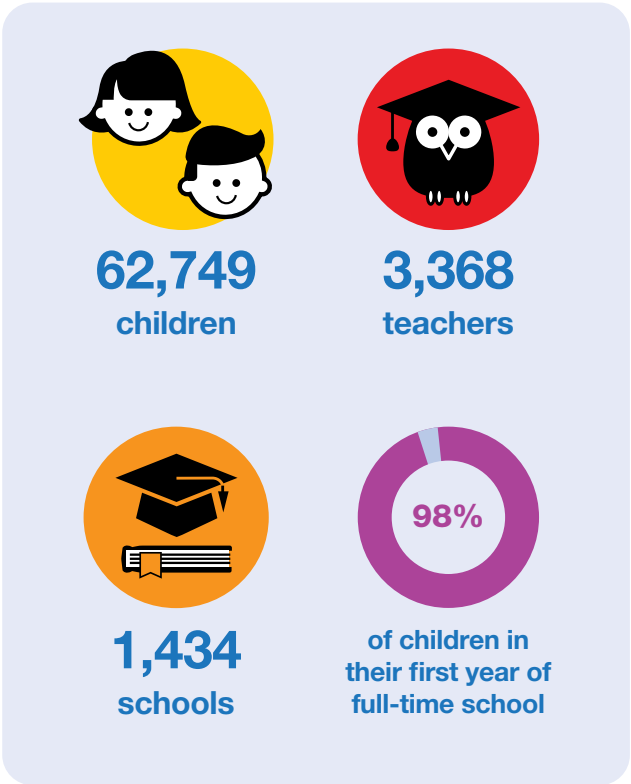
Since the inception of the AEDC, the high participation rates of schools mean that Australia continues to be a global leader in monitoring children's development and wellbeing.

In Queensland, participation has been consistently high – more than 97 per cent for each cycle over the life of the collection. This is driven by the strong collaborative relationships developed between the Queensland Department of Education (DoE) and the independent and Catholic schooling sector peak bodies: Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ) and the Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC).

Demonstrating our shared purpose, in the lead up to the 2024 data collection, Queensland non-government sector heads, the Chief Executive Officer ISQ and the Executive Director QCEC joined with the Director-General DoE to promote the importance of contributing to the data set to all Queensland schools.

More than 1,400 Queensland schools participated in the 2024 AEDC, capturing data on more than 62,000 children, or 98% of those enrolled in Prep across the state. This high participation rate reflects the collective commitment by government and schools to support and nurture Queensland's youngest learners.

Figure 1 – 2024 AEDC participation in Queensland

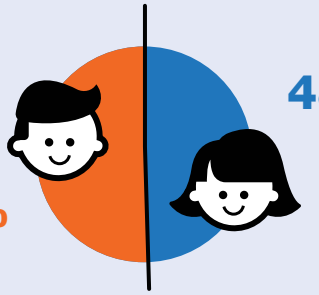


Demographic snapshot

The AEDC provides important insights into the demographic characteristics of the children captured in the 2024 collection. Figure 2 highlights key demographic characteristics and the diversity of the population of children in Queensland.

Figure 2 – Demographic characteristics of children who participated in the 2024 AEDC in Queensland

Age/gender

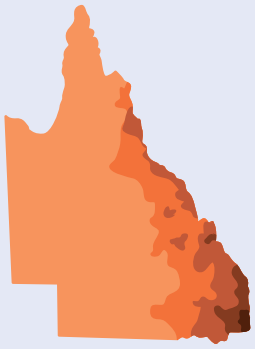


48.3% Girls

51.7% Boys

Mean age: 5 years 7 months

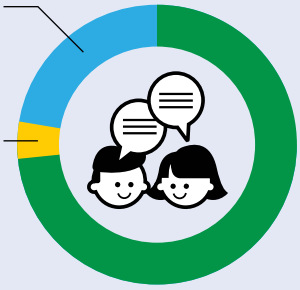
Geographic location



Remoteness levels

65.3% Major cities
18.7% Inner regional
13.2% Outer regional
1.5% Remote
1.2% Very remote

Language diversity

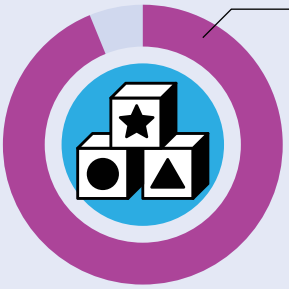


16.1% LBOTE† – Proficient in English

2.6% LBOTE – Not proficient in English

81.3% English only

Preschool attendance



90.3%^ of children attended a preschool program in the year before full-time school

Cultural diversity

10.8% First Nations children

5.6% Children born overseas

Support needs

6.9% Children with special needs*

21.9% Children requiring further assessment#

† Language background other than English.

^ Although teachers are well-placed to report on the development of children, the extent to which teachers know about children's preschool/kindergarten experience varies. If teachers indicate they 'don't know' this information, these cases are excluded from the reporting figure. In 2024, 12.6% of teachers selected 'don't know'.

* Children requiring special assistance because of chronic medical, physical, or intellectually disabling conditions based on a medical diagnosis. Children may be included in both 'special needs' and 'requiring further assessment'.

\# Children who are currently being assessed or who have been identified by a teacher as needing further assessment.

Trends in development

The AEDC domains

The AEDC captures data on 5 key areas or 'domains' of early childhood development that have been shown to predict later mental health, wellbeing and educational outcomes. Figure 3 describes the AEDC domains.

Figure 3 – AEDC domain descriptions

Physical health and wellbeing

Children's physical readiness for the school day, physical independence and gross and fine motor skills.

Social competence

Children's overall social competence, responsibility and respect, approach to learning, and readiness to explore new things.

Emotional maturity

Children's pro-social and helping behaviours, and absence of anxious and fearful behaviour, aggressive behaviour, hyperactivity and inattention.

Language and cognitive skills (school-based)

Children's interest and skills in literacy and numeracy, and memory.

Communication skills and general knowledge

Children's communication skills and general knowledge based on broad developmental competencies and skills.

For more information, see the About the AEDC domains fact sheet

How children's scores are classified

Children receive a score (0-10) for each of the five AEDC domains. These domain scores are then classified into one of 3 groups using benchmarks that were developed from the first AEDC collection in 2009. These categories are: developmentally on track, at risk, or vulnerable (Table 1).

Table 1 – Definitions of developmentally vulnerable, at risk and on track on the AEDC domains

Developmentally on track Scores above the 25th percentile or in the top 75 per cent of the 2009 scores	Children are developing well
Developmentally at risk Scores between the 10th and 25th percentile	Children are facing challenges in some aspects of their development
Developmentally vulnerable Scores below the 10th percentile or in the lowest 10 per cent of the 2009 scores	Children are facing some significant challenges in their development

Understanding significant change

With the 2024 AEDC being the sixth collection since 2009, results can be compared to past collections to identify shifts in children's development over time. The AEDC uses 'critical difference' methodology to indicate whether changes in results between 2 collections represent a 'significant change' in children's development.

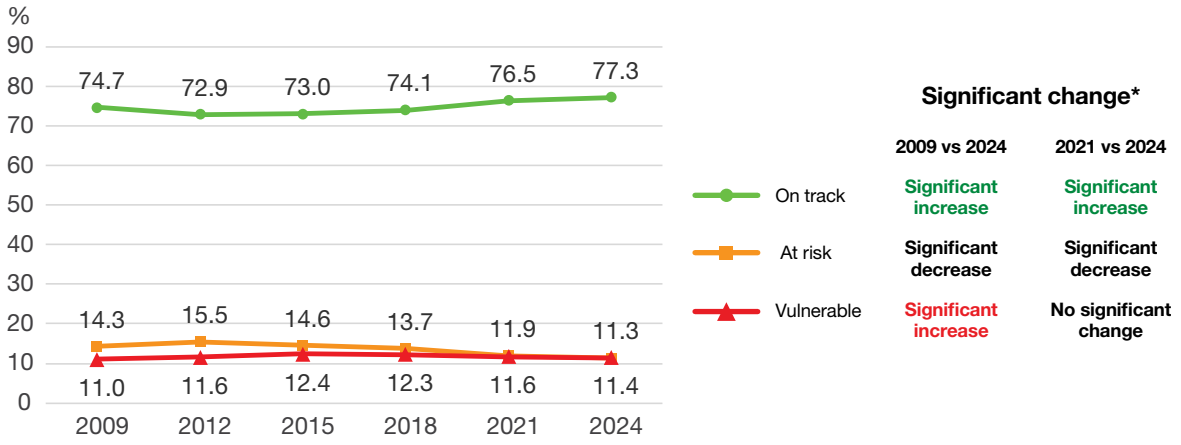
For more information, see the Comparing AEDC results over time fact sheet

Queensland trends: AEDC domains

Physical health and wellbeing

In 2024, the percentage of Queensland children developmentally vulnerable on the physical health and wellbeing domain remained stable, yet above the baseline of 11.0 per cent observed in 2009. A significant decrease in the proportion of children developmentally at risk on this domain was accompanied by an increase in those starting school developmentally on track.

Figure 4 – Queensland trends/Physical health and wellbeing



Significant change*

	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
On track	Significant increase	Significant increase
At risk	Significant decrease	Significant decrease
Vulnerable	Significant increase	No significant change

Developmentally on track	Developmentally at risk	Developmentally vulnerable
Children can **almost always** physically cope with the school day, are generally independent, have excellent motor skills, and have adequate energy levels.	Children experience **some challenges** that interfere with their ability to physically cope with the school day, e.g. dressing inappropriately, or frequently late, hungry or tired. Children may also show poor coordination, fine and/or gross motor skills, or poor-to-average energy levels.	Children experience **several challenges** that interfere with their ability to physically cope with the school day, e.g. dressing inappropriately, or frequently late, hungry or tired. Children are usually clumsy and may have fading energy levels.

* Significant change text is colour coded **green** for a positive change and **red** for a negative change. Significant change text for 'at risk' is not colour coded as it should be interpreted in relation to changes in the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable and on track.

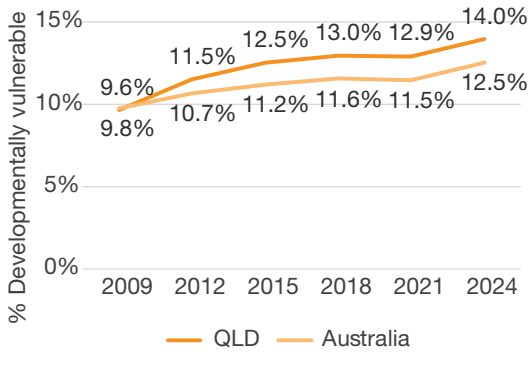
Queensland trends: Sub-domains

Physical health and wellbeing

The physical health and wellbeing domain is the only AEDC domain that is reported with sub-domain analysis. Patterns of vulnerability vary across the physical health and wellbeing domain: for example, children might be coming to school hungry but still have developmentally appropriate fine and gross motor skills. As such, sub-domains are reported for the physical health and wellbeing domain, enabling communities to make better sense of these results.

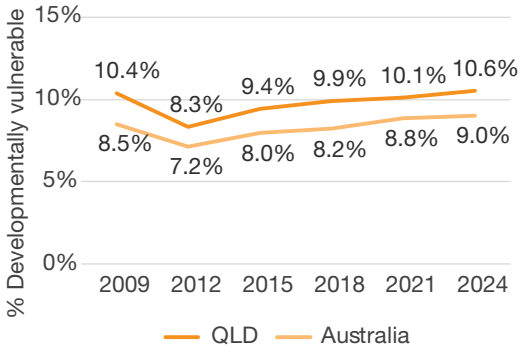
The physical readiness for the school day sub-domain (Figure 5) indicates that the percentage of children going to school hungry, tired and without the things they need to be ready to learn increased substantially at state and national levels. On the other hand, developmental vulnerability on the physical independence and gross and fine motor skills sub-domains is relatively lower, and has either reduced or remained stable in 2024 (see Figures 6 and 7).

Figure 5 – Queensland trends/Physical readiness for the school day



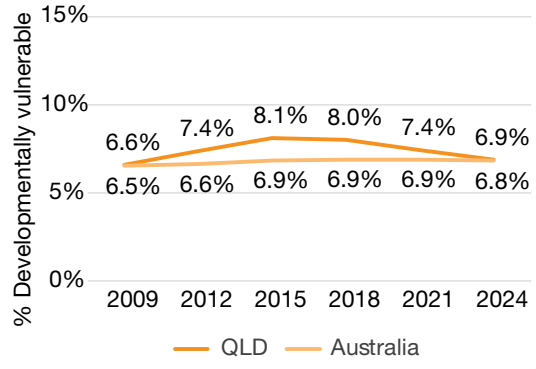
Children developmentally vulnerable on this sub-domain have at least sometimes experienced coming unprepared for school by being dressed inappropriately, coming to school late, hungry or tired.

Figure 6 – Queensland trends/Physical independence



Children developmentally vulnerable on this sub-domain range from those who have not developed either independence or handedness or coordination, to those who have not developed any of these skills.

Figure 7 – Queensland trends/Gross and fine motor skills



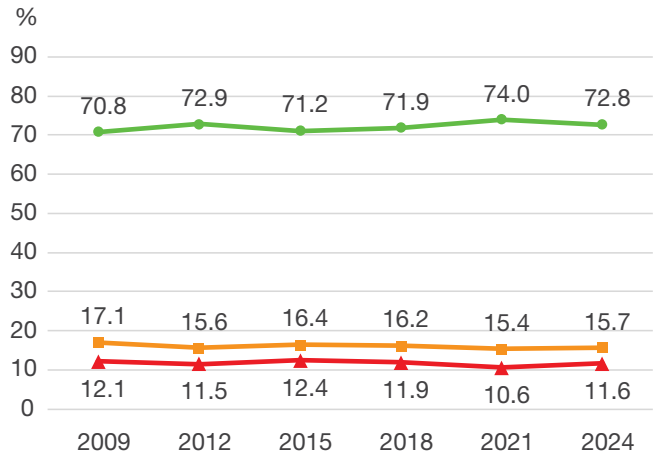
Children developmentally vulnerable on this sub-domain could have poor fine and gross motor skills and/or poor overall energy levels during the school day.

Queensland trends: AEDC domains

Social competence

Social competence is an important element of a child's ability to adapt well to school. In 2024, the percentage of Queensland children developmentally vulnerable on this domain increased significantly for the first time since 2015. Furthermore, the proportion of children developmentally at risk on the social competence domain increased, while the proportion of those developmentally on track significantly decreased.

Figure 8 – Queensland trends/Social competence



Significant change*	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
On track	Significant increase	Significant decrease
At risk	Significant decrease	Significant increase
Vulnerable	Significant decrease	Significant increase

Developmentally on track	Developmentally at risk	Developmentally vulnerable
Children **almost never** have problems getting along with others, are respectful to adults, self-confident, can follow class routines, and can help others.	Children experience **some challenges** in areas such as getting along with others (children or teachers), playing cooperatively with a variety of children, showing respect for others and for property, following instructions and class routines, taking responsibility for their actions, working independently, and exhibiting self-control and selfconfidence.	Children experience **several challenges** and have poor overall social skills, e.g. regularly have challenges getting along with other children, do not accept responsibility for actions, and have difficulty following rules and class routines. Children may be disrespectful of others and their property, have low self-confidence and self-control, do not adjust well to change, and are usually unable to work independently.

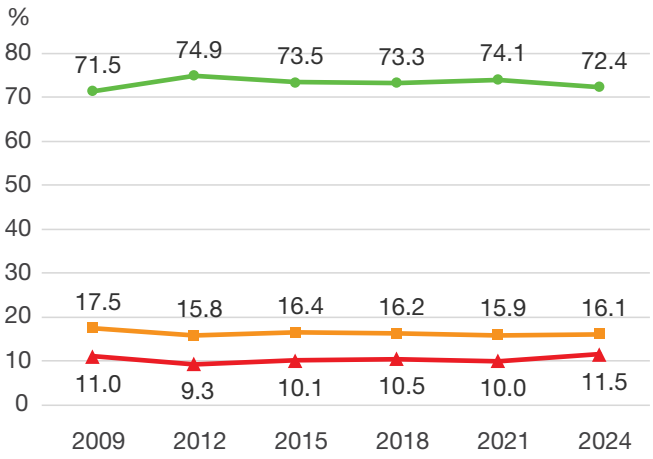
* Significant change text is colour coded **green** for a positive change and **red** for a negative change. Significant change text for 'at risk' is not colour coded as it should be interpreted in relation to changes in the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable and on track.

Queensland trends: AEDC domains

Emotional maturity

Emotional maturity is another important determinant of a child's ability to adapt well to school. Since 2021, developmental vulnerability on this domain also increased significantly from 10.0 per cent to 11.5 per cent, while the proportion of children developmentally on track decreased significantly from 74.1 per cent to 72.4 per cent. Developmental vulnerability on the emotional maturity domain is the highest it has ever been in Queensland.

Figure 9 – Queensland trends/Emotional maturity



Significant change*	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
On track	Significant increase	Significant decrease
At risk	Significant decrease	No significant change
Vulnerable	Significant increase	Significant increase

Developmentally on track	Developmentally at risk	Developmentally vulnerable
Children **almost never** show aggressive, anxious or impulsive behaviour. Children have good concentration and will often help other children.	Children may **sometimes** experience problems with anxiety, aggression, temper tantrums, or problems with inattention or hyperactivity. Children experience some challenges in areas such as helping others who are hurt, sick or upset, inviting others to join in, being kind to others, and turn-taking.	Children experience **several challenges** in emotional regulation, e.g. aggression, prone to disobedience, easily distracted, inattentive, and impulsive. Children usually do not help others and are sometimes upset when left by their caregiver.

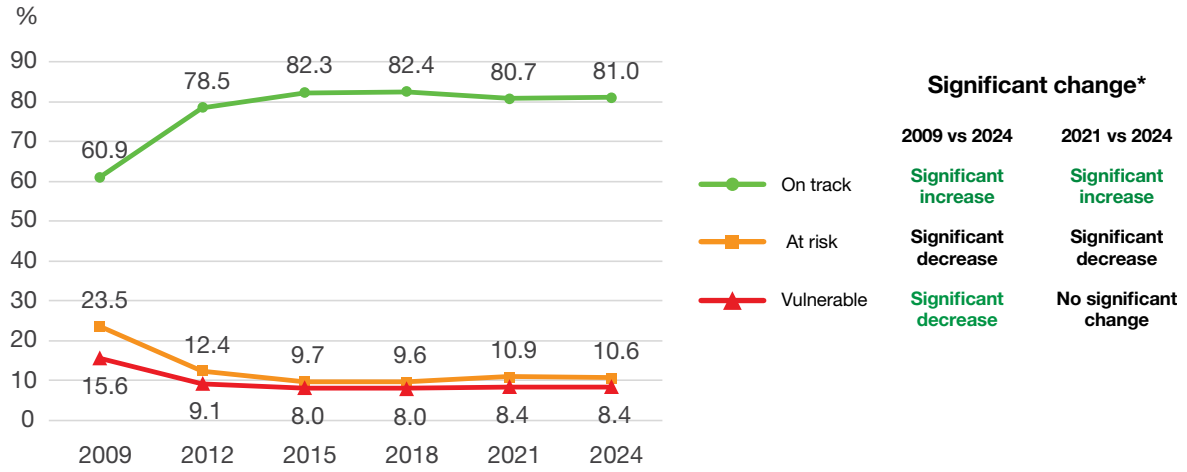
* Significant change text is colour coded **green** for a positive change and **red** for a negative change. Significant change text for 'at risk' is not colour coded as it should be interpreted in relation to changes in the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable and on track.

