

Acknowledgement of Country

The ACT Government acknowledges the traditional custodians of the ACT, the Ngunnawal peoples, and the Wreck Bay Peoples as the traditional custodians of the Jervis Bay area.

We acknowledge and respect their ancestors of years long past, today's Elders that hold the cultural lore, language and customs of their people, and the leaders of tomorrow.

In particular we thank the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and teachers who participated in the AEDC and strive to work with our local community as we share these data.



Acknowledgements

Since 2002, the Australian Government has worked in partnership with eminent child health research institutes. The Centre for Community Child Health at the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne, Murdoch Children's Hospital, Melbourne, and the and the Telethon Kids Institute, Perth to deliver the Australian Early Development Census program to communities nationwide.

On 1 July 2014, the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) program became known as the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC), and was launched

on the website www.aedc.gov.au. The Australian Government continues to work with its partners, and with state and territory governments to run the AEDC. Sections of this report are copied directly from the *Australian Early Development Census National Report 2018* and the *Australian Early Development Census National Report 2021* with written permission.

Thank you to all the children who kindly gave their permission for us to use their artwork that is featured in this publication.

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Message from the Minister

Children's early years set the groundwork for their future physical, cognitive, social, and emotional health and wellbeing. The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) is a national measure of how children have developed by the time they are in their first year of school. The Census provides us with key insights so we can make evidence-based decisions that improve outcomes for our children.



Yvette Berry

Minister for Education and
Early Childhood Development

The AEDC is Australia's only national census of children in their early years. Since the first release in 2009, it has measured early childhood development across 5 domains. These domains form the foundations for later good health, education, and social outcomes. I am pleased to report all ACT schools with kindergarten children participated in the latest cycle and we achieved a participation rate over 98 per cent. I extend my thanks to everyone involved in this success. This exceptional completion rate has resulted in a robust data set to track trends in the development of Canberra's children.

From the latest results we know more ACT children are starting school with developmental vulnerabilities. While many children are doing well, more than one in 4 were developmentally vulnerable on one or more AEDC domain(s). These results contribute to a trend of increasing developmental vulnerability for ACT children. The 2021 ACT results differ from the national results, which show a slight increase in the rate of children developmentally vulnerable, compared to the more significant increase in the ACT.

We know there is more work to do to give every child in Canberra the best start in life. The rich dataset of the AEDC provides us with an opportunity to reflect on what is working well, and where we need to improve our approach to better support children and families. The results clearly tell us there continues to be an increased need for early childhood supports and services in the ACT. This government is committed to improving equitable access to early childhood education and care, including staged delivery of universal access to quality early learning for 3-year-old children in the ACT.

Investing in the early years and supporting our children and families will be key to ensuring our children are set up for lifelong success. It is important that we continue to work together to use the AEDC data to assist our understanding of where Canberra's children are at and how we can better support them in the early years to open the door for every success in the future.

Key findings for the ACT in 2021 AEDC

Who took part in 2021?

5,803

children living in the ACT included

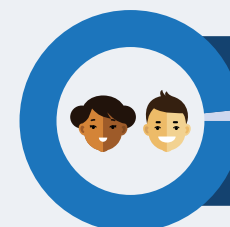


5 years 7 months
mean age of students



366

teachers took part

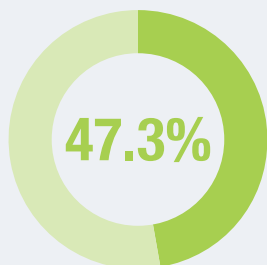


98.4%
of eligible students participated across
100% of schools



2021 results

ACT children developmentally on track on 5 domains has significantly decreased from **48.7%** in 2018 to **47.3%** in 2021.



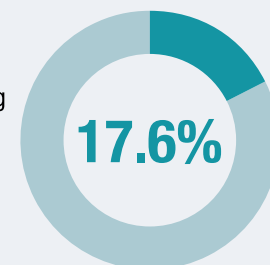
Developmental vulnerability on one or more domain(s) has significantly increased in the ACT from **24.6%** in 2018 to **26.7%** in 2021.



Developmental vulnerability on 2 or more domain(s) has increased significantly in the ACT from **12.4%** in 2018 to **13.3%** in 2021.

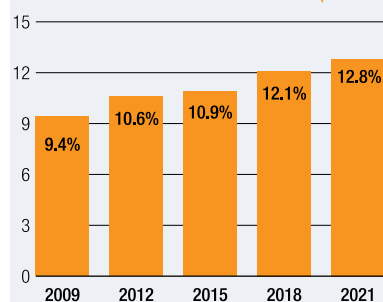


The percentage of ACT children identified as needing further assessment increased from **14.7%** in 2018 to **17.6%** in 2021.



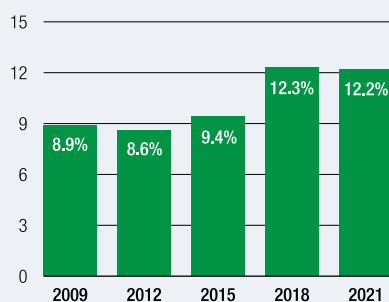
Domains

PHYSICAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING



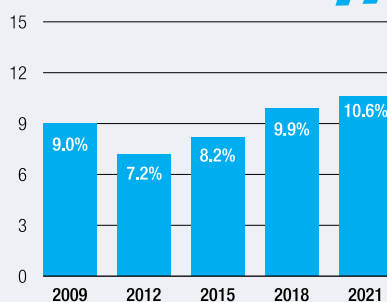
Developmental vulnerability has continued to **increase** since 2009.

SOCIAL COMPETENCE



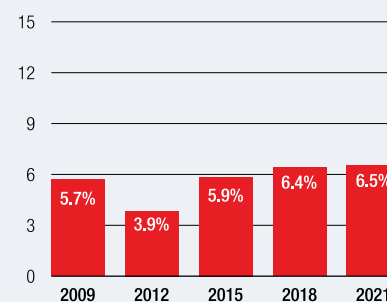
Developmental vulnerability has **decreased** slightly since 2018.