Queensland trends: AEDC domains

Language and cognitive skills (school-based)

In 2024, the percentage of Queensland children developmentally on track on the language and cognitive skills (school-based) domain significantly increased, while the percentage of those developmentally at risk significantly decreased. Developmental vulnerability on this domain increased from 2018 to 2021. However, it remained stable in 2024.

Figure 10 – Queensland trends/Language and cognitive skills (school-based)



Significant change*

	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
On track	Significant increase	Significant increase
At risk	Significant decrease	Significant decrease
Vulnerable	Significant decrease	No significant change

Developmentally on track	Developmentally at risk	Developmentally vulnerable
Children **are interested** in books, reading and writing, and basic math. Children can read and write simple sentences and complex words, and can count and recognise numbers and shapes.	Children have **mastered some** literacy and numeracy skills but not all, e.g. identify and attach sounds to some letters, aware of rhyming words, knows writing directions, able to write their own name, count to 20, recognise shapes and numbers, compare numbers, sort and classify, and understand simple time concepts. Children may have memory difficulties, are disinterested in books, reading and numbers, and may not have mastered more advanced literacy skills such as reading and writing simple words or sentences.	Children experience **several challenges** in reading/writing and numbers, e.g. unable to read and write simple words, often unable to attach sounds to letters, difficulties with memory, counting to 20, recognising and comparing numbers, disinterested in reading and numbers.

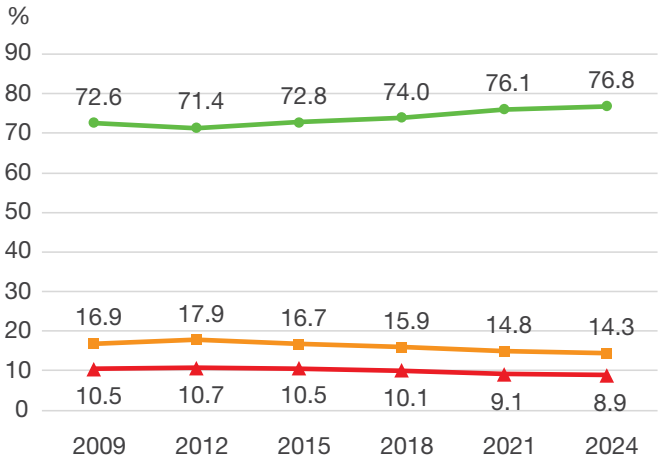
* Significant change text is colour coded **green** for a positive change and **red** for a negative change. Significant change text for 'at risk' is not colour coded as it should be interpreted in relation to changes in the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable and on track.

Queensland trends: AEDC domains

Communication skills and general knowledge

Queensland children's development on the communication skills and general knowledge domain has continued to improve in 2024. Significantly more children are developmentally on track on this domain, whereas significantly fewer are developmentally at risk or vulnerable. For the first time in 2024, the gap between Queensland and Australia has completely closed on this domain, meaning that Queensland children are on par with the Australian average in their communication skills and general knowledge upon school entry.

Figure 11 – Queensland trends/Communication skills and general knowledge



Significant change*	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
On track	Significant increase	Significant increase
At risk	Significant decrease	Significant decrease
Vulnerable	Significant decrease	Significant decrease

Developmentally on track	Developmentally at risk	Developmentally vulnerable
Children have **excellent communication skills**, can tell a story and communicate easily with both children and adults, and have no **problems with articulation.**	Children have **mastered some** communication skills but not all, e.g. listening, understanding and speaking effectively in English, clear articulation, able to tell a story and to take part in imaginative play. Children may not have **some basic general knowledge** about the world, e.g. leaves fall in autumn, an apple is fruit, dogs bark.	Children **have poor communication skills and articulation.** They may have limited command of English (or the language of instruction), difficulties talking to others, understanding, and being understood, and have poor **general knowledge**.

* Significant change text is colour coded **green** for a positive change and **red** for a negative change. Significant change text for 'at risk' is not colour coded as it should be interpreted in relation to changes in the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable and on track.

The AEDC summary indicators

The AEDC has 3 summary indicators that collectively can be used to monitor trends in children's development.

On track on five AEDC domains (OT5) reflects children's developmental strengths and recognises the importance of holistic development. It can help identify where things are working well to support children's development.

Developmentally vulnerable on one or more AEDC domains (DV1) and developmentally vulnerable on two or more AEDC domains (DV2), can be used to identify trends in children's developmental vulnerability over time, and indicate where additional support might be needed at a community level.

The summary indicators can be used to help evaluate the impact of policies and programs over time (Figure 12).

Figure 12 – AEDC summary indicators

OT5	The percentage of children who are developmentally on track on five AEDC domains.
DV1	The percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable on one or more AEDC domains.
DV2	The percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable on two or more AEDC domains.

OT5 has been selected as an indicator in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, Outcome 4: Children thrive in their early years.

For more information, see the AEDC summary indicators fact sheet

Queensland trends: AEDC summary indicators

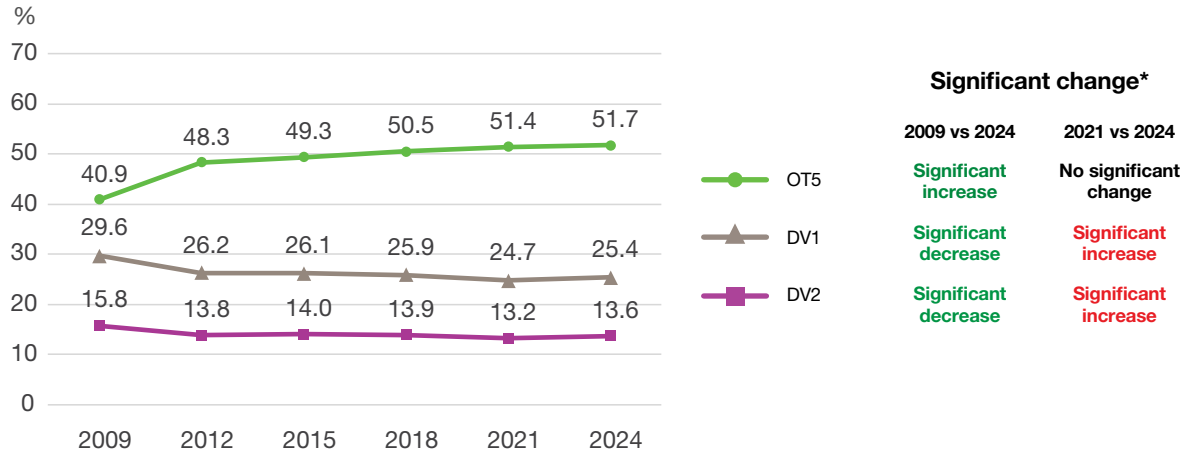
OT5 DV1 DV2

The percentage of Queensland children starting school developmentally on track on all five domains (OT5) has increased steadily since 2009, but remained stable in 2024.

The percentage of Queensland children who were DV1 declined significantly between 2009 and 2012, and continued to decrease in 2018 and 2021. However, in 2024 Queensland has seen the first significant increase in the percentage of children who are DV1 since the AEDC collection began.

The percentage of Queensland children who were DV2 fluctuated over the first 4 collection cycles, before decreasing significantly in 2021. However, in 2024 the percentage of Queensland children who are DV2 increased for the first time since 2015.

Figure 13 – Queensland trends/Summary indicators



Significant change*

	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
OT5	Significant increase	No significant change
DV1	Significant decrease	Significant increase
DV2	Significant decrease	Significant increase

* Significant change text is colour coded **green** for a positive change and **red** for a negative change. Significant change text for 'at risk' is not colour coded as it should be interpreted in relation to changes in the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable and on track.

Transition to school indicators

As part of the AEDC collection, teachers answer 3 questions known as transition indicators:

- Would you say that this child is making good progress in adapting to the structure and learning environment of the school?
- Would you say that this child has parent(s)/ caregiver(s) who are actively engaged with the school in supporting their child's learning?
- Would you say that this child is regularly read to/ encouraged in his/her reading at home as far as you can tell?

Teachers are asked to answer 'very true', 'somewhat true', 'not true' or 'don't know'.

The proportion of Queensland children who are making good progress in adapting to the structure and learning environment of the school has decreased from 72.5 per cent in 2021 to 71.7 per cent in 2024 (Figure 14). The proportion of children who are read to or encouraged in their reading at home has continued to decrease (from 69.3 per cent in 2018 to 66.5 per cent in 2024; see Figure 15). Meanwhile, the proportion of parents who are actively engaged with the school has continued to increase; from 65.3 per cent in 2009 to 73.5 per cent in 2024.

Figure 15 – Queensland trends/Child read to at home

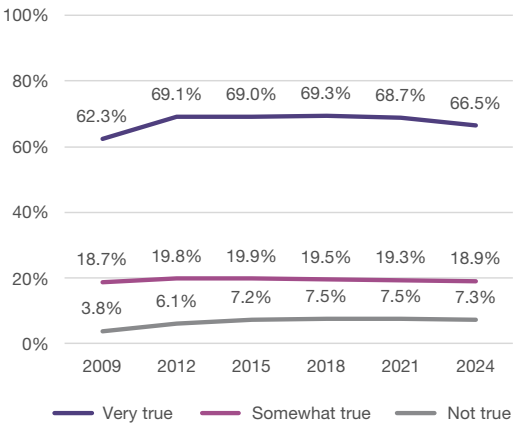


Figure 14 – Queensland trends/Child adapting to school

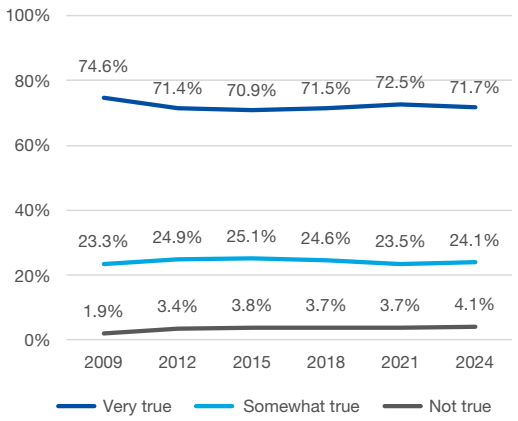
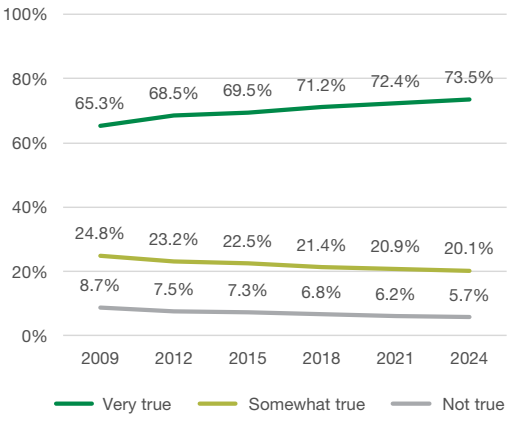


Figure 16 – Queensland trends/Parents actively engaged with the school



Priority groups

First Nations children

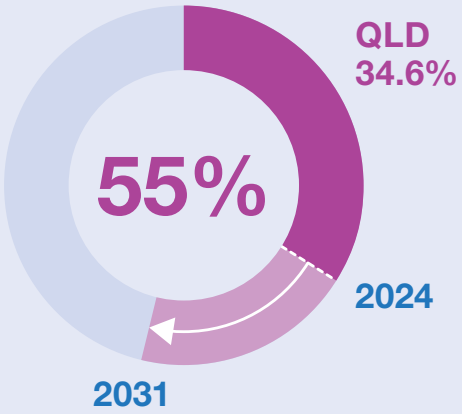
The AEDC data provides insight into the developmental outcomes of First Nations children. This data is vital for identifying whether national and local initiatives are contributing to improving First Nations children's development over time.

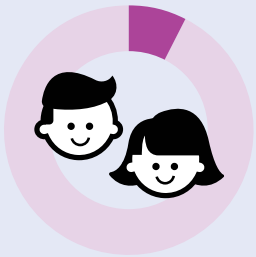
Improving early development for First Nations children is a priority of the National Closing the Gap partnership. By identifying the percentage of children who are developmentally on track on five domains, AEDC data contributes to measuring progress against Outcome 4 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap: *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children thrive in their early years.*

AEDC data is available to First Nations communities and researchers to empower them to lead the national research agenda for First Nations children.

For more information on the AEDC and First Nations children, visit the AEDC website

The Australian state and territory governments, through the Closing the Gap initiative, have set a target to increase the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are on track on five domains to 55 per cent by 2031.





10.8%

of children in the Queensland 2024 AEDC are First Nations children.

OT5

The percentage of First Nations children developmentally on track on five domains stabilised, with a non-significant increase, from 2021 to 2024.

2021	2024
33.8%	34.6%

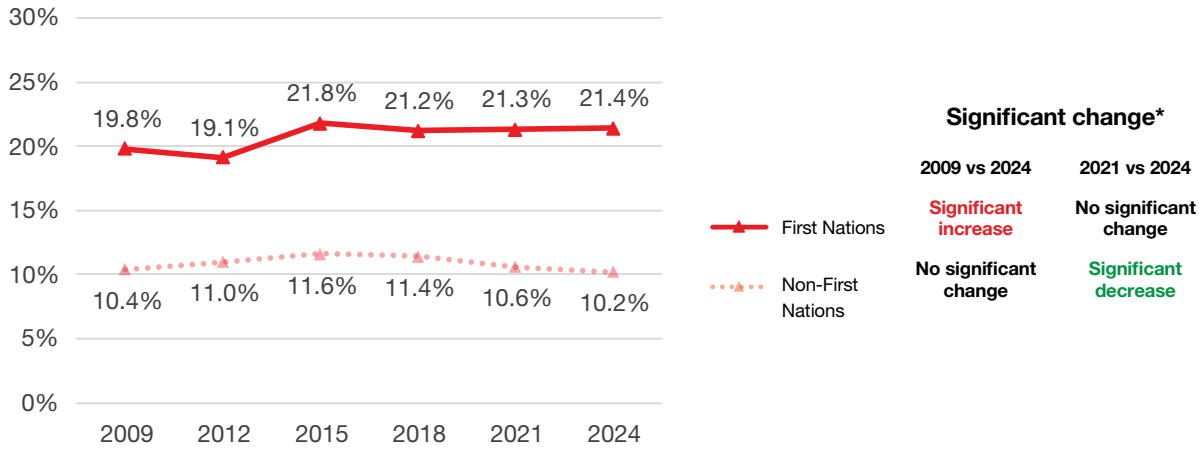
Note: The 2024 Australian version of the Early Development Instrument (AvEDI) and its supporting materials use the term 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children' when referring to First Nations children.

Queensland trends: First Nations children

Physical health and wellbeing

First Nations children are more likely to experience developmental vulnerability on the physical health and wellbeing domain compared to non-First Nations children. In 2024, the proportion of First Nations children developmentally vulnerable on the physical health and wellbeing domain remained stable. The proportion of non-First Nations children developmentally vulnerable on this domain decreased, resulting in a widening of the gap.

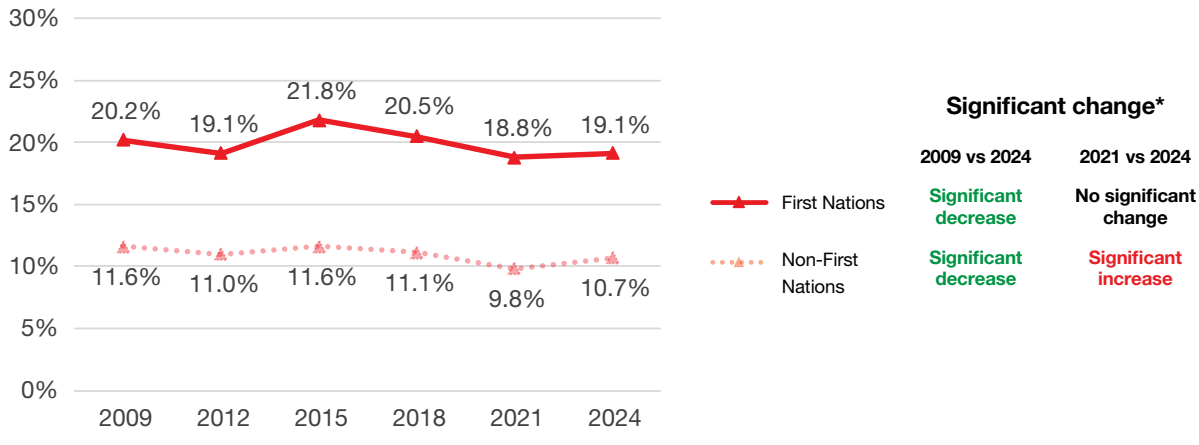
Figure 17 – Developmental vulnerability by First Nations status/Physical health and wellbeing



Social competence

First Nations children are more likely to experience developmental vulnerability on the social competence domain compared to non-First Nations children. In 2024, the proportion of First Nations children developmentally vulnerable on the social competence domain remained stable. The proportion of non-First Nations children developmentally vulnerable on this domain increased, resulting in a narrowing of the gap.