EMOTIONAL MATURITY



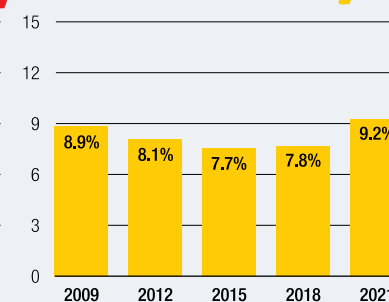
Developmental vulnerability has **increased** since 2012 and **increased significantly** since 2018.

LANGUAGE AND COGNITIVE SKILLS (SCHOOL-BASED)



Developmental vulnerability has continued to **increase** since 2012.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND GENERAL KNOWLEDGE



Developmental vulnerability has continued to **increase** since 2015 and **increased significantly** since 2018.

Background on the AEDC

The importance of early childhood development

Early childhood development is increasingly recognised as a key predictor of future outcomes for children. Research has shown that investing time, effort and resources in the early years of a child's life has significant impacts on their behaviour, learning, health and wellbeing, as they transition from childhood to adulthood. Research shows that investing in children's early years, when their brains are developing rapidly, benefits children and the whole community. Early developmental gains support children through their school years and beyond.

About the AEDC

The AEDC is a national measure of children's development, as they enter their first year of full-time school. The data for the AEDC is collected every 3 years using the Australian version of the Early Development Instrument (AveDI), adapted from Canada. Participation is voluntary with data collected through the cooperation of parents and the active involvement of the government, Catholic and independent schools sectors across Australia.

In 2009, Australia became the first country in the world to collect national data on the developmental health and wellbeing of all children during their first year of full-time school. The success of the 2009 collection laid the foundation for the Australian Government's commitment to ongoing AEDC data collection cycles in 2012, 2015, 2018 and 2021.

The AEDC highlights what is working well and what needs to be improved or developed to support children and their families, and helps communities know how their children are progressing. As a population-based measure, the AEDC is not designed to be an individual diagnostic tool and is instead reported publicly at a community level.

About the AEDC domains

The Australian version of the Early Development Instrument consists of approximately 100 questions across 5 key domains, which are closely linked to child health, education and social outcomes. The AEDC domains, domain icons and domain descriptions are presented in Figure 1. For further information about the domains and domain characteristics (developmentally on track, at risk and vulnerable) please refer to the fact sheet About the AEDC domains (www.aedc.gov.au/abtdom).

The AEDC domains have been shown to predict children's later outcomes in health, wellbeing and academic success.

Summary Indicators

AEDC summary indicators provide a high-level picture of how children are faring in their development. The national summary indicators are 'developmentally vulnerable on one or more domain(s)', 'developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains' and 'on track on all 5 domains'.

Figure 1: AEDC developmental domains — icons and descriptions



How the AEDC results are reported

Teachers complete the Early Development Instrument (AvEDI), which is similar to a questionnaire, for kindergarten children across the 5 AEDC domains. On each of the 5 domains, children receive a score from zero to 10 which is calculated based on teacher responses to the relevant domain questions for each child. AEDC results are reported as the number and percentage of children who are considered as 'developmentally on track', 'developmentally at risk' and 'developmentally vulnerable' in each domain. These are categorised based on cut-offs established using 2009 data.

Children 'developmentally on track' score above the 25th percentile (in the top 75%). Children 'developmentally at risk' score between the 10th and 25th percentile. Children 'developmentally vulnerable' score below the 10th percentile (in the lowest 10%) and demonstrate a much lower than average ability in the developmental competencies in that domain (refer to Figure 2). The AEDC reports developmental vulnerability based on where a child lives rather than where they attend school. This report presents data for children who live in the ACT, not the population of children who attend a school in the ACT.¹

How to use the AEDC data

The AEDC provides important information to communities, governments and schools to support their planning and service provision.

The ACT Government has demonstrated a strong commitment to supporting the translation and utilisation of the AEDC results. This has been achieved through working across systems to affect change by engaging with representatives from each area of influence in children's development, these being, families, community, environments, services, systems, policy and governance to promote the AEDC and the importance of the early years.

For further information on how to use the AEDC results, refer to the AEDC User Guides (www.aedc.gov.au/resources/using-aedc-data/user-guides-and-resources).

¹ The results published in this report may be different to previous National, state and territory reports due to changes in counting rules.

Figure 2: Developmental Categories

Developmentally on track

Children are considered to be developing well. As such, it is desirable to see percentage of children who are 'on track' increase with each new AEDC collection cycle.

Developmentally at risk

Children are facing challenges in some aspects of their development. Changes in the percentage of children 'at risk' need to be considered alongside changes in the percentage of children on track and vulnerable, e.g., a reduction in those who are developmentally vulnerable could coincide with an increase in those at risk which would signal an overall improvement. Alternatively, a reduction in those who are on track could coincide with an increase in those who are at risk which would signal an overall decline in development.

Developmentally vulnerable

Children are facing some significant challenges in their development. As such, it is desirable to see the percentage of children who are 'vulnerable' decrease with each new AEDC collection cycle.

How to compare results across years – critical difference

Changes in AEDC data look larger in some areas than in others, especially where there are small numbers of children. To support people to consider the size of the change in their area, a method has been developed called the 'critical difference'. The critical difference can also be used to explore changes over time in the summary indicators – Vuln 1 (DV1), Vuln 2 (DV2), and OT5. The 'critical difference tool' is available for use on the AEDC website (aedc.gov.au/crit-diff-com). The critical difference is the minimum percentage point change required between 2 collection cycles for the results to represent a 'significant change' in children's development. The critical difference varies slightly for the different AEDC indicators but is mainly determined by the number of children in the group being compared (e.g., state/territory, community, school). At a national level, where 260,000 children or more are captured in each AEDC cycle, the critical difference is 0.1 percentage points, so any change larger than this represents a significant change in child development. For large jurisdictions, such as New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland, where 50,000 to 100,000 children are captured in each AEDC cycle, the critical difference is 0.2 to 0.3 percentage points. For a smaller jurisdiction, such as Tasmania, ACT and Northern Territory, where 3,000 to 7,000 children are captured in each AEDC cycle, the critical difference is 0.5 to 1.3 percentage points. For a small community with 100 children, the AEDC results would need to shift by 4 to 7 percentage points to represent a significant shift in child development, depending on which AEDC indicator is of interest.

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

AEDC data from 2021 provides an insight into the early effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and families. ACT children who started school in 2021 experienced some disruption to their early learning participation. Our education systems responded and adapted their programs. For many families the pandemic enabled them to spend more time connecting with their children and their early learning experiences. AEDC data from this collection reflects both the challenges and the benefits during this time. This cohort experienced a 7-week school closure starting 24 March 2020, and a shift to remote learning for many preschools. Some families chose not to access early education and care at this time due to concerns about COVID-19, while other families increased attendance or began daycare as the government made it fee-free between 6 April 2020 and 28 June 2020.

For the following year until the time the AEDC was completed, families had varying experiences of the pandemic. For example some families faced unemployment/underemployment while others received more government financial supports than they had been able to access previously. There were many ongoing impacts on children's lives including changes to parents' employment situations and stress/anxiety levels, less opportunities for extended family interaction due to interstate/international travel restrictions and reduced development/support opportunities due to fewer or changed service offerings (e.g., libraries, playgroups, development checks, Child and Family Centres). These changes in the AEDC highlight the importance of ensuring younger cohorts are well supported over the coming years with a focus on mitigating impacts for families most affected in their access to employment, social support, and early education and care.

'Connect and Grow' playgroup in Westfield Belconnen



Capital Region Community Services (CRCS), formerly Belconnen Community Service, received a grant for an AEDC Community Partnership project as part of an ACT AEDC initiative aimed at improving early childhood development outcomes in the Belconnen region and supporting parents to engage with their children to promote their development.

CRCS began a weekly Connect and Grow playgroup in the Westfield Belconnen mall, providing a range of play-based experiences for children and families in the Belconnen region and the broader Canberra community. Multidisciplinary early childhood professionals were available during each session to support

the children and their families. Physiotherapists and Speech Pathologists from the University of Canberra Good Start in Life Project and Therapeutic Practitioners from the CRCS Family Foundations Program assisted in the playgroup interactions. ACT's Early Childhood Early Intervention partner EACH attended and were able to write referrals directly to EACH for families who were concerned about their child's development.

The educators role modelled play-based learning styles and demonstrated using sustainable resources that were recycled or repurposed. The collaboration created a safe and relaxed environment for families to access support they otherwise may not have received due to either a lack of knowledge of community supports, time commitments and difficulty with transport.

CASE STUDY

Oliver was born full term to loving first-time parents living in Canberra in 2016. Oliver's parents started to struggle with managing some challenging behaviour Oliver was displaying as he grew older and at the suggestion of a friend, they visited an ACT Child and Family Centre (CFC) soon after his second birthday.

At the CFC the intake worker connected the family with multiple supports including the Circle of Security Parenting Program, the Early Parenting Counselling Service and a local playgroup. After accessing these programs, Oliver's parents felt more supported in their parenting, developed their parenting skills and a greater support network around them. When Oliver was 3 he accessed free early education and care for 2 days a week through the 3-year-old initiative, until he began preschool. With this early start in quality education, Oliver was supported to develop his social skills, along with learning emotional regulation and how to engage with other adults and peers.

These skills and the support accessed by Oliver's parents meant that when starting kindergarten, the earlier concerns were minimised, and Oliver's teacher noted his development was within the range expected for children starting school. Oliver's teacher participated in the 2021 AEDC, contributing to the picture of early childhood development in their school and community.

Note: This case study is a fictional story not based on a real person. The scenario provides an example of a possible link between child development and the AEDC in the ACT context.



AEDC summary indicators

The AEDC has 3 summary indicators which are used to demonstrate how children are developing overall. The percentage of children who are developmentally on track on 5 domains, provides an indication of those children tracking as expected in their development. The children who are developmentally vulnerable on one or more domain(s) and developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains are at higher risk of poorer educational and wellbeing outcomes. Data for the summary indicators is provided in Figures 3 and 4.

Vuln 1 Developmentally vulnerable on one or more domain(s) (Vuln 1 or DV1): The percentage of children who are classified as developmentally vulnerable on one or more AEDC domain(s).

Vuln 2 Developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains (Vuln 2 or DV2): The percentage of children who are classified as developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more AEDC domains.

OT5 On track on 5 domains (OT5): This indicator measures the percentage of children developmentally on track on all 5 domains and complements the developmentally vulnerable summary indicators.



In considering the proportion of children who are developmentally on track on all 5 domains, it is important to note that the percentage of children not on track on all 5 domains includes:

- children who have a developmental vulnerability on one or more domain(s)
- children who are at risk in their development on one or more domain(s)
- those missing a domain score on one or more domain(s) due to the teacher not being able to answer at least 75 per cent of the items relevant to a domain.

Note this third summary indicator, on track on 5 domains, supports the National Agreement on Closing the Gap as a nationally agreed measure.

AEDC data shows that in 2021 almost half of ACT children were developmentally on track on 5 domains (47.3%, 2,615 children). This is less than the national result (54.8%) and a significant decrease from the 2018 ACT result (48.7%).

More than one in 4 (26.7%, 1,474 children) ACT children were developmentally vulnerable on one or more domain(s), while approximately 3 children in every kindergarten class

(13.3%, 735 children) were developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains. These increases in the percentages of ACT children developmentally vulnerable on one or more and 2 or more domains in 2021 compared to 2018 were statistically significant, which continues the trend of significant increases in these 2 AEDC summary indicators for the ACT since 2015. The percentages of children developmentally vulnerable on one or more or 2 or more domains in the ACT in 2021 were also higher than the corresponding results nationally.

These latest AEDC results reveal a concerning trend of a growing number of children in the ACT starting school with challenges in one or more areas of their development. This highlights the need for a coordinated response to promote optimal development in the early years. Many initiatives in the ACT early childhood space are actively aimed at improving developmental outcomes, such as quality early childhood education for 3-year-olds initiative, currently targeted and aimed to become universally available. The ACT Education Directorate have a comprehensive evaluation framework in place to support analysis of the impacts of this initiative for participating children over time.