Figure 18 – Developmental vulnerability by First Nations status/Social competence



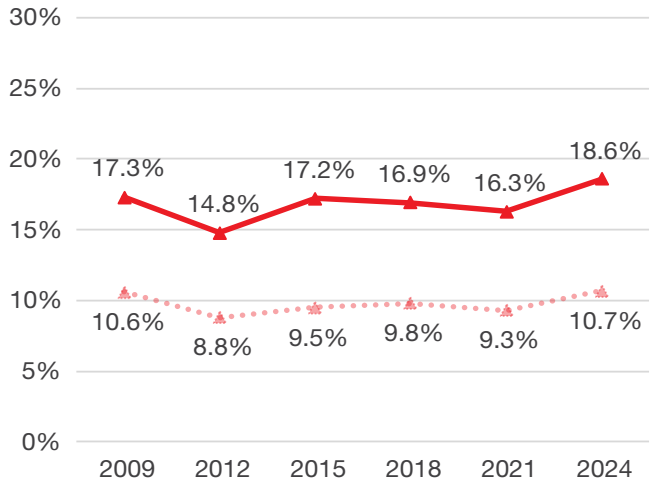
* Significant change text is colour coded **green** for a positive change and **red** for a negative change. Significant change text for 'at risk' is not colour coded as it should be interpreted in relation to changes in the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable and on track.

Queensland trends: First Nations children

Emotional maturity

First Nations children are more likely to experience developmental vulnerability on the emotional maturity domain compared to non-First Nations children. In 2024, there was a 2.3 percentage point increase in the proportion of First Nations children developmentally vulnerable on this domain relative to 2021. A slightly smaller increase in developmental vulnerability of 1.4 percentage points was also seen among non-First Nations children.

Figure 19 – Developmental vulnerability by First Nations status /Emotional maturity

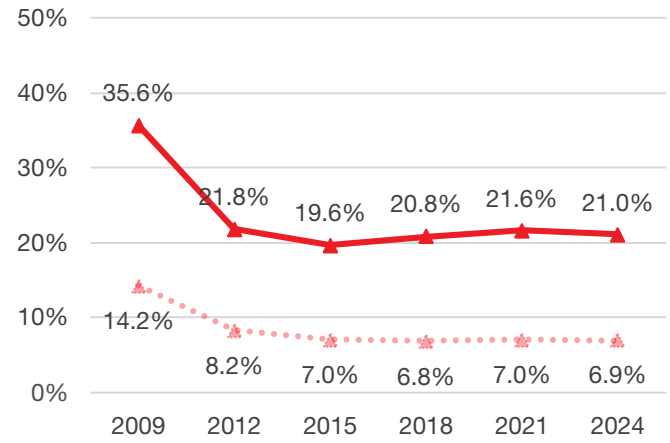


Significant change*	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
First Nations	Significant increase	Significant increase
Non-First Nations	No significant change	Significant increase

Language and cognitive skills (school-based)

Overall, developmental vulnerability on the language and cognitive skills (school-based) domain is higher for First Nations compared to non-First Nations children. However, in 2024 the proportion of First Nations children developmentally vulnerable on this domain decreased for the first time since 2015, whereas no change was observed among non-First Nations children.

Figure 20 – Developmental vulnerability by First Nations status/Language and cognitive skills (school-based)



Significant change*	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
First Nations	Significant decrease	Significant decrease
Non-First Nations	Significant decrease	No significant change

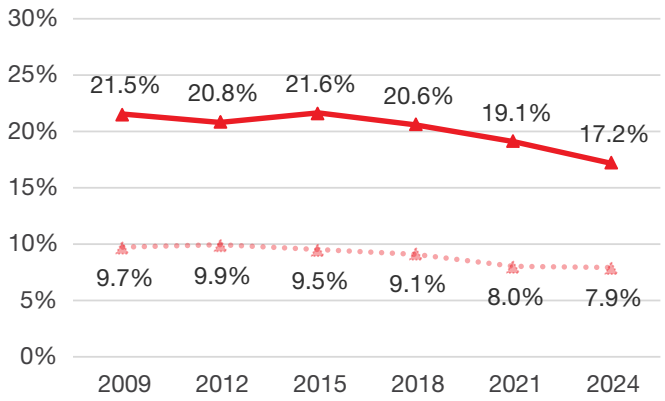
* Significant change text is colour coded **green** for a positive change and **red** for a negative change. Significant change text for 'at risk' is not colour coded as it should be interpreted in relation to changes in the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable and on track.

Queensland trends: First Nations children

Communication skills and general knowledge

Overall, developmental vulnerability on the communication skills and general knowledge domain is higher for First Nations compared to non-First Nations children. However, in 2024 the proportion of First Nations children developmentally vulnerable on this domain decreased, in line with a decreasing trend evident since 2015. Developmental vulnerability did not change significantly for non-First Nations children, resulting in a narrowing of the gap.

Figure 21 – Developmental vulnerability by First Nations status/Communication skills and general knowledge



Significant change*

	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
First Nations	Significant decrease	Significant decrease
Non-First Nations	Significant decrease	No significant change

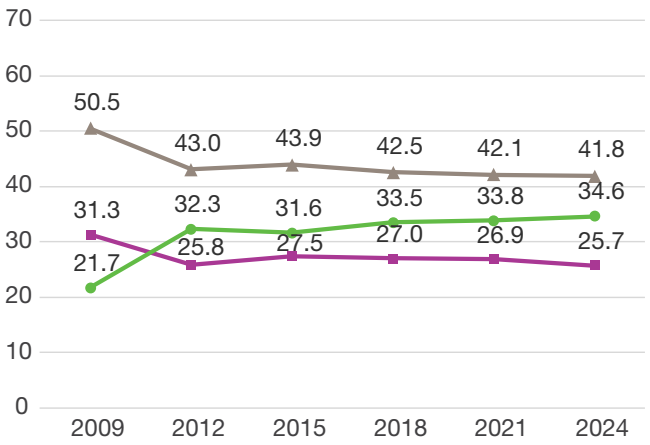
Summary indicators

OT5 DV1 DV2

OT5 – The percentage of Queensland First Nations children who are OT5 has been stable since 2018. In 2024, there was a small, non-significant increase of 0.8 percentage points.

DV1 and **DV2** – While rates of developmental vulnerability increased across Queensland in 2024, the percentage of First Nations children who are DV1 remained stable, while the percentage of those who are DV2 has significantly decreased.

Figure 22 – First Nations children/Summary indicators



Significant change*

	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
OT5	Significant increase	No significant change
DV1	Significant decrease	No significant change
DV2	Significant decrease	Significant decrease

* Significant change text is colour coded **green** for a positive change and **red** for a negative change. Significant change text for 'at risk' is not colour coded as it should be interpreted in relation to changes in the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable and on track.

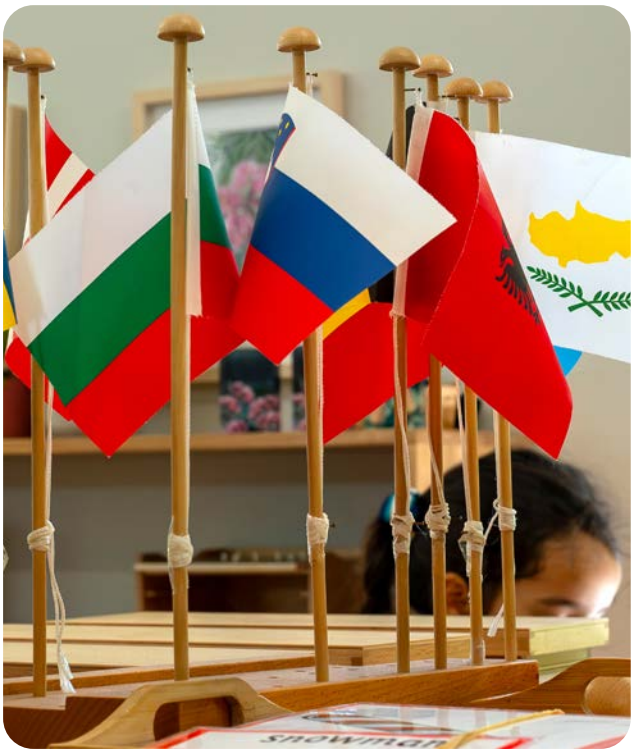
Language diversity and English proficiency

The Australian population is one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse in the world, and this is reflected in the children included in the Queensland AEDC.

In the AEDC, children are considered to have a language background other than English (LBOTE) if they speak a language other than English at home or if they have English as a second language (ESL) status.

Children who begin school with limited English proficiency can face additional challenges in keeping pace academically, while simultaneously learning the English language. In communities where many children speak a language other than English at home, there are important considerations when working to understand and interpret AEDC results. AEDC data can tell us about the skills and competencies that children demonstrate in English and in their school setting, but the results do not capture the language capacities children display at home or in other contexts where their first language and literacy skills may be stronger.

In Queensland, the top 5 non-English languages spoken at home are Mandarin, Punjabi, Malayalam, Hindi, and Spanish.



OT5

The percentage of children with a language background other than English (LBOTE) who are developmentally on track on five domains stabilised with a non-significant decline from 2021 to 2024.

2021	2024
47.1%	46.8%

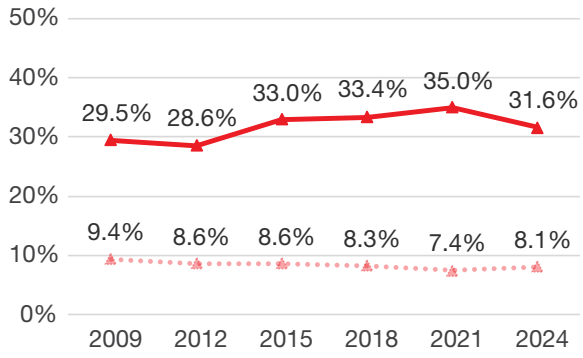
For more information, see the Language diversity and the AEDC fact sheet

Queensland trends: Language diversity and English proficiency

Physical health and wellbeing

In 2024, the proportion of LBOTE (not English proficient) children developmentally vulnerable on the physical health and wellbeing domain decreased. The proportion of LBOTE (English proficient) children developmentally vulnerable on this domain increased. Children with a LBOTE who are not proficient in English are almost 4 times more likely to experience developmental vulnerability on the physical health and wellbeing domain than children with a LBOTE who are proficient in English.

Figure 23 – Developmental vulnerability by English proficiency/Physical health and wellbeing



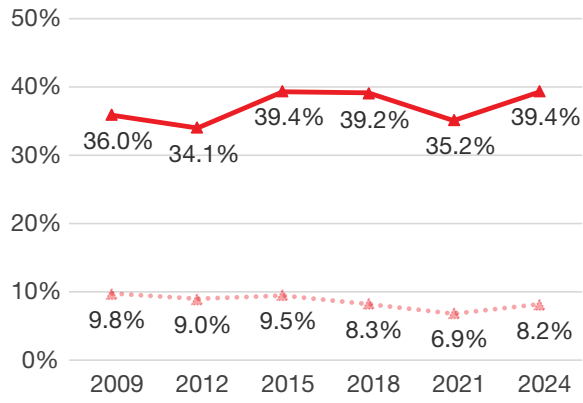
	Significant change*	
	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
LBOTE - proficient in English	Significant decrease	Significant increase
LBOTE - not proficient in English	Significant increase	Significant decrease

Social competence

The proportion of LBOTE (not English proficient) children developmentally vulnerable on the social competence domain increased in 2024. Following a decrease in developmental vulnerability in 2021, developmental vulnerability on the social competence domain has returned to the 2015 rate.

Although developmental vulnerability also increased for LBOTE children who are English-proficient, their rates of developmental vulnerability on this domain remain relatively low (8.2%), particularly compared to the average for all Queensland children (11.6%).

Figure 24 – Developmental vulnerability by English proficiency/Social competence



	Significant change*	
	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
LBOTE - proficient in English	Significant decrease	Significant increase
LBOTE - not proficient in English	Significant increase	Significant increase

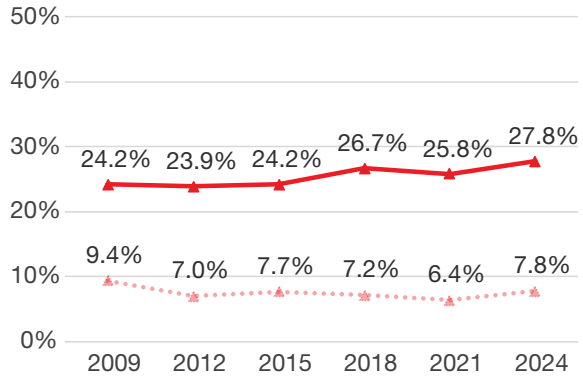
* Significant change text is colour coded **green** for a positive change and **red** for a negative change. Significant change text for 'at risk' is not colour coded as it should be interpreted in relation to changes in the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable and on track.

Queensland trends: Language diversity and English proficiency

Emotional maturity

Among children with a LBOTE, developmental vulnerability on the social competence domain increased significantly for both children who are and those who are not proficient in English. However, while developmental vulnerability among those not proficient in English is considerably higher compared to the state average (27.8 per cent versus 11.5 per cent, respectively), developmental vulnerability is relatively lower compared to the state average for those who are proficient in English (7.8 per cent).

Figure 25 – Developmental vulnerability by English proficiency/Emotional maturity

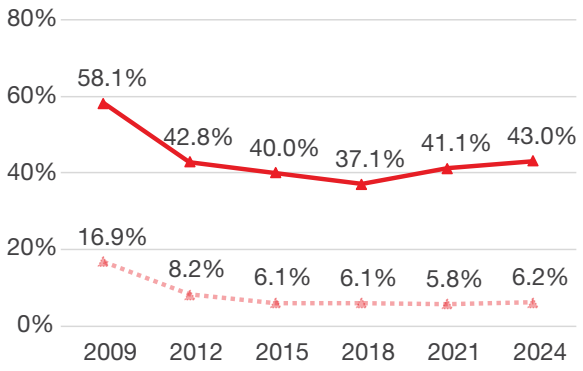


	Significant change*	
	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
LBOTE - proficient in English	Significant decrease	Significant increase
LBOTE - not proficient in English	Significant increase	Significant increase

Language and cognitive skills (school-based)

Among children with a LBOTE, developmental vulnerability on the language and cognitive skills (school-based) domain increased significantly for those not proficient in English, while it stabilised for those who are proficient in English. LBOTE children who are not proficient in English are about 5 times more likely to experience developmental vulnerability on this domain compared with the rest of the state (43% vs. 8.4%, respectively), whereas LBOTE children who are English proficient are less likely (only 6.2% are developmentally vulnerable).

Figure 26 – Developmental vulnerability by English proficiency/Language and cognitive skills (school-based)



	Significant change*	
	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
LBOTE - proficient in English	Significant decrease	No significant change
LBOTE - not proficient in English	Significant decrease	Significant increase

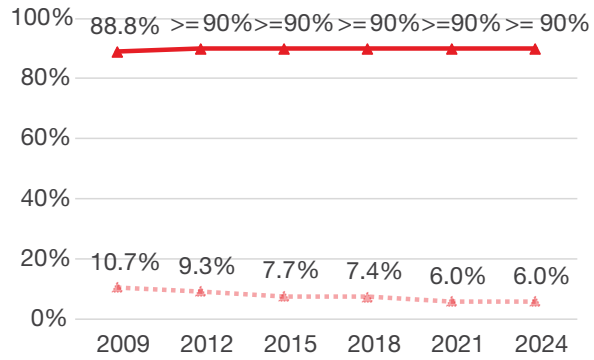
* Significant change text is colour coded **green** for a positive change and **red** for a negative change. Significant change text for 'at risk' is not colour coded as it should be interpreted in relation to changes in the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable and on track.

Queensland trends: Language diversity and English proficiency

Communication skills and general knowledge

Among children with a LBOTE, developmental vulnerability on the communication skills and general knowledge domain has remained stable for those who are, and those who are not proficient in English. The impact of English proficiency on this domain is the largest, with over 90 per cent of LBOTE children not proficient in English experiencing developmental vulnerability. On the other hand, developmental vulnerability is lower for LBOTE children who are English proficient compared with the rest of Queensland children (6.0 per cent versus 8.9 per cent, respectively).

Figure 27 – Developmental vulnerability by English proficiency/Communication skills and general knowledge



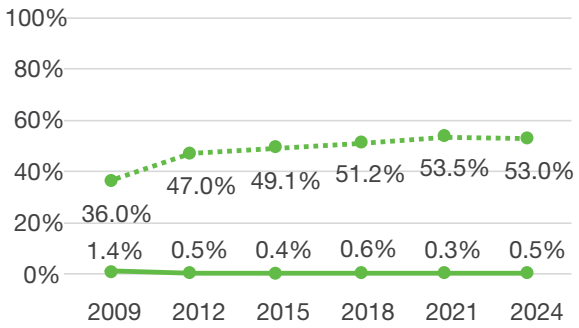
	Significant change*	
	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
LBOTE - proficient in English	Significant decrease	No significant change
LBOTE - not proficient in English	Vulnerability is suppressed	Vulnerability is suppressed

Summary indicators

OT5

OT5 – Less than 1.0 per cent of LBOTE children not proficient in English are OT5. This has been stable since 2012, with no significant changes seen in 2024.

Figure 28 – OT5 by English proficiency



	Significant change*	
	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
LBOTE - proficient in English	Significant increase	No significant change
LBOTE - not proficient in English	No significant change	No significant change

* Significant change text is colour coded **green** for a positive change and **red** for a negative change. Significant change text for 'at risk' is not colour coded as it should be interpreted in relation to changes in the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable and on track.

Queensland trends: Language diversity and English proficiency

Summary indicators

DV1 DV2

DV1 and DV2 – Over 90.0 per cent of LBOTE children not proficient in English were DV1 in 2024. This pattern has been persistent since 2009. Over 60.0 per cent of these children were DV2.