Figure 3: National and ACT trends: Percentage of children developmentally on track on 5 domains

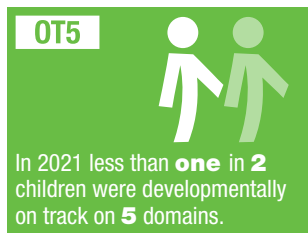
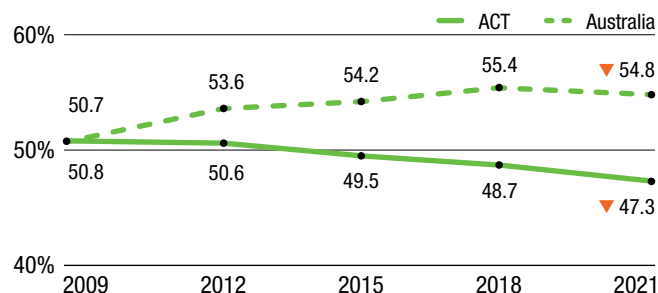
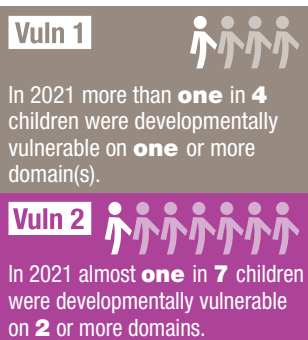
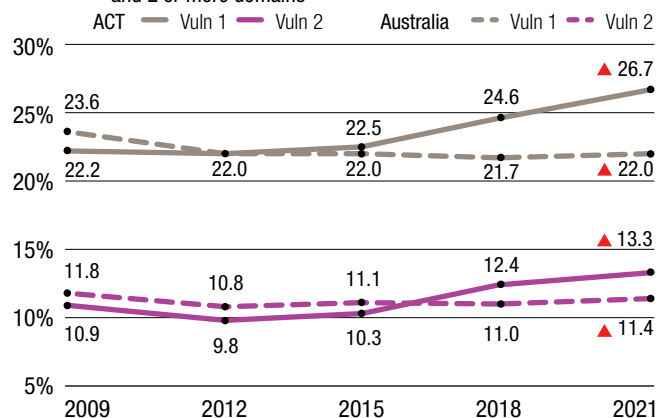


Figure 4: National and ACT trends: Percentage of children developmentally vulnerable on one or more domain(s) and 2 or more domains



Significance key for changes 2018 to 2021

- ▲ **Significant increase** (development worsening used for Vuln1, Vuln2, and vulnerable in domains)
- ▼ **Significant decrease** (development improving used for Vuln1, Vuln2, and vulnerable in domains)
- ▲ **Significant increase** (development improving used for OT5, and on track in domains)
- ▼ **Significant decrease** (development worsening used for OT5, and on track in domains)

Free quality early childhood education for 3-year-olds in ACT

A key initiative of the ACT Government's *Set up for Success: An Early Childhood Strategy for the ACT*, is providing places for priority 3-year-old children who could most benefit from accessing early education and care services from participating service providers across the ACT.

Children attend for 2 full days of early learning building their sense of belonging and engaging their families in services. In the first phase of this initiative up to 500 places are available for priority children, with an additional 100 places also available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 3-year-olds across the 5 Koori Preschools in the ACT.

The ACT Education Directorate, Community Services Directorate, Health Directorate, Canberra Health Services, Justice and Community Safety Directorate and community organisations are working together to identify priority children using a variety of methods, one being AEDC data. Eligible families are referred into the initiative.

As of June 2021, priority children were offered places through 18 providers representing 58 Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services and 101 children accessing early childhood education and care through the initiative. This model of delivery will expand to a universal provision for all 3-year-old children in early 2024.

ACT AEDC 2021 data and trends over the latest 3 cycles²

Physical health and wellbeing



This domain measures children's physical readiness for the school day, physical independence, and gross and fine motor skills.

The ACT trend shows a slight increase in the percentage of children developmentally on track, from 70.0 per cent in 2018 to 70.4 per cent in 2021. For 2021, the ACT trended in line with the national result, with the ACT over 8 percentage points lower than the national average of 78.5 per cent.

In the past 3 cycles the ACT has seen increases in children developmentally vulnerable in the physical health and wellbeing domain, with children in the ACT most likely to be developmentally vulnerable in this domain. In 2021, 12.8 per cent of ACT's children were developmentally vulnerable in this domain, a slight increase from 12.1 per cent in 2018.

Factors that support development in this domain include opportunities for children to practice fine and gross motor skills, food security and environments that foster physical independence and outdoor play.

2 Comprehensive data for each domain is available at Appendix 1.

Figure 5: Percentage of children developmentally on track, at risk and vulnerable on the physical health and wellbeing domain, ACT

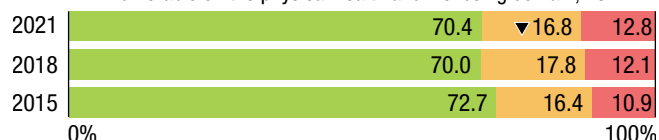
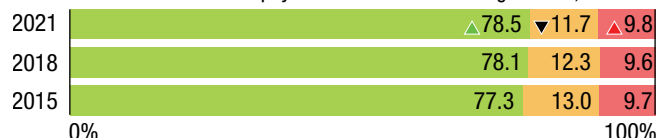


Figure 6: Percentage of children developmentally on track, at risk and vulnerable on the physical health and wellbeing domain, Australia



Social competence



This domain measures children's overall social competence, responsibility and respect, approaches to learning, and readiness to explore new things.

Since 2015 there has been a decreasing percentage of ACT children developmentally on track in the social competence domain, with 70.3 per cent in 2021. This is lower than the national percentage of 75.9 in 2021.

The percentage of ACT children who were developmentally vulnerable in this domain decreased very slightly from 12.3 per cent in 2018 to 12.2 per cent 2021. In comparison, nationally the children who were developmentally vulnerable in the social competence domain significantly decreased to 9.6 per cent in 2021 from 9.8 per cent in 2018.