Figure 29 – DV1 by English proficiency

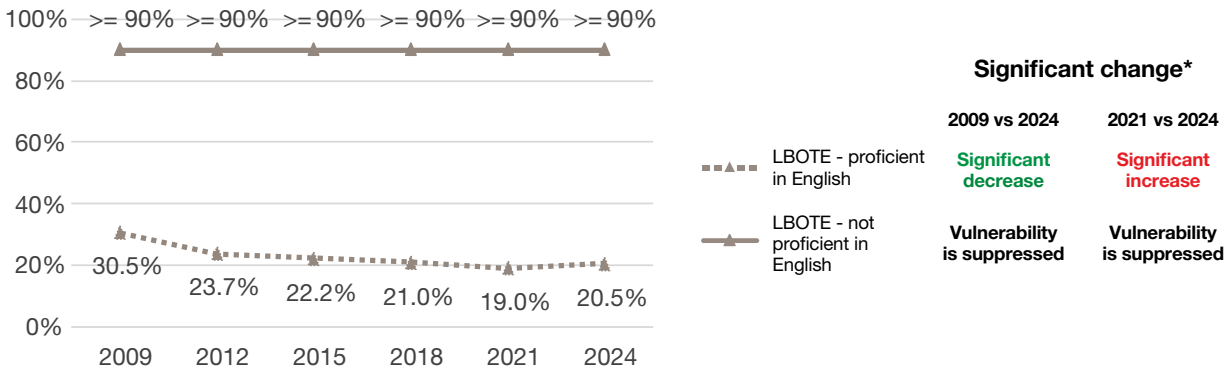
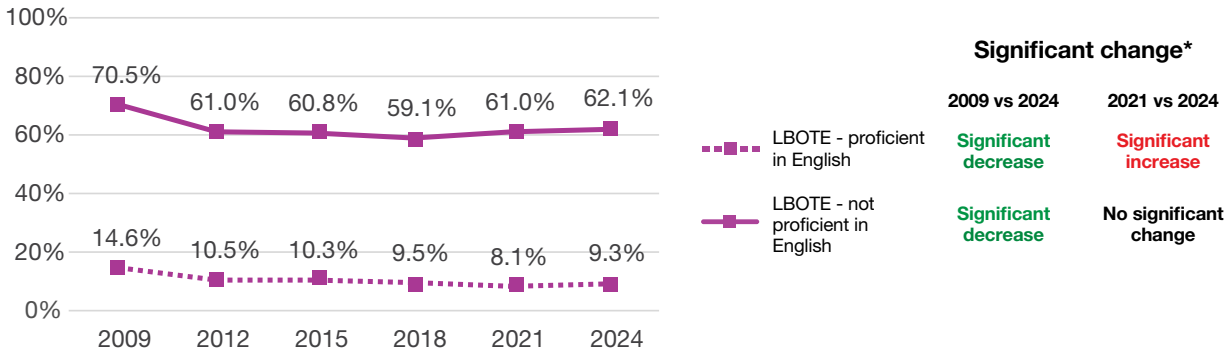


Figure 30 – DV2 by English proficiency



* Significant change text is colour coded **green** for a positive change and **red** for a negative change. Significant change text for 'at risk' is not colour coded as it should be interpreted in relation to changes in the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable and on track.

Socio-economic status

The Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) is a set of indexes developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to measure the socio-economic characteristics of geographical areas. They consider factors such as education, employment, income and housing.

The AEDC uses the SEIFA Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSD), which ranks areas based on their relative disadvantage. Through the IRSD, geographic locations are separated into 5 groups of equal size – quintiles – that correspond to decreasing levels of socio-economic disadvantage. Quintile 1 includes the locations with the highest level of disadvantage. Quintile 5 includes the locations with the lowest levels of disadvantage. There may also be pockets of advantage and disadvantage within a single area.

Approximately 20% of children live in each of the SEIFA quintiles

Most disadvantaged — Least disadvantaged

Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q5

Linking SEIFA with AEDC data provides insight into the relationship between socio-economic disadvantage and children's developmental vulnerability.

OT5

The percentage of children developmentally on track on five domains stabilised in all SEIFA quintiles except for Q2 from 2021 to 2024.

	2021		2024*
Q1	40.1%	=	40.0%
Q2	48.0%	↑	49.2%
Q3	53.3%	=	53.5%
Q4	56.5%	=	57.0%
Q5	61.3%	=	60.8%

For time series data tables by SEIFA quintile, visit the AEDC website

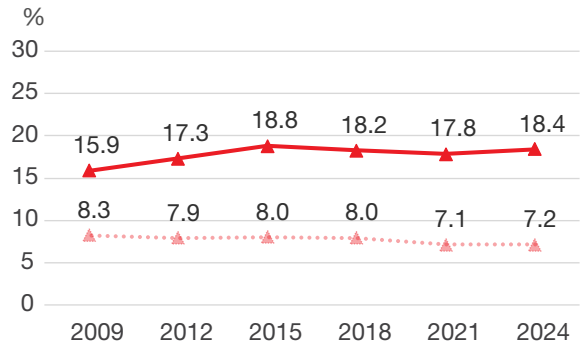
* Note: In 2024, AEDC data was updated to reflect the most recent area-based SEIFA at the time of data collection. This applies to all collection cycles. In previous collections, SEIFA was applied retrospectively. This means previously published AEDC SEIFA results may differ from those published in 2024.

Queensland trends: Socio-economic status

Physical health and wellbeing

In 2024, there was a significant increase in developmental vulnerability on the physical health and wellbeing domain for children living in SEIFA quintile 1, while no difference was seen for children living in SEIFA quintile 5. The gap in development for children living in the least and most disadvantaged communities has widened over time from 7.6 percentage points in 2009 to 11.2 percentage points in 2024.

Figure 31 – Developmental vulnerability by socio-economic status/Physical health and wellbeing



Quintile 1 (most disadvantaged)

Quintile 5 (least disadvantaged)

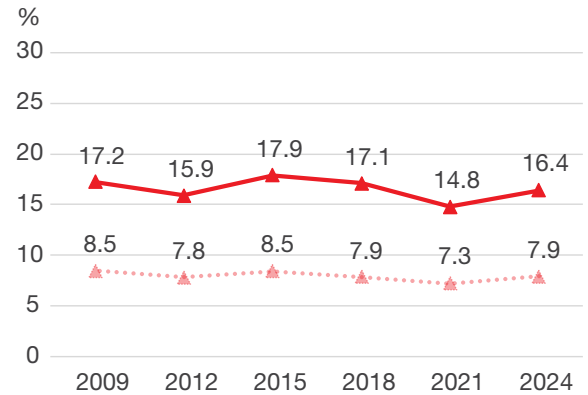
Significant change*

	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
Quintile 1 (most disadvantaged)	Significant increase	Significant increase
Quintile 5 (least disadvantaged)	Significant decrease	No significant change

Social competence

In 2024, developmental vulnerability on the social competence domain increased for children living in all SEIFA quintiles. The gap in development for children living in the least and most socio-economically disadvantaged communities increased to 8.5 percentage points in 2024.

Figure 32 – Developmental vulnerability by socio-economic status/Social competence



Quintile 1 (most disadvantaged)

Quintile 5 (least disadvantaged)

Significant change*

	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
Quintile 1 (most disadvantaged)	Significant decrease	Significant increase
Quintile 5 (least disadvantaged)	Significant decrease	Significant increase

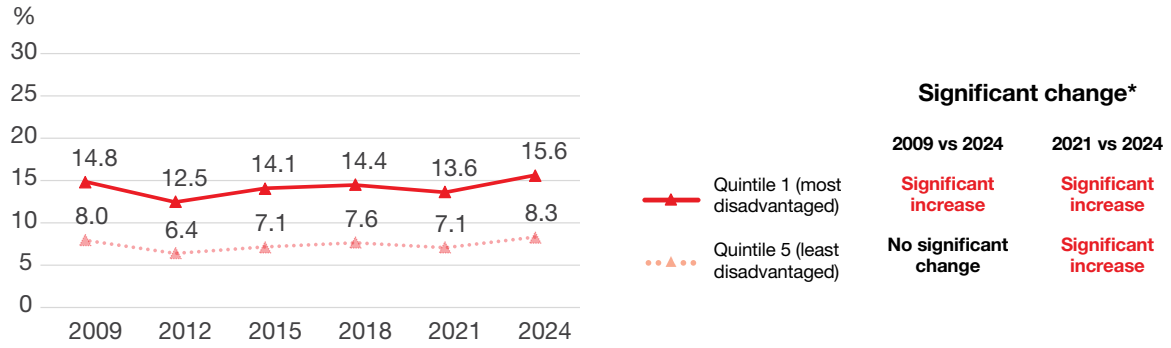
* Significant change text is colour coded **green** for a positive change and **red** for a negative change. Significant change text for 'at risk' is not colour coded as it should be interpreted in relation to changes in the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable and on track.

Queensland trends: Socio-economic status

Emotional maturity

In 2024, developmental vulnerability on the emotional maturity domain increased for children living in all SEIFA quintiles. The gap in development for children living in the least and most socio-economically disadvantaged communities increased from 6.8 percentage points in 2009, to 7.3 percentage points in 2024.

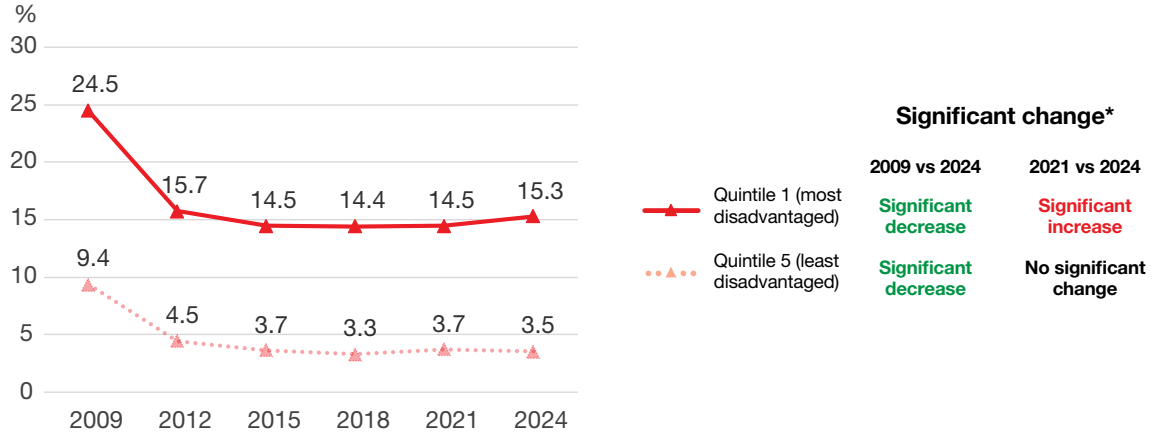
Figure 33 – Developmental vulnerability by socio-economic status/Emotional maturity



Language and cognitive skills (school-based)

In 2024, developmental vulnerability on the language and cognitive skills (school-based) domain increased significantly only for children living in the most socio-economically disadvantaged communities. The gap in development for children living in the least and most socio-economically disadvantaged communities has remained relatively stable since 2012, increasing to 11.8 percentage points in 2024.

Figure 34 – Developmental vulnerability by socio-economic status/Language and cognitive skills (school-based)



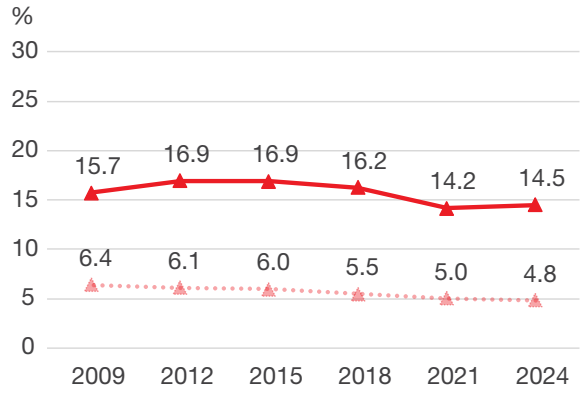
* Significant change text is colour coded **green** for a positive change and **red** for a negative change. Significant change text for 'at risk' is not colour coded as it should be interpreted in relation to changes in the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable and on track.

Queensland trends: Socio-economic status

Communication skills and general knowledge

In 2024, developmental vulnerability on the communication skills and general knowledge domain stabilised for children living in the most and in the least socio-economically disadvantaged communities. The gap in development for children living in the least and most socio-economically disadvantaged communities has increased from 9.3 percentage points in 2009 to 9.7 percentage points in 2024.

Figure 35 – Developmental vulnerability by socio-economic status/Communication skills and general knowledge



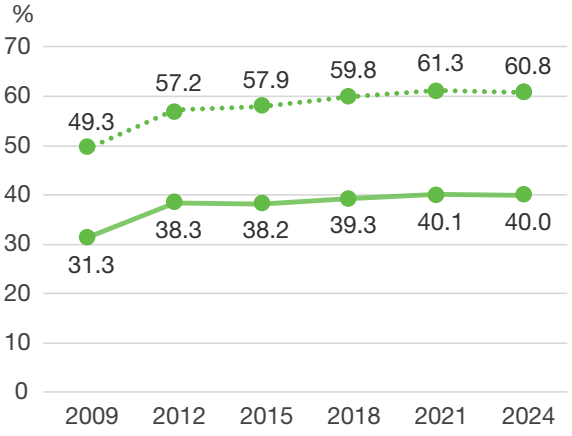
	Significant change*	
	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
Quintile 1 (most disadvantaged)	Significant decrease	No significant change
Quintile 5 (least disadvantaged)	Significant decrease	No significant change

Summary indicators

OT5

OT5 – The percentage of children who are OT5 has remained stable in SEIFA quintiles 1 and 5. The gap in developmental outcomes between the most and least socioeconomically disadvantaged communities remains high (a 20.8 percentage point difference in 2024).

Figure 36 – OT5 by socio-economic status



	Significant change*	
	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
Quintile 1 (most disadvantaged)	Significant increase	No significant change
Quintile 5 (least disadvantaged)	Significant increase	No significant change

* Significant change text is colour coded **green** for a positive change and **red** for a negative change. Significant change text for 'at risk' is not colour coded as it should be interpreted in relation to changes in the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable and on track.

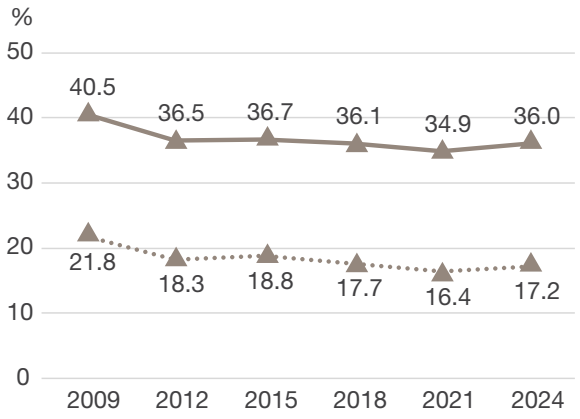
Queensland trends: Socio-economic status

Summary indicators

DV1 DV2

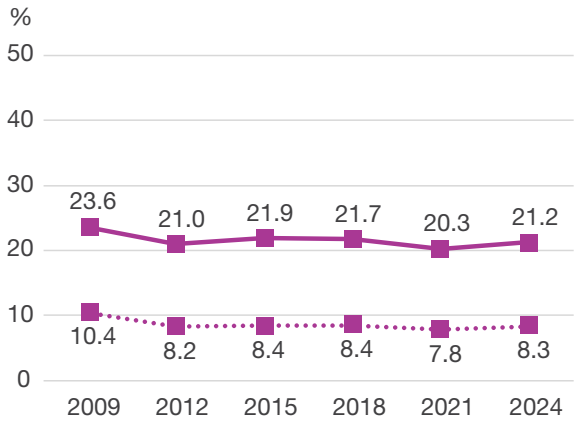
DV1 and DV2 – In 2024, the gap in DV1 between children growing up in the most socio-economically disadvantaged communities (36.0 per cent) and least socio-economically disadvantaged communities (17.2 per cent) was 18.8 percentage points. In 2024, both DV1 and DV2 increased significantly for children in SEIFA quintiles 1 and 5.

Figure 37 – DV1 by socio-economic status



	Significant change*	
	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
Quintile 1 (most disadvantaged)	Significant decrease	Significant increase
Quintile 5 (least disadvantaged)	Significant decrease	Significant increase

Figure 38 – DV2 by socio-economic status



	Significant change*	
	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
Quintile 1 (most disadvantaged)	Significant decrease	Significant increase
Quintile 5 (least disadvantaged)	Significant decrease	Significant increase

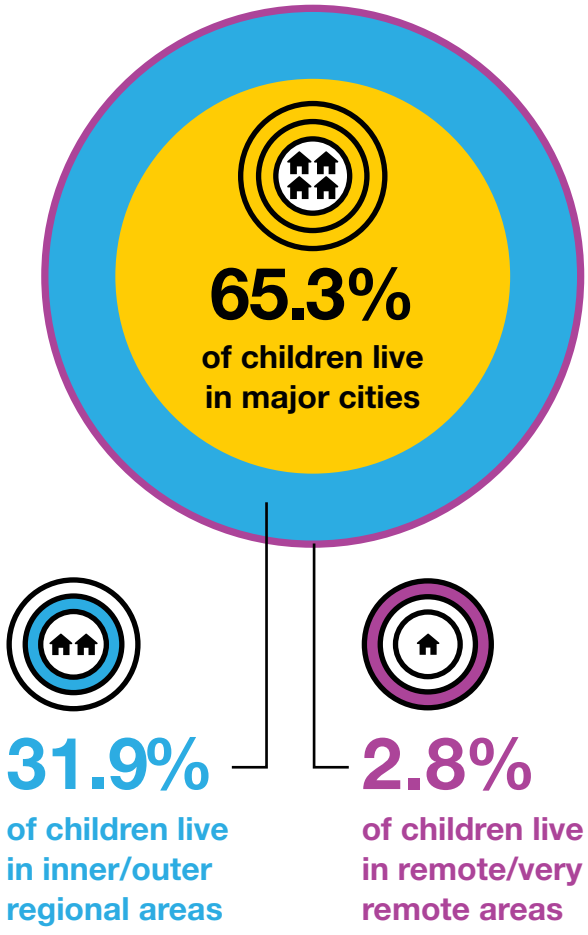
* Significant change text is colour coded **green** for a positive change and **red** for a negative change. Significant change text for 'at risk' is not colour coded as it should be interpreted in relation to changes in the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable and on track.

Geographic location

Geographic location can affect access to early years services that are crucial to early childhood development and family wellbeing. The AEDC sheds light on how development varies across geographic locations in Australia, and where changes are needed to ensure all families have access to support during the critical early years.

The classification of geographic location for the AEDC is based on the Australian Statistical Geographical Standard (ASGS) Remoteness Areas classification. This was developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to classify places in relation to their geographical remoteness.

The ASGS divides Australia into 5 classes of remoteness based on their relative access to services.



For time series data tables by remoteness area, visit the AEDC website

The 5 classes of remoteness are:

- **Major cities:** relatively unrestricted accessibility to a wide range of goods and services and opportunities for social interaction.
- **Inner regional:** some restrictions to accessibility of some goods, services and opportunities for social interaction.
- **Outer regional:** significantly restricted accessibility to goods, services and opportunities for social interaction.
- **Remote:** very restricted accessibility to goods, services and opportunities for social interaction.
- **Very remote:** very little accessibility to goods, services and opportunities for social interaction.

This report presents AEDC data using 3 categories: major cities, and by combining ‘remote’ with ‘very remote’ and ‘inner regional’ with ‘outer regional’.

OT5

The percentage of children developmentally on track on five domains increased for children living in major cities, and decreased for those living in remote/very remote areas from 2021 to 2024.