Strategies that promote development in this domain include opportunities for play with peers, high quality early childhood education and/or playgroups and support for families in their parenting.

Figure 7: Percentage of children developmentally on track, at risk and vulnerable on the social competence domain, ACT



Figure 8: Percentage of children developmentally on track, at risk and vulnerable on the social competence domain, Australia



Emotional maturity



This domain measures children's pro-social and helping behaviour, anxious and fearful behaviour, aggressive behaviour and hyperactivity and inattention.

The percentage of ACT children developmentally on track in the emotional maturity domain has decreased from 76.1 per cent in 2018 to 73.9 per cent in 2021. Nationally this result has remained relatively stable since the previous 2018 cycle, and was 77.0 per cent in 2021.

The ACT has experienced increasing developmental vulnerability in the emotional maturity domain in recent cycles. In 2021 there was a significant increase with 10.6 per cent of ACT's children classified as developmentally vulnerable in the emotional maturity domain compared to 9.9 per cent in 2018. At a national level there was a slight although non-significant increase in the percentage of children developmentally vulnerable in this domain.

Promoting development in this domain may involve opportunities to practice emotional regulation across different settings, opportunities for play (e.g., playgroups, early education and care) and supportive adult interactions.

Figure 9: Percentage of children developmentally on track, at risk and vulnerable on the emotional maturity domain, ACT

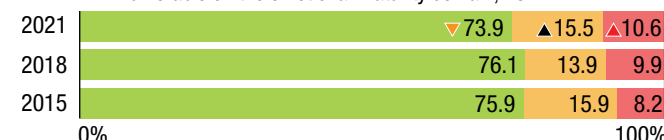


Figure 10: Percentage of children developmentally on track, at risk and vulnerable on the emotional maturity domain, Australia



Language and cognitive skills (school-based)



This domain measures children's basic literacy, advanced literacy, basic numeracy, and interest in literacy, numeracy and memory.

ACT children are most likely to be developmentally on track in the language and cognitive skills (school-based) domain. The percentage of ACT children developmentally on track has decreased from 84.2 per cent in 2018 to 83.4 per cent in 2021. This result is in line with the decreasing national result of 82.6 per cent in 2021.

The ACT trend since 2015 has seen increases in children developmentally vulnerable in this domain, with a slight increase to 6.5 per cent in 2021. The ACT has a lower level of developmental vulnerability compared to the national figure of 7.3 per cent which was a significant increase from 6.6 per cent in 2018.

Ideas to support development in this domain include providing language rich early environments, opportunities to practice memory, problem solving skills and creative thinking, exposure to reading and numerical concepts and access to quality early education services.

Communication skills and general knowledge



This domain measures children's communication skills and general knowledge based on broad developmental competencies and skills measured in the school context.

The ACT has experienced decreasing results in children developmentally on track in the communication skills and general knowledge domain, with 71.6 per cent in 2021. In contrast, the national result is 77.1, which is 5.5 percentage points higher than the ACT in 2021.

In 2021, the ACT experienced a significant increase to 9.2 per cent of children developmental vulnerability in the communication skills and general knowledge domain compared to 7.8 per cent in 2018. This result was in line with the national trend, which saw a significant increase in developmental vulnerability to 8.4 per cent. For the first time the ACT now reports higher levels of developmental vulnerability in the communication skills and general knowledge domain, compared to the national result.

Development in this domain may be enhanced by providing access to rich early learning environments such as libraries and playgroups and opportunities for listening, talking, storytelling and imaginative play.

Significance key for changes 2018 to 2021

- ▲ **Significant increase**
(development worsening used for Vuln1, Vuln2, and vulnerable in domains)
- ▼ **Significant decrease**
(development improving used for Vuln1, Vuln2, and vulnerable in domains)
- ▲ **Significant increase**
(development improving used for OT5, and on track in domains)
- ▼ **Significant decrease**
(development worsening used for OT5, and on track in domains)
- ▲ **Significant increase**
(used for developmentally at risk)
- ▼ **Significant decrease**
(used for developmentally at risk)

Note At risk significance symbols have not been colour coded as any changes should be interpreted in context with changes in the percentage of children who are vulnerable and on track.

Figure 11: Percentage of children developmentally on track, at risk and vulnerable on the language and cognitive skills (school-based) domain, ACT



Figure 12: Percentage of children developmentally on track, at risk and vulnerable on the language and cognitive skills (school-based) domain, Australia



Figure 13: Percentage of children developmentally on track, at risk and vulnerable on the communication skills and general knowledge domain, ACT



Figure 14: Percentage of children developmentally on track, at risk and vulnerable on the communication skills and general knowledge domain, Australia





Early childhood programs in Woden and the Molonglo Valley

Through a grant for an AEDC Community Partnership Project, Woden Community Service (WCS) undertook a range of initiatives aimed at improving early childhood development outcomes and family support in the Woden and Molonglo Valley areas.

Woden Community Service delivered a series of programs including:

- Four new free drop-in style outdoor Paint and Play playgroups, for families with children aged 0–5 years. WCS reviewed AEDC results in Woden and Molonglo Valley suburbs and used this to inform the location of these playgroups.
- Bush Play Connections, a semi-structured weekly family playgroup for children aged 0–4 years with a focus on nature play and connection to earth and country. Interwoven into the program was modelling developmentally appropriate language, strategies and foundational skills to scaffold competence over time and learning across the 5 AEDC domains.
- A Circle of Security Parenting course for a group of 6 families.
- A Multicultural Coffee Conversation group which engaged 10 parents of children aged 0–4 years and split into smaller groups to facilitate engagement. The groups acted as informal support groups aiming to reduce parenting stress and strengthen social bonds.

Together the 4 initiatives implemented by WCS successfully promoted early childhood development and supported families in the region.

ACT regional overview

Developmental vulnerability by AEDC Community (region)

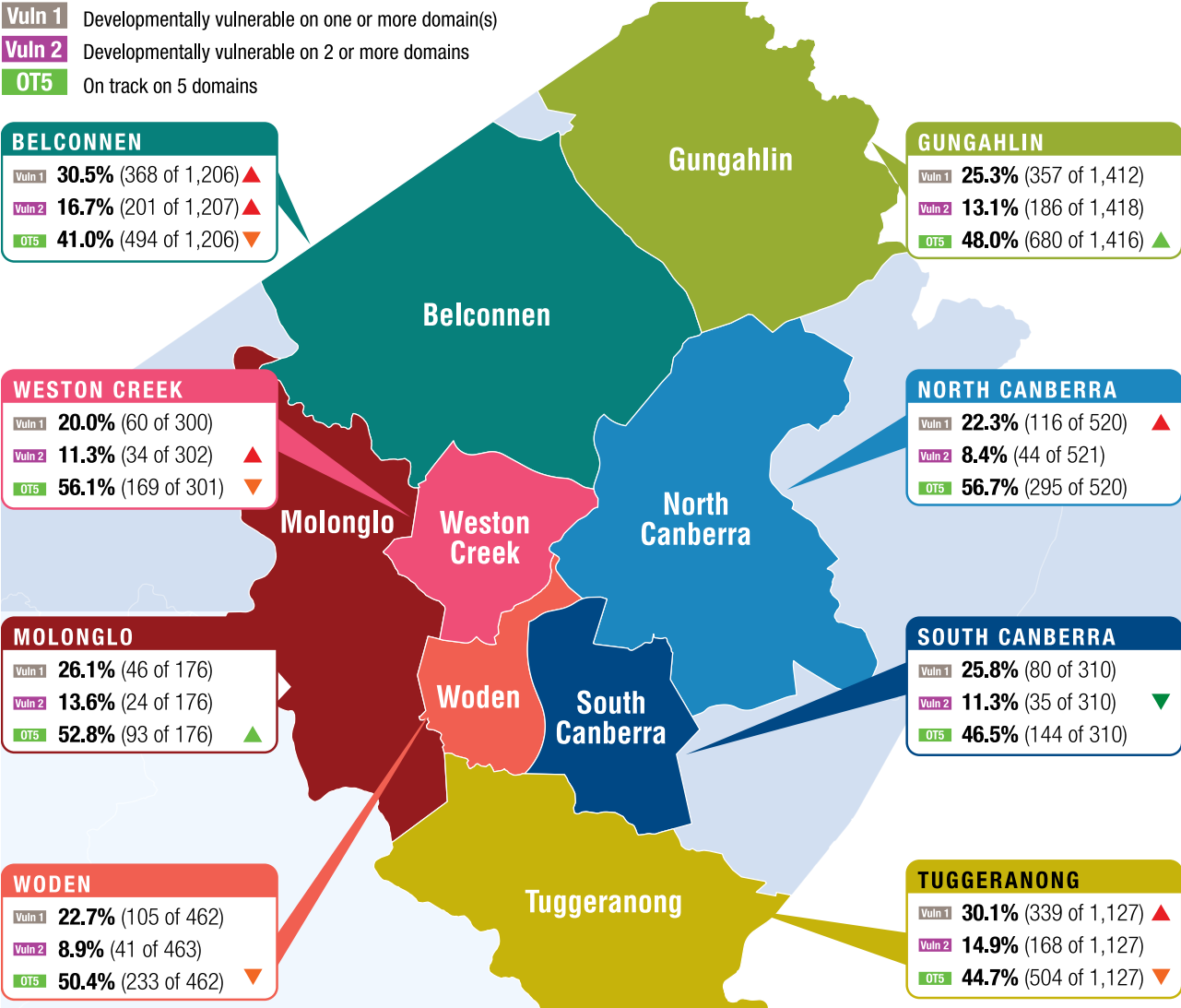
The AEDC reports data for 8 regions of the ACT: Belconnen, Gungahlin, Molonglo, North Canberra, South Canberra, Tuggeranong, Weston Creek and Woden.

AEDC publications refer to the ACT regions which are geographic areas, usually equivalent to a Local Government Area (LGA) as AEDC communities (e.g., on the AEDC website and national report). AEDC data is also collected for children living in the ACT but outside the 8 ACT regions in 'Regional ACT'. Due to small numbers, data for 'Regional ACT' is not provided in this report. The Molonglo region is still a developing area with the population expected to continue increasing across the next AEDC cycles. Further information on the local communities (suburbs or small area localities) within these ACT regions/AEDC communities can be found in community profiles and online maps from the AEDC website www.aedc.gov.au.

AEDC data show that Belconnen and Tuggeranong regions had the highest percentages of children developmentally vulnerable in 2021. In these regions, almost a third of children were developmentally vulnerable on one or more domain(s) and more than one in 7 were developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains (Figure 15).

The most populated regions of Belconnen, Tuggeranong and Gungahlin had the largest numbers of children developmentally vulnerable in 2021, with the majority of all children in the ACT who were developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains located in these 3 regions (Figure 15).

Figure 15: Developmental vulnerability by ACT region, 2021



Significance key for changes 2018 to 2021

▲ Significant increase (development worsening used for Vuln1, Vuln2, and vulnerable in domains)
▼ Significant decrease (development improving used for Vuln1, Vuln2, and vulnerable in domains)

▲ Significant increase (development improving used for OT5, and on track in domains)
▼ Significant decrease (development worsening used for OT5, and on track in domains)

The percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable on one or more domain(s) has increased significantly in 2021 compared to 2018 in the Belconnen, North Canberra and Tuggeranong regions. Over the same time period, there was a significant increase in the percentage of children developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains in Belconnen, South Canberra and Weston Creek (Figure 15).

There has been a significant decrease since 2018 in the percentage of children developmentally on track on 5 domains in the Belconnen, Tuggeranong, Weston Creek and Woden regions as compared to 2021. While

Gungahlin saw a significant increase across this time in the percentage of children developmentally on track on 5 domains (Figure 15).

The ACT Community Services Directorate (CSD) is planning to present further trend analysis of the ACT regions to ACT stakeholders, schools, ECECs and the community groups throughout the second half of 2022.

We will release a time series module in early 2023 covering detailed trend analysis within the ACT context developed in partnership with ACT stakeholders and the community, for more information or to be involved contact the ACT AEDC Coordinator at aedc@act.gov.au.