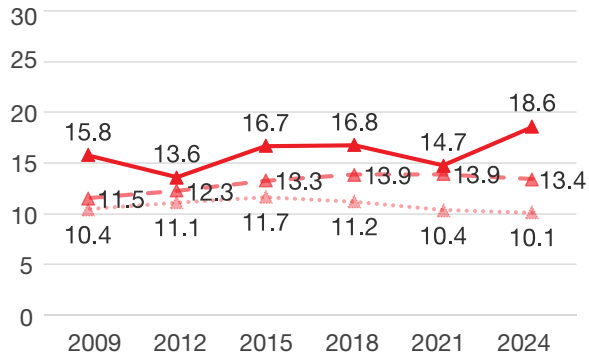
	2021		2024
Major cities	53.3%	↑	53.7%
Inner/Outer regional	47.9%		48.1%
Remote/Very remote	45.5%	↓	43.7%

Queensland trends: Geographic location

Physical health and wellbeing

In 2024, developmental vulnerability on the physical health and wellbeing domain increased for children living in remote/very remote communities and decreased for those living in inner/outer regional communities. The gap in development for children living in major cities and those living in remote/very remote communities has fluctuated over the years, peaking in 2024 with a gap of 8.5 percentage points.

Figure 39 – Developmental vulnerability by geographic location/Physical health and wellbeing

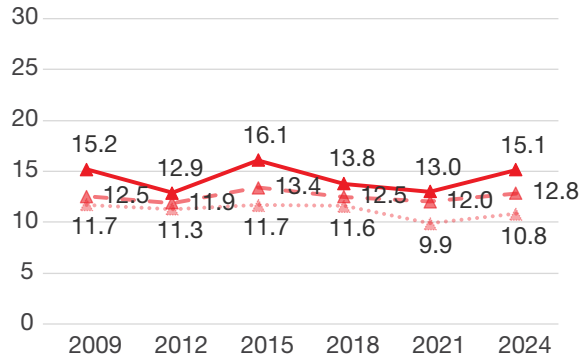


	Significant change*	
	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
Remote/Very remote	Significant increase	Significant increase
Inner regional/ Outer regional	Significant increase	Significant decrease
Major cities	No significant change	No significant change

Social competence

Developmental vulnerability on the social competence domain has increased significantly for children living in major cities, inner/outer regional and remote/very remote areas in 2024.

Figure 40 – Developmental vulnerability by geographic location/Social competence



	Significant change*	
	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
Remote/Very remote	No significant change	Significant increase
Inner regional/ Outer regional	No significant change	Significant increase
Major cities	Significant decrease	Significant increase

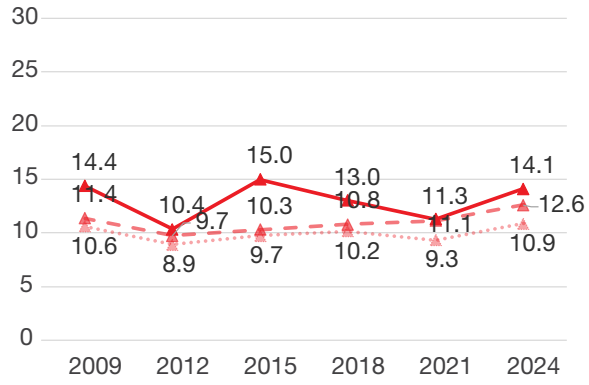
* Significant change text is colour coded **green** for a positive change and **red** for a negative change. Significant change text for 'at risk' is not colour coded as it should be interpreted in relation to changes in the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable and on track.

Queensland trends: Geographic location

Emotional maturity

In 2024, children living in major cities, regional and remote areas of Queensland all experienced increases in developmental vulnerability on the emotional maturity domain. Increases in developmental vulnerability ranged from 2.8 percentage points for children living in remote/very remote communities to 1.6 percentage points for children living in major cities.

Figure 41 – Developmental vulnerability by geographic location/Emotional maturity

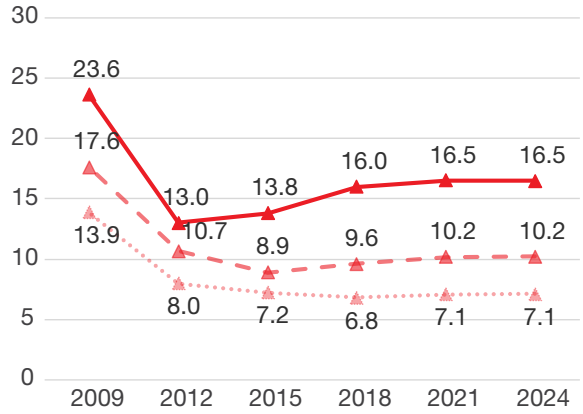


	Significant change*	
	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
Remote/Very remote	No significant change	Significant increase
Inner regional/ Outer regional	Significant increase	Significant increase
Major cities	Significant increase	Significant increase

Language and cognitive skills (school-based)

In 2024, developmental vulnerability on the language and cognitive skills (school-based) domain remained stable for children across all geographic locations.

Figure 42 – Developmental vulnerability by geographic location /Language and cognitive skills (school-based)



	Significant change*	
	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
Remote/Very remote	Significant decrease	No significant change
Inner regional/ Outer regional	Significant decrease	No significant change
Major cities	Significant decrease	No significant change

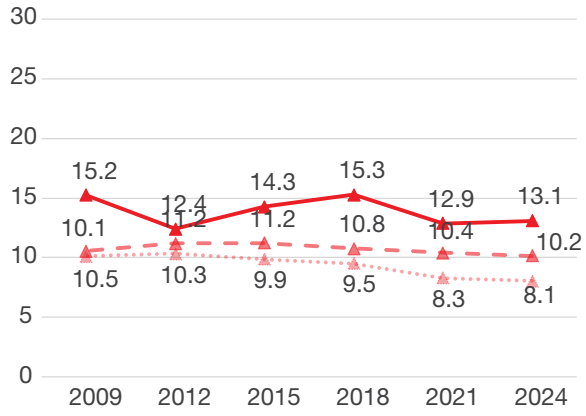
* Significant change text is colour coded **green** for a positive change and **red** for a negative change. Significant change text for 'at risk' is not colour coded as it should be interpreted in relation to changes in the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable and on track.

Queensland trends: Geographic location

Communication skills and general knowledge

In 2024, developmental vulnerability on the communication skills and general knowledge domain remained stable for children in all geographic locations.

Figure 43 – Developmental vulnerability by geographic location/Communication skills and general knowledge



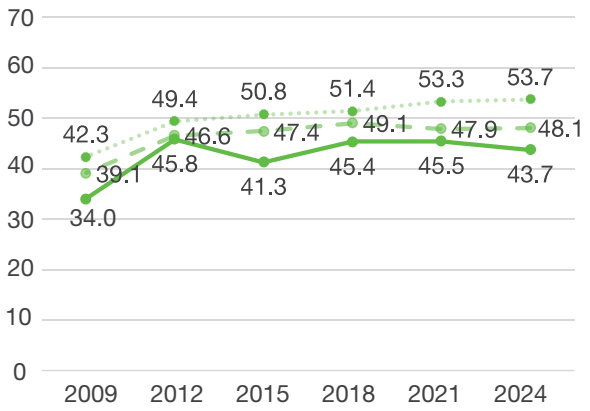
	Significant change*	
	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
Remote/Very remote	Significant decrease	No significant change
Inner regional/ Outer regional	Significant decrease	No significant change
Major cities	Significant decrease	No significant change

Summary indicators

OT5

OT5 – While the percentage of children who are OT5 increased to 53.7 per cent in major cities, it decreased to 43.7 per cent in remote/very remote communities resulting in a 10 percentage point gap in development.

Figure 44 – OT5 by geographic location



	Significant change*	
	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
Remote/Very remote	Significant increase	Significant decrease
Inner regional/ Outer regional	Significant increase	No significant change
Major cities	Significant increase	Significant increase

* Significant change text is colour coded **green** for a positive change and **red** for a negative change. Significant change text for 'at risk' is not colour coded as it should be interpreted in relation to changes in the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable and on track.

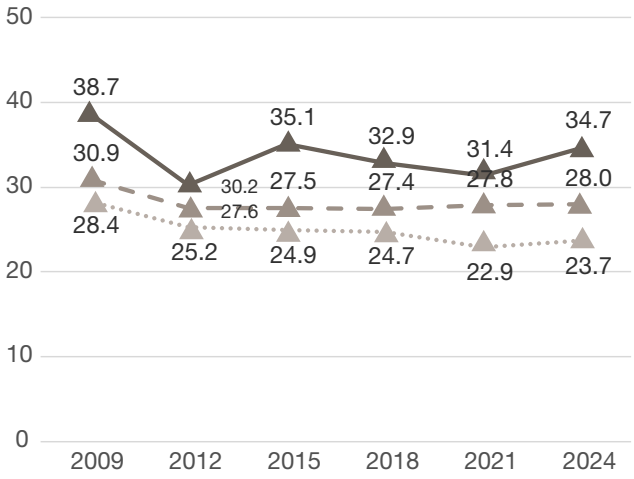
Queensland trends: Geographic location

Summary indicators

DV1 DV2

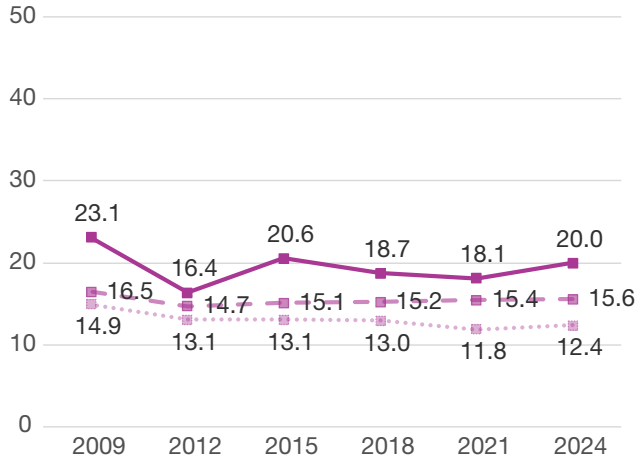
DV1 and DV2 – In 2024, both DV1 and DV2 increased for children living in major cities, and for those living in remote/very remote communities.

Figure 45 – DV1 by geographic location



	Significant change*	
	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
Remote/Very remote	Significant decrease	Significant increase
Inner regional/ Outer regional	Significant decrease	No significant change
Major cities	Significant decrease	Significant increase

Figure 46 – DV2 by geographic location



	Significant change*	
	2009 vs 2024	2021 vs 2024
Remote/Very remote	Significant decrease	Significant increase
Inner regional/ Outer regional	Significant decrease	No significant change
Major cities	Significant decrease	Significant increase

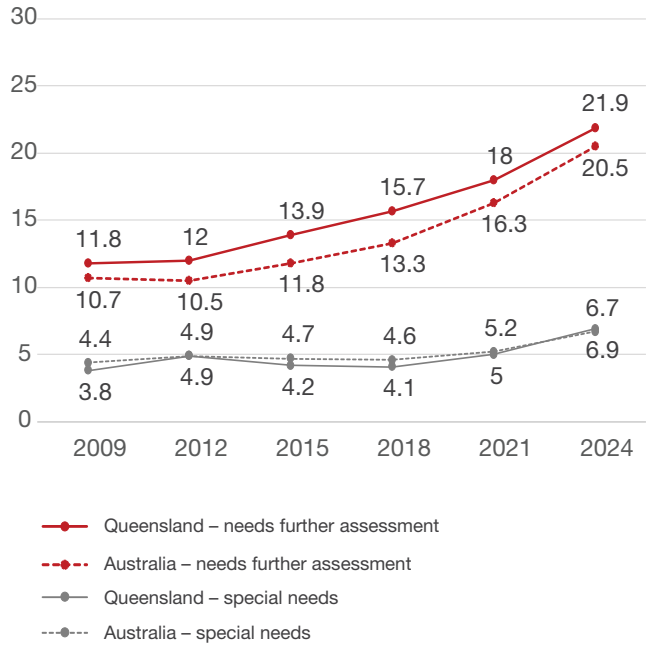
* Significant change text is colour coded **green** for a positive change and **red** for a negative change. Significant change text for 'at risk' is not colour coded as it should be interpreted in relation to changes in the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable and on track.

Children with special needs

For the AEDC, children with special needs are those medically diagnosed as having additional needs requiring assistance due to chronic medical, physical or intellectually disabling conditions (for example, Cerebral Palsy, Down syndrome). Demographic information about children with special needs is reported, but developmental data for these children are not. Demographic information that is inclusive of children with special needs is important for community-level planning and policy refinement.

The 2024 AEDC data show that the percentage of children in Queensland diagnosed with special needs has been steadily rising since 2018, increasing by 1.9 percentage points since 2021. The increasing percentage of children with special needs in Queensland parallels the national trend.

Figure 47 – Special needs trends across Queensland and Australia



Children needing further assessment

Children identified by teachers as 'needing further assessment' are those who are currently being assessed or who require further assessment (for example, medical and physical, behavior management, emotional and cognitive) based on information provided to the teacher by a parent or guardian, professional, or observed directly by the teacher. Children identified as needing further assessment but who do not have a special needs diagnosis are included in the calculation of developmental vulnerability for Queensland.

The percentage of Queensland children identified by their teachers as needing further assessment has been steadily rising since 2009, reaching a historic high of 21.9 per cent in 2024 (an increase of 3.9 percentage points since 2021). While national percentages have been consistently lower than Queensland's over time, the rate of increase has been parallel.

More than half of all children who require further assessment are developmentally vulnerable on at least one domain, with the highest rates of developmental vulnerability seen on the emotional maturity and social competence domains. This suggests a possible relationship between an identified requirement for further assessment and developmental vulnerability.

Impact of COVID-19

The children of the 2024 AEDC cohort were in the early stages of life when the COVID-19 pandemic began to affect Australia. In Queensland, a series of targeted lockdowns meant that periods of isolation experienced by families and children were relatively short compared to other parts of the country. Instances of serious illness in young children were not common, and numbers of recorded deaths overall were also significantly lower than more populated jurisdictions (ABS, 2024).

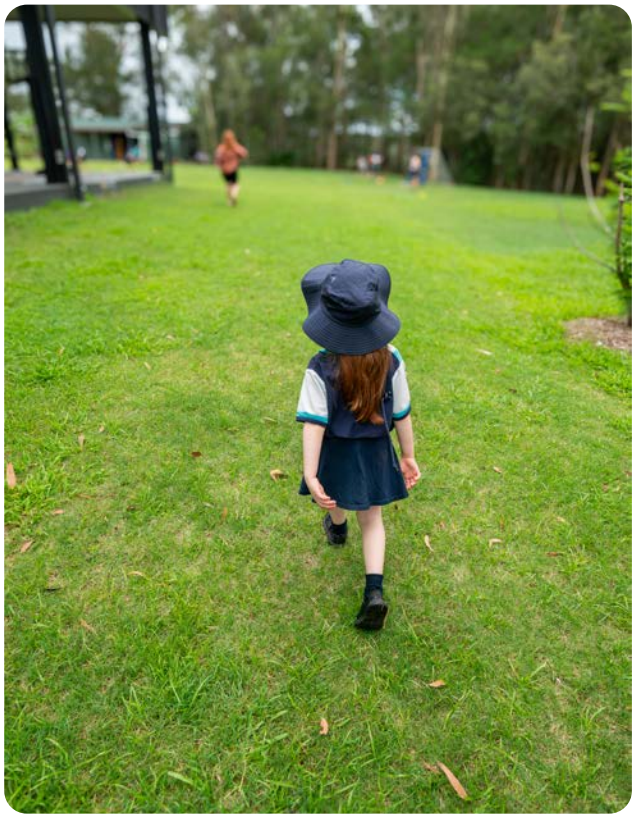
It is widely accepted that the first 1,000 days, from conception through to age 2, are a critical period in every child's life, and that what happens during this time can significantly influence their life trajectory. During the early years of life, children form attachments, attend early childhood education and care, commence schooling and have a myriad of other experiences that lay the foundations for future learning and lifelong outcomes. Experiences during this time, both positive and adverse, can have a significant, long-term impact upon their health and development.

Children represented in the 2024 AEDC data began their pre-natal period sometime between October 2017 to September 2018. They were born between July 2018 and June 2019, with their first 1,000 days ending between July 2021 and June 2022. This means that the children attending Prep in 2024 are the first AEDC cohort to have experienced the kind of disruption that was the COVID-19 pandemic during this critical period.

While there is currently no research evidence showing a relationship between the COVID-19 pandemic and rates of developmental vulnerability, the national trends of the 2024 collection can be considered alongside other data sources relating to the pandemic. Universally, young children experienced mask wearing by adult carers, family isolation and confinement, closure of early childhood education and care services and disruption to routines, all of which potentially affected their sense of security and the predictability of their environments. While for some, increased family time may have been positive, for others there were additional factors such as family pressures due to financial insecurity and other stressors connected to fear and uncertainty.

Australian and international studies suggest that public health measures and their impact on family dynamics have led to the following issues for children Birth - 5 years: worsening behaviour and mood; increased clinginess, anxiety and levels of stress; increased hyperactivity and inattention; increased abuse and neglect; decreased physical activity and increased screen time; and possible disruptions to the length and quality of sleep (Goldfeld et. al., 2022).

The 2024 AEDC data is valuable, particularly to the early childhood, schooling, and health sectors, as an important measure of how very young children might have fared throughout the pandemic. The data provides an opportunity to reflect on the known risk and protective factors for early childhood development and how these may have been impacted. Importantly, these factors will vary due to the diverse nature of Queensland's communities, and the different ways in which each community and its families of young children will have experienced both the direct and indirect impacts of the pandemic.



Working together

Cross-schooling sector collaboration

"It is widely recognised that a significant change to developmental vulnerability at the community level can only be realised through a collective, coherent and strategic effort."

OECD, 2018

Following the release of the 2024 AEDC data, the Queensland cross-schooling sector collaboration will shift its focus to supporting communities with relatively high levels of developmental vulnerability to respond to AEDC data. Emphasis will be on building data literacy, leveraging existing initiatives and shaping new responses that are informed by the AEDC. Specifically, developing proactive strategies for lifting early childhood outcomes, with particular attention paid to the first 1,000 days of life.

Each school plays a key role in contributing to the AEDC data collection, but the value of this dataset is realised when it is used effectively to support children to thrive. A strong collaboration between the 3 education sectors ensures Queensland stakeholders have the capability to use AEDC data to inform improvement planning, curriculum decision-making and program implementation.

Community collaboration

Redland AEDC Community Story: A collaborative community working together to improve early childhood outcomes

In the south-east Queensland community of Redland, a range of education, family and community support agencies have been engaging with the AEDC data over the lifespan of the collection. A part of Greater Brisbane, the Redland Local Government Area is spread along Moreton Bay (Quandamooka Country), incorporating several small island communities and representing a broad range of socio-economic demographics.