A Village for Every Child Belconnen

A Village for Every Child (A Village) is located in Belconnen (ACT).

A Village is an initiative that aims to identify issues facing young families and transform early childhood systems across Belconnen. The Village initiative is jointly funded and supported by the local community services sector and the ACT Government.

It is being approached collaboratively with families, communities, child and family support providers and government agencies to identify and address the issues facing families with young children.

By working together using a collective impact framework the community is stronger, more connected and better placed to meet the needs of children and families.

The percentage of children developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains in Belconnen has been steadily increasing across the last 3 AEDC cycles (2015: 12.1%, 2018: 14.3%, 2021: 16.7%).

It is hoped that by focussing collectively on supporting children and their families in this region that we will begin to reverse this trend.

Specific population groups in the ACT

The ACT CSD is planning to release a series of further AEDC modules in early 2023 covering detailed information about specific population groups and trend analysis within the ACT context. These modules will be developed in partnership with ACT stakeholders and the community, for more information contact the ACT AEDC Coordinator at aedc@act.gov.au.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

In 2021, 188 (3.2%) ACT children included in the AEDC identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. The ACT has seen this population increase every cycle since 2012. In 2018 approximately half of ACT's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (49.1 per cent) were developmentally vulnerable on one or more domain(s); in 2021 this decreased significantly to 43.0 per cent.

The percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains also decreased significantly from 30.2 per cent in 2018 to 25.7 per cent in 2021.

There has also been a corresponding increase from 2018 to 2021 in the percentage of ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children developmentally on track on all 5 AEDC domains from 26.4 per cent in 2018 to 27.3 per cent in 2021.

This is a nationally reported Closing the Gap measure (Indicator 4). While results for ACT's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are encouraging for 2021, the results need to be interpreted with caution due to small numbers which are prone to fluctuation between cycles, and noting more still needs to be done to close the gap.

Table 1 AEDC summary indicators (%) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the ACT

	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021
Vuln 1	37.0	45.4	41.9	49.1	▼ 43.0
Vuln 2	26.0	26.3	28.7	30.2	▼ 25.7
OT5	41.0	32.0	31.0	26.4	27.3

Figure 16: Percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the ACT developmentally vulnerable on one or more domain(s) and 2 or more domains

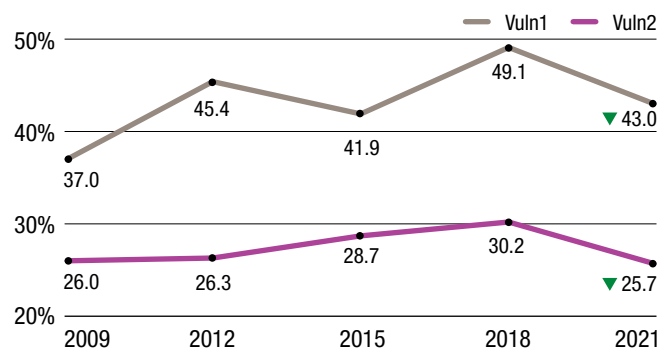
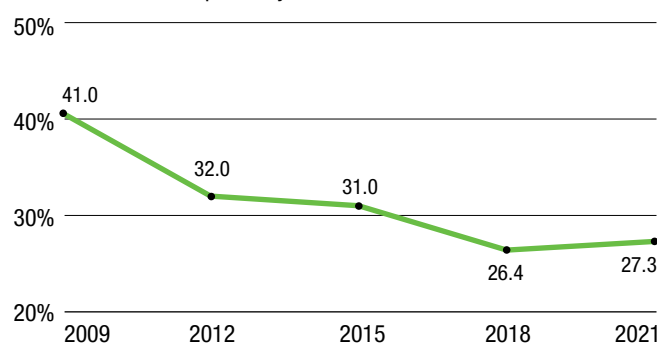


Figure 17: Percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the ACT developmentally on track 5 domains



Measuring impact — ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019–2028 (the Agreement)

The Agreement upholds the principle of self-determination and supports Canberra's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to influence and participate in social, cultural and economic life. The Agreement was developed through extensive conversations with the community. Children and Young People are one of the 4 core areas in the Agreement, focusing on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people growing up safely in their families and communities. The Outcomes Framework has been developed to track performance with the AEDC being recognised as a key predictor of future outcomes for children and aligning with the use of the 'developmentally on track on all 5 AEDC domains' outcome measure included in the Closing the Gap targets. The Outcomes Framework is continuing to be developed using the AEDC measure, alongside other measures such as Kindergarten Health Check to allow an annual tracking of progress.

Children with a language background other than English



In the AEDC, children are classified as having a language background other than English (LBOTE) if they speak a language other than English at home, or if they speak English at home but are still considered to have an English as a Second Language (ESL) status. It is possible for children to be both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and have a LBOTE.

In 2021, a total of 1,618 ACT children (27.9%) were reported as having a LBOTE, a small increase from 1,557 (27.2%) in 2018. This 2021 ACT figure is higher than the equivalent national figure of 26.8 per cent. The percentage of children in the ACT with a LBOTE who are proficient in English decreased from 89.3 per cent in 2018 to 87.5 per cent 2021. Children with a LBOTE who are not proficient in English are more likely to be developmentally vulnerable and this will be explored further in the series of ACT AEDC modules to be released in early 2023 by the ACT CSD.

The percentage of children who were identified as having a LBOTE who were developmentally vulnerable on one or more domain(s) has increased significantly between 2018 and 2021 (2018: 27.3%, 2021: 30.0%). Across the same time period the percentage of children with a LBOTE who

were developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains remained relatively stable (2018: 14.6%, 2021: 14.7%), and the percentage of children with a LBOTE who were on track on 5 domains showed a small decrease (2018: 43.3%, 2021: 42.3%).