Over the years, various networks have formed, meeting regularly and using their AEDC results to celebrate community strengths, but also to determine where developmental vulnerability exists and how they might collaborate to address it.

The Redlands Integrated Early Years Place (RIEYP) is a hub for several of these networks, offering the benefit of co-located services that provide programs designed to support family wellbeing, promote healthy early childhood development and build community connection for families. Through the provision of playgroups, RIEYP provides an interface between families and services and is also a connection point for services to engage with each other over the local data.

"Because we have that AEDC information, we are able to then seek out other services and partnerships so that we can cater to really specific needs of the children in our community."

"It means we are on the same page when we are talking about transitions or Kindy or educating parents or building capabilities within the early years sector itself."

RIEYP Service Coordinator, Shannon Higgins

Deputy Principal of Hilliard State School, Tracey Young, chairs the Gana Network which is comprised of early childhood teachers from kindergartens and early childhood education services, as well as representatives of early years schooling from other local state and independent schools.

Over time, the Gana Network has observed changes in community demographics. By cross-referencing their observations with the relevant AEDC school profiles and community data, they have been able to pinpoint these shifting trends and plan appropriate responses. The network's approach has enabled strong collaboration between local early childhood education and care services and schools, using the data to plan and prepare for future children and families enrolling. It has also enabled early identification of developmental needs and thus scaffolds and supports the learning of current students.

Part of this collaborative approach is Gana's Starting Strong in Redlands initiative, a cluster approach to supporting children's transition to Prep. This involves schools working collaboratively to build families' connection to the broader community, so that regardless of where they enroll their children, a consistent network of support is available.

"One of the most important things about the Gana Network are those relationships, those connections, just even the conversations...the fact that we can have our state school staff, our independent or private school staff and our early childhood teachers and directors from early childhood education and care services all coming together, so that we can work together to improve the outcomes for our children."

Principal, Hilliard State School – Tracey Young

The 2024 AEDC data presents an opportunity for the Gana Network to work with their partners, using the data to make refinements to policies and practices that will respond to the changing needs of children and families in their dynamic community.

Next steps for Queensland

In the context of a nationwide increase in developmental vulnerability across all five domains, Queensland's results are compelling because they show that while we have made significant improvements as a state since 2009 when it comes to language and cognitive skills (school-based), and communication skills and general knowledge, children's development on the emotional maturity and social competence domains has fallen behind.

The improvements Queensland has seen in the language and cognitive skills (school-based) domain and communication skills and general knowledge have not been accompanied by a corresponding increase in the proportion of children adapting well to school. Of the 4.1 per cent of Queensland children who are not adapting to the structure and learning environment of the school*, only 0.6 per cent started school developmentally on track on all five domains, almost 80.0 per cent were developmentally vulnerable on the social competence domain, and about 70.0 per cent were developmentally vulnerable on the emotional maturity domain.

The importance of social and emotional skills to children's wellbeing and their subsequent ability to engage and learn at school has come to light in recent years. We now know that when children's social and emotional development is supported during their early years, they are better equipped to cope with the various stresses of life, they develop stronger relationships, they negotiate effectively with other children, and they have a more positive sense of self (Blair & Raver, 2015; Eisenberg et al., 2010; Norona-Zhou & Tung, 2020). Moreover, the impact of later educational investments is maximised. Early childhood policies that support these foundational skills can therefore set the groundwork for more efficient future public investment in education and limit the risks of children experiencing developmental vulnerabilities falling behind in their education pathways.

Research suggests that the development of social and emotional skills is underpinned by the quality and stability of a child's relationships with their caregivers during the early years of life. These relationships will go on to influence a wide range of developmental outcomes such as self-confidence and sound mental health, motivation to learn, achievement in school and later in life, the ability to control aggressive impulses and resolve conflicts in non-violent ways, knowing the difference between right and wrong, having the capacity to develop and sustain casual friendships and intimate relationships, and ultimately to be a successful parent oneself (Adynski et al., 2024).

Healthy, positive and responsive relationships are characterised by rich serve-and-return interactions that are critical from birth. These are continuous back-and-forth interactions that are individualised to the child's unique personality style; that build on their own interests, capabilities, and initiative; that shape the child's self-awareness; and that stimulate the growth of their heart and mind (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2004). In the short term, serve-and-return interactions build and strengthen brain architecture and create a relationship in which a baby's experiences are affirmed and new abilities are nurtured (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). In the longer term, children are more likely to develop insights into other people's feelings, needs and thoughts, which form a foundation for cooperative interactions with others and an emerging conscience (Pianta et al., 1997; Kochanska, 2002).

Importantly, relationships with educators in an early childhood education and care setting count. The warmth and support of the educators influence the development of important capabilities in children. Young children benefit when they establish secure relationships with educators who provide cognitively stimulating activities, and support the development of positive relationships with other children (Owen et al., 2003; NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, 2000; 2002).

The 2024 AEDC data provides the impetus for Queensland's continued investment in a strong early learning system through strategies that improve early childhood service quality, inclusion and workforce capability. This includes building the capacity of the early childhood sector to better support children from Birth - 3 years and their families. At the same time, sustaining the focus on providing communities with the infrastructure and tools required to develop coordinated strategies and locally relevant supports for families.

It is our shared responsibility to ensure that every Queensland child, regardless of their background, location or circumstances, consistently experiences growth-promoting relationships in their homes, as well as in their early education prior to school.

* Here we refer to children for whom teachers answered, 'not true' in response to the question, 'Would you say that this child is making good progress in adapting to the structure and learning environment of the school?'.

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Resources

About the AEDC

Australian Early Development Census

A fact sheet summarising the AEDC.
www.aedc.gov.au/aedcsumm

About the AEDC data collection

A fact sheet with information about how the AEDC collects data on children in their first year of full-time school.
www.aedc.gov.au/abtdata

About the AEDC domains

A fact sheet summarising the key characteristics of each AEDC domain.
www.aedc.gov.au/abtdom

AEDC summary indicators

A fact sheet providing an overview of the 3 summary indicators used to describe children's development – OT5, DV1 and DV2.
www.aedc.gov.au/abtsumm

Definition of AEDC terms

A fact sheet defining the key terms used in the AEDC program and resources.
www.aedc.gov.au/defterm

Introduction to the AEDC

A short video explaining the AEDC.
www.aedc.gov.au/vidintro

For more resources to help understand and use the data, visit the national AEDC website

Accessing AEDC data

Community Data Explorer

The Community Data Explorer is a searchable online data tool available through the AEDC website. Data from each AEDC collection can be viewed at 4 different levels: local community, community, state/territory and national. Data is available to download in report, table, chart and map formats.

www.aedc.gov.au/cde

Public Data Tables

Time series data tables are available for download for all AEDC data collections by Local Government Area (LGA), Statistical Area Levels 2, 3 and 4 (SA2, SA3, SA4), Greater Capital City Statistical Areas (GCCSA), Remoteness and SEIFA.

www.aedc.gov.au/dataproducts

Community Profiles

Community Profiles present AEDC results from geographic areas, usually equivalent to an LGA. They also include information that provides context for the AEDC results, such as demographics and the characteristics of children in the area.

www.aedc.gov.au/communityprofiles

Data Guidelines

The principles and protocols governing the management, access, use, disclosure and dissemination of AEDC data are outlined in the AEDC Data Guidelines. This includes the process for accessing data that is not publicly available.

www.aedc.gov.au/dg

Using AEDC data

User Guides

AEDC User Guides are designed to help educators, communities, policymakers, and researchers understand and use AEDC data effectively. The user guides outline the principles and practices for local action and solutions that work for the children and families that make up communities and jurisdictions.

www.aedc.gov.au/userguides

Informing Your Planning

A video describing how the AEDC can be used to improve the provision of services and supports to children and families.

www.aedc.gov.au/vidinform

Understanding the Data

A video explaining how the AEDC data is collected and used to calculate AEDC results at a community level.

www.aedc.gov.au/vidunders

Community Stories

A series of stories developed to showcase how communities across Australia are using AEDC data to support early childhood development.

www.aedc.gov.au/commstories

School Stories

A series of stories developed to showcase how schools are using the AEDC to inform curriculum planning and support children's development.

www.aedc.gov.au/schoolstories

For resources and information about the AEDC in Queensland, visit the ECEC AEDC webpage or School AEDC webpage

Glossary

AEDC domains	The AEDC measures five key areas, or domains, of early childhood development: • physical health and wellbeing • social competence • emotional maturity • language and cognitive skills (school-based) • communication skills and general knowledge. These areas have been shown to predict later mental health, wellbeing and educational achievement.
Australian Early Development Census (AEDC)	The AEDC is a population measure of early childhood development. Teachers of children in their first year of full-time school complete an instrument, the Australian version of the Early Development Instrument (AvEDI), for each child in their class. The instrument collects data relating to five key areas of early childhood development referred to as 'domains' (see AEDC domains). Data is collected for individual children and then reported for groups of children at a community, state/territory and national level. Prior to 1 July 2014, the AEDC was known as the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI).
Australian version of the Early Development Instrument (AvEDI)	The AvEDI is an adaptation of the Canadian Early Development Instrument (see **Early Development Instrument**).
Baseline	Results from the first national collection in 2009 are considered 'baseline'.

Closing the Gap	All Australian governments are working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their communities, organisations and businesses to implement the new National Agreement on Closing the Gap at the national, state and territory, and local level. The objective of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (the National Agreement) is to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and governments to work together to overcome the inequality experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and achieve life outcomes equal to all Australians (National Agreement on Closing the Gap). Access to culturally safe and responsive early childhood education is essential for the holistic development and identity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (SNAICC 2022; SNAICC et al. 2023). The Coalition of Peaks recognised the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) as a valuable dataset to track how well Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families were supported in the early years and selected a summary indicator with a strengths-based focus, the percentage of children on track on five domains of development. Target 4 of the National Agreement, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children thrive in their early years, aims to increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children assessed as developmentally on track in all five domains of the AEDC to 55 per cent by 2031 (Productivity Commission).
Community	AEDC Communities are a geographic area, usually equivalent to a Local Government Area (LGA). They are made up of 'Local communities' (see **Local community**).
Community Profiles	Community Profiles are data products that report AEDC results at community and local community levels.
Critical difference	The critical difference is the minimum percentage point change required between two collection cycles for the change to be considered significant. Results beneath the critical difference may be attributed to factors other than changes in children's development. For more information, see the Comparing AEDC Results Over Time fact sheet.
Cut-off scores	When the AEDC was first completed in 2009, a series of cut-off scores for each AEDC domain were established. The cut-off scores provide a reference point against which later AEDC results can be compared.
Developmentally on track on five domains (OT5)	OT5 is one of three summary indicators. OT5 represents the percentage of children who are classified as developmentally on track on five AEDC domains. It was first introduced as a strengths-based national AEDC summary indicator in 2021.
Developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains (DV1)	DV1 is one of three summary indicators. DV1 represents the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable on one or more AEDC domains.
Developmentally vulnerable on two or more domains (DV2)	DV2 is one of 3 summary indicators. DV2 represents the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable on two or more AEDC domains.

Early Development Instrument (EDI)	The Early Development Instrument (EDI) was developed in Canada by Magdalena Janus and Dan Offord at the Offord Centre for Child Studies at McMaster University (Janus & Offord, 2007) to measure the developmental health and wellbeing of young children. The AEDC uses an Australian adaptation of the EDI (see **Australian version of the Early Development Instrument [AvEDI]**). Janus, M., & Offord, D. R. (2007). Development and psychometric properties of the Early Development Instrument (EDI): A measure of children's school readiness. Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science 39(1), 1.
English as a Second Language (ESL)	Children are considered to have ESL status where English is not their first language, they are either conversational but not yet proficient in English, and/or require additional instruction in English.
Further assessment	'Further assessment' is an item in the AvEDI which allows teachers to identify a child who needs further assessment, or if a child is currently being assessed.
Language background other than English (LBOTE)	Children are considered to have a LBOTE if they speak a language other than English at home, or if they speak English at home but are still considered to have ESL status.
Local community	A Local community is small area locality, usually a suburb or town. For results to be reported, a Local community must have a minimum of 15 children and 2 teachers. Results are not reported if more than 20 per cent of children are identified as having special needs.
Proficient in English	For the AEDC, children are considered proficient in English if teachers answered 'average' or 'good/very good' to the AvEDI question: 'How would you rate this child's ability to use language effectively in English?'
Quintiles	Quintiles are 5 equal groups dividing a population. They are used for the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) (see **SEIFA**) to divide the population into 5 categories of socioeconomic disadvantage. Quintile 1 represents the most socio-economically disadvantaged areas. Quintile 5 represents the least socio-economically disadvantaged areas.
Remoteness Areas	Geographic location for the AEDC is based on the Australian Statistical Geographical Standard (ASGS) Remoteness Areas classification. This was developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to classify places of geographical remoteness.
Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA)	The AEDC classifies socio-economic status according to the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).. The AEDC uses the Index for Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (ISRD), which considers Census information such as income, educational attainment and employment. Every geographical area in Australia is given a SEIFA score that ranks the disadvantage of an area, compared with other areas in Australia.
Summary indicators	Summary indicators combine information from all five domains to provide a summary of children's strengths and vulnerabilities. The AEDC has 3 summary indicators: • Developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains (DV1) • Developmentally vulnerable on two or more domains (DV2) • On track on five domains (OT5).

For more information, see the Definition of AEDC terms fact sheet

Data appendix

Contents

Demographics of children represented in the AEDC – Queensland only

Demographic profile of children represented in the AEDC

	Number of children						Percentage of children (%)					
	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024
Gender – Male children	28,460	31,928	33,248	33,418	33,275	32,396	51.3	51.8	51.0	51.7	51.2	51.7
Gender – Female children	26,988	29,665	31,952	31,282	31,708	30,272	48.7	48.2	49.0	48.3	48.8	48.3
First Nations children	3,695	4,513	5,332	5,776	6,457	6,741	6.7	7.3	8.2	8.9	9.9	10.8
Children born in another country	3,590	4,689	4,123	3,901	3,489	3,485	6.5	7.6	6.3	6.0	5.4	5.6
Children with English as a second language	3,925	5,117	6,239	8,199	8,490	8,621	7.1	8.3	9.6	12.7	13.1	13.8

Children with additional or special needs in the AEDC

	Number of children						Percentage of children (%)					
	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024
Children with special needs status	2,081	3,047	2,762	2,680	3,251	4,340	3.8	4.9	4.2	4.1	5.0	6.9
Children needing further assessment (e.g. medical and physical, behaviour management, emotional and cognitive development)	6,382	7,235	8,802	9,845	11,339	13,169	11.8	12.0	13.9	15.7	18.0	21.9

Demographics of children represented in the AEDC – Queensland only

Language diversity of children in the AEDC

	Number of children						Percentage of children (%)					
	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024
LBOTE – Total[1]	5,543	6,549	8,104	10,520	11,369	11,738	10.0	10.6	12.4	16.3	17.5	18.7
LBOTE – Not proficient in English	1,086	1,136	1,267	1,427	1,523	1,605	2.0	1.9	2.0	2.2	2.4	2.6
LBOTE – Proficient in English	4,300	5,333	6,762	9,013	9,745	10,027	7.8	8.7	10.4	14.0	15.1	16.1
English only – Total[2]	49,905	55,044	57,096	54,180	53,614	50,931	90.0	89.4	87.6	83.7	82.5	81.3
English only – Not proficient in English	2,915	3,342	3,391	2,781	3,056	2,936	5.3	5.5	5.2	4.3	4.7	4.7
English only – Proficient in English	46,563	51,399	53,469	51,248	50,361	47,774	84.9	84.0	82.4	79.5	77.9	76.6

1 Total for LBOTE includes children that are NOT proficient in English, ARE proficient in English, as well as children whose proficiency in English is unknown.
2 Total children who speak only English at home includes children that are NOT proficient in English, ARE proficient in English, as well as children whose proficiency is unknown.

Summary indicator data

Developmentally on track on 5 domains

		Number of children						Percentage of children (%)					
Category name	Subcategory code	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024
Overall	Overall	52,685	58,087	62,094	61,751	61,364	57,930	40.9	48.3	49.3	50.5	51.4	51.7
Socio-economic status[3]	Quintile 1 (most disadvantaged)	10,184	10,703	11,120	12,380	12,944	12,108	31.3	38.3	38.2	39.3	40.1	40.0
	Quintile 2	10,647	11,817	12,466	12,946	12,488	11,784	37.6	44.6	45.2	47.9	48.0	49.2
	Quintile 3	11,133	12,269	13,449	12,966	13,365	12,853	41.6	48.2	49.5	51.9	53.3	53.5
	Quintile 4	10,859	12,230	13,195	13,549	12,515	11,920	45.0	52.6	54.8	55.1	56.5	57.0
	Quintile 5 (least disadvantaged)	9,616	10,869	11,663	9,815	10,005	9,187	49.3	57.2	57.9	59.8	61.3	60.8
Geographic location	Major cities	31,997	35,277	38,146	39,426	39,842	37,800	42.3	49.4	50.8	51.4	53.3	53.7
	Inner regional	10,621	11,720	12,373	11,879	11,245	10,765	39.2	46.9	47.2	48.8	48.2	47.9
	Outer regional	8,106	9,034	9,529	8,593	8,517	7,739	39.0	46.2	47.8	49.4	47.6	48.4
	Remote	1,064	1,168	1,116	1,019	1,007	903	39.1	50.8	44.7	51.8	49.8	48.4
	Very remote	897	888	930	834	753	723	28.0	39.3	37.2	37.5	39.7	37.9
Gender	Male	26,635	29,549	31,165	31,400	30,835	29,187	30.8	39.1	39.5	41.4	42.5	42.5
	Female	26,050	28,538	30,929	30,351	30,529	28,742	51.2	57.8	59.1	59.9	60.4	61.0
Indigenous background	First Nations	3,393	4,161	4,976	5,414	5,861	6,006	21.7	32.3	31.6	33.5	33.8	34.6
	Non-First Nations	49,292	53,926	57,118	56,337	55,503	51,924	42.2	49.5	50.8	52.1	53.2	53.6
Language diversity	LBOTE - Total[1]	5,199	6,179	7,788	10,154	10,867	11,029	29.6	39.5	41.9	44.8	47.1	46.8
	LBOTE - Not proficient in English	950	994	1,154	1,272	1,307	1,283	1.4	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.5
	LBOTE - Proficient in English	4,227	5,178	6,626	8,871	9,556	9,744	36.0	47.0	49.1	51.2	53.5	53.0
	English only - Total[2]	47,486	51,908	54,306	51,597	50,497	46,901	42.1	49.3	50.4	51.6	52.3	52.8
	English only - Not proficient in English	1,952	2,200	2,472	2,040	2,139	1,815	0.5	0.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5
	English only - Proficient in English	45,506	49,666	51,821	49,530	48,350	45,074	43.9	51.5	52.7	53.7	54.6	54.9

1 Total for LBOTE includes children that are NOT proficient in English, ARE proficient in English, as well as children whose proficiency in English is unknown.
2 Total children who speak only English at home includes children that are NOT proficient in English, ARE proficient in English, as well as children whose proficiency is unknown.
3 Figures may differ from earlier publications as SEIFA and Remoteness Areas in this report are based on the updated 2021 version of the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS).

Developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains

		Number of children						Percentage of children (%)					
Category name	Subcategory code	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024
Overall	Overall	52,603	57,994	62,027	61,673	61,279	57,860	29.6	26.2	26.1	25.9	24.7	25.4
Socio-economic status[3]	Quintile 1 (most disadvantaged)	10,164	10,693	11,111	12,364	12,923	12,090	40.5	36.5	36.7	36.1	34.9	36.0
	Quintile 2	10,630	11,795	12,449	12,932	12,473	11,771	32.0	29.2	29.8	28.2	27.3	27.7
	Quintile 3	11,113	12,240	13,437	12,947	13,350	12,833	28.4	25.1	24.9	24.3	22.5	23.1
	Quintile 4	10,848	12,216	13,180	13,533	12,496	11,910	25.2	22.6	21.6	21.7	20.7	21.0
	Quintile 5 (least disadvantaged)	9,602	10,851	11,651	9,803	9,990	9,178	21.8	18.3	18.8	17.7	16.4	17.2
Geographic location	Major cities	31,964	35,230	38,108	39,365	39,784	37,763	28.4	25.2	24.9	24.7	22.9	23.7
	Inner regional	10,607	11,698	12,368	11,874	11,234	10,751	30.6	27.5	27.2	27.8	27.5	28.2
	Outer regional	8,081	9,018	9,523	8,585	8,506	7,726	31.3	27.7	27.8	26.8	28.2	27.7
	Remote	1,058	1,166	1,112	1,019	1,006	903	31.9	26.0	30.7	26.7	27.5	31.0
	Very remote	893	882	916	830	749	717	46.7	35.8	40.4	40.5	36.6	39.3
Gender	Male	26,587	29,491	31,127	31,354	30,791	29,145	38.2	33.7	33.8	33.0	31.5	32.8
	Female	26,016	28,503	30,900	30,319	30,488	28,714	20.9	18.5	18.4	18.5	17.8	17.8
Indigenous background	First Nations	3,383	4,152	4,971	5,407	5,852	5,991	50.5	43.0	43.9	42.5	42.1	41.8
	Non-First Nations	49,220	53,842	57,056	56,266	55,427	51,869	28.2	24.9	24.6	24.3	22.9	23.5
Language diversity	LBOTE - Total[1]	5,191	6,168	7,772	10,133	10,844	11,012	42.1	34.9	32.9	30.3	28.1	29.1
	LBOTE - Not proficient in English	949	993	1,152	1,271	1,307	1,282	≥90.0	≥90.0	≥90.0	≥90.0	≥90.0	≥90.0
	LBOTE - Proficient in English	4,221	5,168	6,612	8,851	9,534	9,728	30.5	23.7	22.2	21.0	19.0	20.5
	English only - Total	47,412	51,826	54,255	51,540	50,435	46,848	28.3	25.2	25.2	25.0	24.0	24.5
	English only - Not proficient in English	1,952	2,200	2,472	2,040	2,138	1,813	≥90.0	≥90.0	≥90.0	≥90.0	≥90.0	≥90.0
	English only - Proficient in English	45,433	49,593	51,773	49,478	48,292	45,025	25.4	22.1	21.8	22.1	20.9	21.7

1 Total for LBOTE includes children that are NOT proficient in English, ARE proficient in English, as well as children whose proficiency in English is unknown.
2 Total children who speak only English at home includes children that are NOT proficient in English, ARE proficient in English, as well as children whose proficiency is unknown.
3 Figures may differ from earlier publications as SEIFA and Remoteness Areas in this report are based on the updated 2021 version of the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS).

Developmentally vulnerable on two or more domains

		Number of children						Percentage of children (%)					
Category name	Subcategory code	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024
Overall	Overall	52,670	58,107	62,103	61,781	61,385	57,956	15.8	13.8	14.0	13.9	13.2	13.6
Socio-economic status[3]	Quintile 1 (most disadvantaged)	10,171	10,694	11,111	12,379	12,940	12,087	23.6	21.0	21.9	21.7	20.3	21.2
	Quintile 2	10,649	11,822	12,476	12,964	12,491	11,784	16.9	15.8	17.0	15.6	14.8	15.1
	Quintile 3	11,137	12,264	13,445	12,965	13,367	12,864	15.0	12.9	12.8	12.2	11.7	11.8
	Quintile 4	10,853	12,242	13,204	13,555	12,518	11,941	12.6	11.2	10.8	10.7	10.2	10.6
	Quintile 5 (least disadvantaged)	9,615	10,886	11,667	9,824	10,022	9,202	10.4	8.2	8.4	8.4	7.8	8.3
Geographic location	Major cities	31,991	35,281	38,159	39,428	39,854	37,830	14.9	13.1	13.1	13.0	11.8	12.4
	Inner regional	10,617	11,728	12,373	11,892	11,256	10,771	16.5	14.6	15.1	15.4	15.3	15.8
	Outer regional	8,106	9,045	9,528	8,599	8,511	7,742	16.5	14.8	15.1	14.9	15.6	15.3
	Remote	1,060	1,168	1,118	1,021	1,007	903	18.2	13.4	17.3	13.4	14.7	17.4
	Very remote	896	885	925	841	757	710	28.9	20.2	24.5	25.2	22.6	23.2
Gender	Male	26,620	29,536	31,160	31,413	30,826	29,202	21.7	18.8	19.3	19.0	17.9	18.8
	Female	26,050	28,571	30,943	30,368	30,559	28,753	9.7	8.6	8.7	8.6	8.4	8.4
Indigenous background	First Nations	3,386	4,153	4,972	5,412	5,855	5,990	31.3	25.8	27.5	27.0	26.9	25.7
	Non-First Nations	49,284	53,954	57,131	56,369	55,530	51,966	14.7	12.8	12.9	12.6	11.7	12.2
Language diversity	LBOTE - Total[1]	5,185	6,168	7,790	10,152	10,866	11,011	24.8	18.6	17.7	15.8	14.4	15.4
	LBOTE - Not proficient in English	938	984	1,144	1,266	1,302	1,274	70.5	61.0	60.8	59.1	61.0	62.1
	LBOTE - Proficient in English	4,227	5,177	6,636	8,874	9,560	9,733	14.6	10.5	10.3	9.5	8.1	9.3
	English only - Total[2]	47,485	51,939	54,313	51,629	50,519	46,945	14.8	13.2	13.5	13.5	12.9	13.2
	English only - Not proficient in English	1,945	2,189	2,468	2,036	2,134	1,815	79.9	76.2	77.3	78.5	76.5	75.9
	English only - Proficient in English	45,515	49,715	51,834	49,568	48,377	45,118	12.0	10.4	10.5	10.8	10.1	10.7

1 Total for LBOTE includes children that are NOT proficient in English, ARE proficient in English, as well as children whose proficiency in English is unknown.
2 Total children who speak only English at home includes children that are NOT proficient in English, ARE proficient in English, as well as children whose proficiency is unknown.
3 Figures may differ from earlier publications as SEIFA and Remoteness Areas in this report are based on the updated 2021 version of the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS).

Physical health and wellbeing domain

		Number of children						Developmentally on track %						Developmentally at risk %						Developmentally vulnerable %					
Category name	Subcategory code	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024
Overall	Overall	52,761	58,209	62,161	61,844	61,441	58,027	74.7	72.9	73.0	74.1	76.5	77.3	14.3	15.5	14.6	13.7	11.9	11.3	11.0	11.6	12.4	12.3	11.6	11.4
Socio-economic status[3]	Quintile 1 (most disadvantaged)	10,193	10,724	11,125	12,398	12,954	12,115	68.3	65.1	64.4	65.5	67.9	67.8	15.8	17.6	16.8	16.2	14.2	13.8	15.9	17.3	18.8	18.2	17.8	18.4
	Quintile 2	10,665	11,842	12,485	12,972	12,497	11,796	72.9	70.7	70.3	72.7	74.8	75.8	15.3	16.4	15.1	13.9	12.5	11.8	11.8	12.9	14.6	13.4	12.7	12.4
	Quintile 3	11,151	12,284	13,460	12,981	13,383	12,880	75.7	73.3	73.6	75.3	78.3	79.5	14.3	16.0	14.9	13.5	11.3	10.8	10.1	10.7	11.5	11.2	10.3	9.7
	Quintile 4	10,880	12,263	13,218	13,568	12,531	11,950	77.2	75.7	77.3	77.7	79.8	81.0	13.7	14.8	13.0	12.6	11.1	10.6	9.0	9.6	9.7	9.7	9.1	8.4
	Quintile 5 (least disadvantaged)	9,626	10,897	11,672	9,830	10,029	9,208	79.7	79.3	78.7	80.1	82.9	83.6	12.0	12.8	13.3	12.0	10.0	9.2	8.3	7.9	8.0	8.0	7.1	7.2
Geographic location	Major cities	32,031	35,333	38,178	39,477	39,891	37,870	75.2	73.4	74.2	75.2	78.3	79.1	14.3	15.5	14.2	13.6	11.3	10.7	10.4	11.1	11.7	11.2	10.4	10.1
	Inner regional	10,639	11,744	12,384	11,894	11,264	10,785	74.7	72.3	71.2	71.7	73.2	74.1	14.0	15.5	15.0	14.1	12.8	12.8	11.3	12.2	13.7	14.1	13.9	13.1
	Outer regional	8,127	9,068	9,535	8,608	8,521	7,747	74.0	71.6	71.6	72.4	72.5	74.3	14.2	16.0	15.8	14.1	13.6	12.0	11.7	12.3	12.6	13.4	13.9	13.7
	Remote	1,065	1,169	1,122	1,022	1,007	904	73.6	76.8	72.0	75.1	78.6	72.9	13.1	12.5	13.5	11.1	9.1	11.5	13.3	10.7	14.4	13.8	12.3	15.6
	Very remote	899	895	942	843	758	721	64.6	67.0	65.8	68.2	69.8	63.9	16.7	15.6	14.9	11.4	12.3	13.7	18.7	17.3	19.3	20.4	17.9	22.3
Gender	Male	26,673	29,599	31,192	31,444	30,867	29,244	69.8	68.4	67.8	69.2	71.9	72.7	16.0	16.7	16.2	15.1	13.2	12.6	14.2	14.9	16.0	15.7	14.9	14.8
	Female	26,088	28,610	30,969	30,400	30,574	28,782	79.8	77.5	78.3	79.1	81.1	82.0	12.5	14.3	12.9	12.2	10.6	10.1	7.7	8.2	8.8	8.7	8.3	8.0
Indigenous background	First Nations	3,400	4,168	4,977	5,421	5,865	6,009	62.5	62.7	61.4	61.8	64.1	64.5	17.7	18.2	16.8	16.9	14.5	14.1	19.8	19.1	21.8	21.2	21.3	21.4
	Non-First Nations	49,361	54,041	57,184	56,423	55,576	52,018	75.6	73.7	74.0	75.2	77.8	78.7	14.0	15.3	14.4	13.4	11.6	11.0	10.4	11.0	11.6	11.4	10.6	10.2
Language diversity	LBOTE - Total[1]	5,208	6,189	7,803	10,176	10,879	11,042	71.7	73.1	73.5	75.5	78.3	77.9	15.3	15.1	14.3	13.0	11.0	11.3	13.1	11.8	12.2	11.5	10.7	10.8
	LBOTE - Not proficient in English	951	994	1,154	1,272	1,307	1,282	46.9	49.1	46.7	44.7	46.7	49.0	23.6	22.3	20.3	21.9	18.3	19.4	29.5	28.6	33.0	33.4	35.0	31.6
	LBOTE - Proficient in English	4,234	5,187	6,640	8,890	9,568	9,755	77.2	77.7	78.1	79.9	82.6	81.7	13.3	13.7	13.3	11.8	10.0	10.2	9.4	8.6	8.6	8.3	7.4	8.1
	English only - Total[2]	47,553	52,020	54,358	51,668	50,562	46,985	75.1	72.9	72.9	73.8	76.1	77.1	14.2	15.6	14.6	13.8	12.1	11.3	10.8	11.6	12.4	12.4	11.8	11.5
	English only - Not proficient in English	1,952	2,197	2,467	2,040	2,138	1,813	26.5	24.4	23.3	22.1	25.1	26.1	22.2	22.5	19.3	18.0	18.7	18.4	51.2	53.1	57.4	59.9	56.2	55.5
	English only - Proficient in English	45,573	49,775	51,879	49,600	48,413	45,159	77.2	75.0	75.3	75.9	78.3	79.2	13.8	15.2	14.4	13.6	11.8	11.1	9.0	9.7	10.3	10.4	9.9	9.8

1 Total for LBOTE includes children that are NOT proficient in English, ARE proficient in English, as well as children whose proficiency in English is unknown.

2 Total children who speak only English at home includes children that are NOT proficient in English, ARE proficient in English, as well as children whose proficiency is unknown.

3 Figures may differ from earlier publications as SEIFA and Remoteness Areas in this report are based on the updated 2021 version of the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS).

Social competence domain

		Number of children						Developmentally on track %						Developmentally at risk %						Developmentally vulnerable %					
Category name	Subcategory code	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024
Overall	Overall	52,755	58,186	62,136	61,838	61,435	58,017	70.8	72.9	71.2	71.9	74.0	72.8	17.1	15.6	16.4	16.2	15.4	15.7	12.1	11.5	12.4	11.9	10.6	11.6
Socio-economic status[3]	Quintile 1 (most disadvantaged)	10,191	10,718	11,122	12,396	12,948	12,113	63.0	65.9	63.1	63.9	66.9	64.6	19.7	18.2	19.0	19.0	18.3	19.0	17.2	15.9	17.9	17.1	14.8	16.4
	Quintile 2	10,662	11,845	12,478	12,971	12,498	11,796	69.3	70.4	67.9	70.6	71.9	70.8	17.9	16.2	17.7	16.3	15.9	16.4	12.8	13.5	14.4	13.1	12.1	12.8
	Quintile 3	11,151	12,280	13,454	12,978	13,382	12,872	71.1	73.5	72.1	72.8	75.2	74.3	17.3	15.7	16.0	16.0	15.2	15.3	11.6	10.7	11.9	11.2	9.6	10.3
	Quintile 4	10,879	12,252	13,210	13,568	12,531	11,949	73.6	75.3	74.7	74.9	77.3	76.3	16.1	14.7	15.3	15.3	14.0	14.2	10.3	10.0	10.0	9.8	8.7	9.5
	Quintile 5 (least disadvantaged)	9,626	10,892	11,672	9,830	10,029	9,209	77.2	78.9	77.2	78.2	79.9	79.2	14.4	13.3	14.3	13.9	12.8	12.8	8.5	7.8	8.5	7.9	7.3	7.9
Geographic location	Major cities	32,032	35,330	38,172	39,473	39,891	37,864	71.7	73.5	72.6	72.7	75.3	74.1	16.6	15.3	15.7	15.8	14.8	15.1	11.7	11.3	11.7	11.6	9.9	10.8
	Inner regional	10,637	11,735	12,382	11,894	11,263	10,781	69.3	72.4	69.6	70.6	71.7	70.2	18.3	16.5	17.3	16.9	16.4	16.9	12.4	11.1	13.1	12.5	11.8	12.8
	Outer regional	8,122	9,060	9,531	8,607	8,517	7,746	70.4	71.5	68.8	70.9	71.4	70.9	16.8	15.7	17.5	16.6	16.4	16.3	12.8	12.8	13.8	12.5	12.2	12.8
	Remote	1,066	1,168	1,122	1,022	1,007	904	67.4	74.1	68.8	73.7	75.2	70.5	20.2	14.8	18.3	16.0	14.1	15.9	12.4	11.0	12.9	10.3	10.7	13.6
	Very remote	898	893	929	842	757	722	60.8	67.4	60.9	60.5	65.0	61.1	20.7	17.4	19.2	21.5	19.0	21.9	18.5	15.2	19.9	18.1	16.0	17.0
Gender	Male	26,671	29,586	31,187	31,443	30,865	29,236	62.3	64.9	62.6	63.9	66.1	64.8	21.1	19.3	20.3	19.5	18.9	18.9	16.6	15.7	17.1	16.5	15.0	16.3
	Female	26,084	28,600	30,949	30,395	30,570	28,780	79.5	81.0	79.8	80.1	82.0	80.9	13.0	11.8	12.5	12.7	11.8	12.4	7.5	7.2	7.8	7.2	6.2	6.7
Indigenous background	First Nations	3,395	4,164	4,975	5,420	5,862	6,007	57.5	61.4	57.5	59.6	61.2	60.1	22.3	19.5	20.7	19.9	19.9	20.7	20.2	19.1	21.8	20.5	18.8	19.1
	Non-First Nations	49,360	54,022	57,161	56,418	55,573	52,010	71.7	73.7	72.3	73.1	75.3	74.2	16.7	15.3	16.0	15.8	14.9	15.1	11.6	11.0	11.6	11.1	9.8	10.7
Language diversity	LBOTE - Total[1]	5,205	6,185	7,800	10,174	10,876	11,037	67.4	70.1	70.0	71.5	74.5	72.8	18.0	16.9	16.0	16.3	15.2	15.4	14.6	13.0	13.9	12.2	10.3	11.8
	LBOTE - Not proficient in English	950	990	1,151	1,271	1,304	1,277	37.7	38.8	36.2	32.1	35.1	33.7	26.3	27.1	24.3	28.7	29.7	26.9	36.0	34.1	39.4	39.2	35.2	39.4
	LBOTE - Proficient in English	4,232	5,187	6,640	8,889	9,568	9,755	74.1	76.0	75.9	77.2	79.9	77.9	16.2	15.0	14.6	14.5	13.2	13.9	9.8	9.0	9.5	8.3	6.9	8.2
	English only - Total[2]	47,550	52,001	54,336	51,664	50,559	46,980	71.2	73.2	71.3	71.9	73.9	72.7	17.0	15.4	16.5	16.2	15.4	15.7	11.9	11.4	12.2	11.9	10.7	11.5
	English only - Not proficient in English	1,952	2,194	2,464	2,039	2,137	1,813	24.8	27.2	22.9	21.4	27.2	23.1	27.8	24.0	25.7	26.2	25.3	24.2	47.4	48.8	51.4	52.4	47.5	52.7
	English only - Proficient in English	45,571	49,762	51,859	49,597	48,412	45,154	73.1	75.2	73.6	74.0	75.9	74.7	16.5	15.1	16.0	15.7	15.0	15.4	10.3	9.7	10.3	10.2	9.1	9.9

1 Total for LBOTE includes children that are NOT proficient in English, ARE proficient in English, as well as children whose proficiency in English is unknown.

2 Total children who speak only English at home includes children that are NOT proficient in English, ARE proficient in English, as well as children whose proficiency is unknown.

3 Figures may differ from earlier publications as SEIFA and Remoteness Areas in this report are based on the updated 2021 version of the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS).

Emotional maturity domain

		Number of children						Developmentally on track %						Developmentally at risk %						Developmentally vulnerable %					
Category name	Subcategory code	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024
Overall	Overall	52,588	57,988	61,959	61,628	61,244	57,789	71.5	74.9	73.5	73.3	74.1	72.4	17.5	15.8	16.4	16.2	15.9	16.1	11.0	9.3	10.1	10.5	10.0	11.5
Socio-economic status[3]	Quintile 1 (most disadvantaged)	10,150	10,677	11,089	12,334	12,913	12,047	65.3	69.4	66.4	66.8	67.7	65.1	19.9	18.2	19.5	18.8	18.7	19.4	14.8	12.5	14.1	14.4	13.6	15.6
	Quintile 2	10,623	11,778	12,443	12,927	12,459	11,758	69.7	72.6	70.9	71.8	71.9	71.1	18.7	16.8	17.4	17.0	17.3	16.3	11.6	10.6	11.7	11.2	10.8	12.6
	Quintile 3	11,119	12,239	13,423	12,934	13,337	12,828	71.4	75.1	73.9	74.3	75.3	73.6	17.4	16.0	16.7	16.1	15.7	15.7	11.3	8.9	9.4	9.6	9.0	10.7
	Quintile 4	10,843	12,229	13,163	13,525	12,483	11,904	74.4	77.3	76.2	75.8	76.8	75.3	16.2	14.6	15.1	15.1	14.3	14.9	9.4	8.0	8.7	9.0	8.8	9.8
	Quintile 5 (least disadvantaged)	9,607	10,866	11,642	9,814	10,005	9,174	76.7	80.1	79.5	78.8	80.1	78.1	15.3	13.5	13.4	13.6	12.9	13.6	8.0	6.4	7.1	7.6	7.1	8.3
Geographic location	Major cities	31,974	35,204	38,064	39,323	39,754	37,721	72.0	75.8	74.3	73.8	75.2	73.7	17.4	15.3	16.0	16.0	15.5	15.4	10.6	8.9	9.7	10.2	9.3	10.9
	Inner regional	10,607	11,714	12,365	11,870	11,240	10,744	71.0	73.3	72.6	72.3	72.6	69.2	17.6	16.7	17.1	16.5	16.6	17.3	11.4	10.0	10.3	11.2	10.8	13.5
	Outer regional	8,067	9,032	9,516	8,592	8,494	7,717	71.1	74.1	73.0	73.4	71.5	71.3	17.5	16.5	16.7	16.4	16.9	17.3	11.4	9.4	10.3	10.2	11.6	11.4
	Remote	1,053	1,168	1,107	1,018	1,006	902	68.0	77.0	70.6	74.6	75.0	69.0	19.8	14.0	17.5	15.1	15.3	18.1	12.3	9.1	11.8	10.3	9.6	13.0
	Very remote	887	870	907	825	750	705	63.6	69.3	61.3	61.8	68.7	66.0	19.5	18.6	19.8	21.8	17.9	18.4	16.9	12.1	18.9	16.4	13.5	15.6
Gender	Male	26,567	29,471	31,078	31,315	30,742	29,096	61.3	65.6	63.5	63.6	64.4	62.6	22.0	20.3	21.0	20.5	20.5	20.0	16.7	14.1	15.5	15.9	15.1	17.4
	Female	26,021	28,517	30,881	30,313	30,502	28,692	81.8	84.6	83.6	83.3	83.9	82.3	12.9	11.1	11.8	11.8	11.3	12.2	5.3	4.2	4.7	4.9	4.8	5.5
Indigenous background	First Nations	3,375	4,140	4,965	5,392	5,843	5,963	60.5	65.4	61.1	63.1	63.8	61.8	22.2	19.8	21.7	20.0	19.8	19.5	17.3	14.8	17.2	16.9	16.3	18.6
	Non-First Nations	49,213	53,848	56,994	56,236	55,401	51,826	72.2	75.7	74.6	74.3	75.2	73.6	17.2	15.5	15.9	15.8	15.5	15.7	10.6	8.8	9.5	9.8	9.3	10.7
Language diversity	LBOTE - Total[1]	5,177	6,161	7,754	10,111	10,824	10,987	66.9	72.4	71.5	72.7	74.2	72.4	21.0	17.9	18.3	17.6	17.1	17.5	12.1	9.7	10.2	9.7	8.7	10.1
	LBOTE - Not proficient in English	935	984	1,139	1,256	1,295	1,269	44.5	46.2	41.4	41.4	43.5	40.1	31.3	29.9	34.4	31.9	30.7	32.1	24.2	23.9	24.2	26.7	25.8	27.8
	LBOTE - Proficient in English	4,220	5,169	6,605	8,842	9,525	9,713	71.9	77.3	76.7	77.1	78.4	76.6	18.7	15.7	15.5	15.6	15.2	15.6	9.4	7.0	7.7	7.2	6.4	7.8
	English only - Total[2]	47,411	51,827	54,205	51,517	50,420	46,802	72.0	75.3	73.8	73.5	74.1	72.4	17.1	15.5	16.1	15.9	15.7	15.7	10.9	9.2	10.1	10.6	10.3	11.9
	English only - Not proficient in English	1,932	2,180	2,452	2,028	2,127	1,801	34.0	38.6	33.4	32.0	35.1	31.7	30.2	30.0	31.4	30.1	29.7	27.3	35.8	31.4	35.1	37.9	35.2	41.0
	English only - Proficient in English	45,452	49,588	51,740	49,461	48,283	44,989	73.6	76.9	75.7	75.2	75.8	74.0	16.6	14.9	15.4	15.3	15.0	15.3	9.9	8.2	8.9	9.5	9.2	10.7

1 Total for LBOTE includes children that are NOT proficient in English, ARE proficient in English, as well as children whose proficiency in English is unknown.

2 Total children who speak only English at home includes children that are NOT proficient in English, ARE proficient in English, as well as children whose proficiency is unknown.

3 Figures may differ from earlier publications as SEIFA and Remoteness Areas in this report are based on the updated 2021 version of the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS).

Language and cognitive skills (school-based) domain

		Number of children						Developmentally on track %						Developmentally at risk %						Developmentally vulnerable %					
Category name	Subcategory code	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024
Overall	Overall	52,590	58,122	62,126	61,781	61,387	57,966	60.9	78.5	82.3	82.4	80.7	81.0	23.5	12.4	9.7	9.6	10.9	10.6	15.6	9.1	8.0	8.0	8.4	8.4
Socio-economic status[3]	Quintile 1 (most disadvantaged)	10,157	10,701	11,115	12,389	12,941	12,091	49.2	68.2	71.7	71.9	69.7	69.2	26.3	16.0	13.8	13.7	15.9	15.5	24.5	15.7	14.5	14.4	14.5	15.3
	Quintile 2	10,629	11,818	12,476	12,962	12,495	11,791	57.7	75.5	78.8	79.4	77.5	78.6	24.6	13.9	10.8	11.2	12.5	12.0	17.7	10.7	10.5	9.5	10.1	9.4
	Quintile 3	11,117	12,263	13,453	12,971	13,372	12,862	62.3	79.6	83.5	84.2	82.7	83.3	23.3	12.1	9.3	8.9	10.3	9.8	14.3	8.4	7.2	6.9	7.0	6.9
	Quintile 4	10,843	12,246	13,212	13,558	12,527	11,943	66.1	82.3	86.7	87.3	86.1	85.9	22.2	10.9	8.1	7.5	8.5	8.5	11.7	6.8	5.2	5.2	5.5	5.5
	Quintile 5 (least disadvantaged)	9,599	10,895	11,669	9,807	10,005	9,201	69.7	86.4	89.4	90.6	89.7	90.2	20.9	9.1	6.9	6.1	6.6	6.2	9.4	4.5	3.7	3.3	3.7	3.5
Geographic location	Major cities	31,944	35,281	38,166	39,440	39,863	37,833	63.6	80.2	83.7	84.3	82.9	83.2	22.5	11.8	9.0	8.9	10.0	9.7	13.9	8.0	7.2	6.8	7.1	7.1
	Inner regional	10,601	11,742	12,377	11,887	11,243	10,773	57.2	75.5	80.1	79.1	77.1	77.5	25.1	13.5	11.0	11.5	12.9	12.2	17.6	11.0	8.9	9.5	10.0	10.3
	Outer regional	8,089	9,042	9,528	8,592	8,513	7,741	57.4	77.2	81.2	80.3	77.7	78.2	25.0	12.6	9.8	9.9	11.9	11.7	17.6	10.2	8.9	9.8	10.4	10.1
	Remote	1,059	1,167	1,120	1,022	1,008	904	59.3	76.2	73.8	78.6	71.2	70.4	22.6	12.7	14.1	9.9	13.9	14.7	18.1	11.1	12.1	11.5	14.9	14.9
	Very remote	897	890	935	840	760	715	43.0	68.7	70.6	65.1	64.9	62.1	26.9	15.8	13.5	13.5	16.4	19.4	30.1	15.5	15.9	21.4	18.7	18.5
Gender	Male	26,582	29,549	31,180	31,418	30,843	29,208	53.0	74.0	78.4	79.3	77.8	78.0	26.8	14.4	11.5	10.9	12.2	11.7	20.2	11.5	10.1	9.8	10.0	10.3
	Female	26,008	28,573	30,946	30,363	30,544	28,757	69.1	83.2	86.1	85.6	83.6	84.2	20.1	10.2	7.9	8.2	9.7	9.5	10.8	6.6	6.0	6.2	6.7	6.4
Indigenous background	First Nations	3,377	4,147	4,968	5,414	5,852	5,991	36.5	59.0	63.5	62.2	59.5	60.6	28.0	19.2	16.9	16.9	18.9	18.3	35.6	21.8	19.6	20.8	21.6	21.0
	Non-First Nations	49,213	53,975	57,158	56,367	55,535	51,975	62.6	80.0	83.9	84.3	82.9	83.4	23.2	11.8	9.1	8.9	10.1	9.7	14.2	8.2	7.0	6.8	7.0	6.9
Language diversity	LBOTE - Total[1]	5,177	6,166	7,798	10,160	10,870	11,019	49.8	72.0	77.6	79.8	78.8	77.6	25.8	14.3	11.3	10.2	11.2	11.9	24.4	13.7	11.1	10.0	10.0	10.5
	LBOTE - Not proficient in English	934	983	1,149	1,270	1,304	1,273	17.6	32.0	37.1	39.2	35.3	32.0	24.3	25.1	22.9	23.7	23.6	25.0	58.1	42.8	40.0	37.1	41.1	43.0
	LBOTE - Proficient in English	4,223	5,177	6,639	8,877	9,562	9,742	57.0	79.6	84.6	85.6	84.7	83.6	26.2	12.3	9.3	8.3	9.5	10.2	16.9	8.2	6.1	6.1	5.8	6.2
	English only - Total[2]	47,413	51,956	54,328	51,621	50,517	46,947	62.2	79.3	82.9	82.9	81.1	81.8	23.2	12.1	9.5	9.5	10.9	10.3	14.6	8.6	7.6	7.6	8.0	7.9
	English only - Not proficient in English	1,937	2,187	2,463	2,036	2,130	1,808	12.6	23.4	26.4	23.1	23.0	25.1	21.3	23.2	22.0	22.1	22.5	22.1	66.0	53.4	51.6	54.9	54.6	52.8
	English only - Proficient in English	45,452	49,707	51,853	49,560	48,375	45,126	64.3	81.7	85.6	85.4	83.7	84.1	23.3	11.6	8.9	9.0	10.4	9.8	12.4	6.6	5.5	5.7	5.9	6.1

1 Total for LBOTE includes children that are NOT proficient in English, ARE proficient in English, as well as children whose proficiency in English is unknown.

2 Total children who speak only English at home includes children that are NOT proficient in English, ARE proficient in English, as well as children whose proficiency is unknown.

3 Figures may differ from earlier publications as SEIFA and Remoteness Areas in this report are based on the updated 2021 version of the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS).

Communication skills and general knowledge domain

		Number of children						Developmentally on track %						Developmentally at risk %						Developmentally vulnerable %					
Category name	Subcategory code	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024
Overall	Overall	52,754	58,203	62,163	61,833	61,450	58,029	72.6	71.4	72.8	74.0	76.1	76.8	16.9	17.9	16.7	15.9	14.8	14.3	10.5	10.7	10.5	10.1	9.1	8.9
Socio-economic status[3]	Quintile 1 (most disadvantaged)	10,191	10,723	11,122	12,397	12,953	12,114	64.0	62.4	62.9	64.2	67.4	67.6	20.3	20.6	20.2	19.5	18.4	17.8	15.7	16.9	16.9	16.2	14.2	14.5
	Quintile 2	10,662	11,840	12,485	12,965	12,500	11,799	70.1	68.3	69.1	71.9	73.8	75.2	18.0	19.5	18.0	16.6	16.0	14.9	11.8	12.1	12.8	11.5	10.2	9.9
	Quintile 3	11,152	12,284	13,461	12,980	13,383	12,879	73.2	71.4	73.2	75.8	77.6	79.0	16.9	18.3	17.1	15.2	14.2	13.7	9.9	10.2	9.6	9.0	8.2	7.3
	Quintile 4	10,878	12,261	13,222	13,566	12,536	11,950	76.7	75.1	77.5	78.2	80.2	80.2	15.0	16.3	14.6	14.2	12.8	12.9	8.3	8.5	7.9	7.6	7.0	6.9
	Quintile 5 (least disadvantaged)	9,626	10,896	11,672	9,830	10,031	9,209	79.4	79.1	80.0	80.9	82.7	83.4	14.2	14.8	14.0	13.6	12.2	11.7	6.4	6.1	6.0	5.5	5.0	4.8
Geographic location	Major cities	32,032	35,332	38,182	39,471	39,888	37,867	73.1	71.9	74.0	74.6	77.5	78.0	16.8	17.7	16.1	15.9	14.2	13.9	10.1	10.3	9.9	9.5	8.3	8.1
	Inner regional	10,635	11,746	12,381	11,891	11,271	10,786	72.4	70.9	71.8	73.2	73.7	75.5	16.9	18.1	17.3	16.1	16.0	14.6	10.7	11.0	10.9	10.7	10.2	10.0
	Outer regional	8,124	9,061	9,534	8,607	8,521	7,750	72.9	70.6	70.0	73.2	73.0	73.8	16.8	18.0	18.3	16.0	16.3	15.7	10.3	11.5	11.7	10.8	10.7	10.4
	Remote	1,064	1,169	1,122	1,022	1,009	903	71.6	71.5	69.5	76.4	78.0	74.6	16.9	18.1	15.9	13.0	11.6	14.0	11.5	10.4	14.6	10.6	10.4	11.4
	Very remote	899	895	944	842	761	723	58.3	64.1	64.9	63.2	66.2	67.4	22.0	20.8	21.2	15.8	17.6	17.4	19.7	15.1	13.9	21.0	16.2	15.2
Gender	Male	26,669	29,599	31,194	31,438	30,872	29,248	66.5	65.8	67.2	68.9	71.6	72.3	19.7	20.4	19.3	18.1	16.9	16.4	13.8	13.8	13.5	13.0	11.5	11.4
	Female	26,085	28,604	30,969	30,395	30,578	28,780	78.9	77.1	78.4	79.3	80.6	81.4	14.0	15.3	14.1	13.6	12.8	12.2	7.1	7.5	7.5	7.1	6.7	6.3
Indigenous background	First Nations	3,397	4,168	4,976	5,417	5,864	6,008	55.2	56.4	56.2	59.5	62.0	63.6	23.3	22.8	22.2	19.9	18.8	19.2	21.5	20.8	21.6	20.6	19.1	17.2
	Non-First Nations	49,357	54,035	57,187	56,416	55,586	52,021	73.8	72.5	74.2	75.4	77.5	78.3	16.5	17.5	16.2	15.5	14.4	13.8	9.7	9.9	9.5	9.1	8.0	7.9
Language diversity	LBOTE - Total[1]	5,202	6,191	7,801	10,171	10,878	11,039	53.6	56.2	58.3	61.5	64.9	65.2	21.4	21.3	21.3	20.2	18.7	18.8	25.0	22.5	20.4	18.2	16.4	16.0
	LBOTE - Not proficient in English	950	990	1,154	1,271	1,306	1,282	2.8	<10.0	<10.0	<10.0	<10.0	<10.0	8.3	<10.0	<10.0	<10.0	<10.0	<10.0	88.8	≥90.0	≥90.0	≥90.0	≥90.0	≥90.0
	LBOTE - Proficient in English	4,232	5,194	6,642	8,890	9,569	9,755	65.1	66.7	68.3	70.2	73.7	73.7	24.2	24.0	24.0	22.3	20.3	20.3	10.7	9.3	7.7	7.4	6.0	6.0
	English only - Total[2]	47,552	52,012	54,362	51,662	50,572	46,990	74.7	73.2	74.8	76.4	78.4	79.5	16.4	17.5	16.1	15.1	14.0	13.3	8.9	9.3	9.1	8.5	7.5	7.2
	English only - Not proficient in English	1,952	2,199	2,471	2,039	2,138	1,814	<10.0	<10.0	<10.0	<10.0	1.2	<10.0	<10.0	<10.0	<10.0	<10.0	9.5	<10.0	≥90.0	≥90.0	≥90.0	≥90.0	89.3	≥90.0
	English only - Proficient in English	45,576	49,783	51,884	49,600	48,429	45,166	77.9	76.4	78.4	79.6	81.9	82.7	16.8	18.0	16.5	15.4	14.2	13.5	5.3	5.6	5.1	5.0	3.9	3.9

1 Total for LBOTE includes children that are NOT proficient in English, ARE proficient in English, as well as children whose proficiency in English is unknown.

2 Total children who speak only English at home includes children that are NOT proficient in English, ARE proficient in English, as well as children whose proficiency is unknown.

3 Figures may differ from earlier publications as SEIFA and Remoteness Areas in this report are based on the updated 2021 version of the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS).

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