Table 2 AEDC summary indicators for children with a LBOTE in the ACT

	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021
Vuln 1	32.0	28.3	28.0	27.3	▲ 30.0
Vuln 2	16.6	13.4	13.0	14.6	14.7
OT5	41.3	44.6	41.8	43.3	42.3

Figure 18: Percentage of children with a LBOTE in the ACT developmentally vulnerable on one or more domain(s) and 2 or more domains

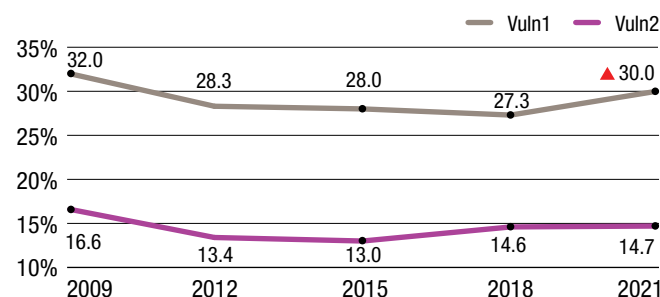
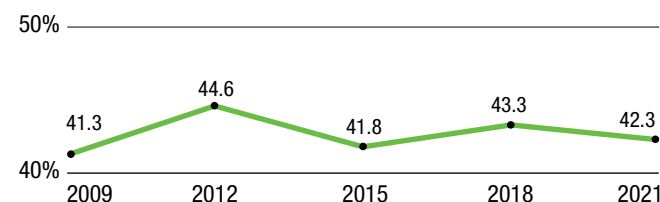


Figure 19: Percentage of children with a LBOTE in the ACT developmentally on track on 5 domains



UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA

AEDC plays critical role in Good Start in Life for Young Children research project

A Medical Research Futures Fund has been granted to the Health Research Institute at the University of Canberra (UC). The aim of this project is to identify areas of unmet need for families and children aged 0–5 years and to develop and evaluate community co-designed interventions aimed at improving early childhood development outcomes for those most at risk. The AEDC is a critical piece in this research project to support the targeting of intervention to local communities with high levels of developmentally vulnerable children. The project supports early childhood development and connection in the Belconnen community. A series of “pop up” loose parts play sessions were held at Belconnen parks with attendance from speech and occupational therapists and students. Loose parts play involves providing children with open-ended materials to stimulate their creativity and imagination. These sessions were successful in engaging local families, promoting strategies to support children’s development and linking parents and caregivers with services.

Children with special needs

Children requiring special assistance because of chronic medical, physical or intellectually disabling conditions based on a diagnosis/diagnoses (e.g., autism, cerebral palsy, down syndrome) are defined in the AEDC as having 'special needs'. Teachers complete the AEDC for children with special needs but these children's results are not included in calculations of domain scores or summary indicators.

The 2021 AEDC data show that the percentage of children in the ACT who had a special needs diagnosis increased by 0.4 percentage points compared to 2018. The 2021 percentage of 4.4 is a return close to the 2015 figure of 4.3 per cent after the decrease to 4.0 per cent in 2018. The percentage of children with special needs in 2021 was lower in the ACT (4.4%) than the national figure (5.2%).

Figure 20: Percentage of children with special needs in the ACT and Australia

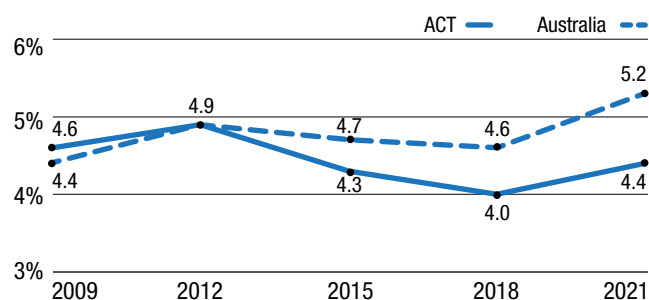


Table 3 Children with special needs in the ACT and Australia

	2009	2012	2015	2018	ACT 2021	Australia 2021
No.	204	238	234	229	258	15,895
%	4.6	4.9	4.3	4.0	4.4	5.2

Children needing further assessment

Children identified by teachers as 'needing further assessment' are children that are currently being assessed or need further assessment (e.g., medical and physical, behaviour management, emotional and cognitive development) based on information provided to the teacher by a parent/guardian, professional or through teacher observation. This group may also include children who are already assessed as having special needs.

In 2021, 989 ACT children were determined as needing further assessment, this is approximately 4 children in every kindergarten class. Of the 989 children identified as needing further assessment in 2021, only a small number (81) of children already had a special needs diagnosis. There continues to be a growing percentage of ACT children whose teachers indicated they need further assessment (2015: 11.0%, 2018: 14.7%, 2021: 17.6%).

The 2021 AEDC data show that the percentage of children in the ACT needing further assessment increased by 2.9 percentage points compared to 2018. The percentage of children requiring further assessment in 2021 was also higher in the ACT (17.6%) than the national figure (16.3%) but again in line with the national increasing trend. Contributing factors may include the impact of the Early Years Intervention approach for the NDIS and associated changes to the service system and/or the COVID-19 pandemic when diagnostic assessments were less accessible.

Children requiring further assessment are much more likely to be developmentally vulnerable. These data and trends will be explored further in a focus module to be released in early 2023 by the ACT CSD.

Figure 21: Percentage of children needing further assessment in the ACT and Australia

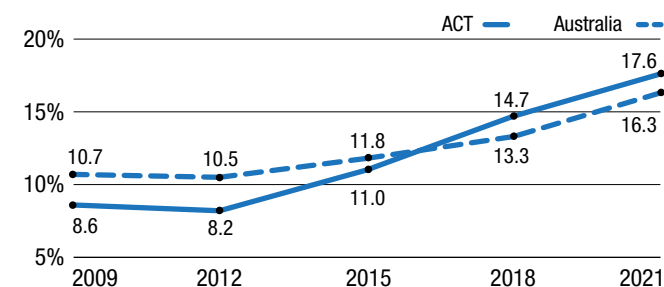


Table 4 Children needing further assessment in the ACT and Australia

	2009	2012	2015	2018	ACT 2021	Australia 2021
No.	373	394	581	816	989	47,913
%	8.6	8.2	11.0	14.7	17.6	16.3

Note: Percentages of ACT children needing further assessment may have changed slightly from previously reported figures due to reporting differences in baseline numbers.



Early education and care experience

The percentage of ACT children attending daycare has increased steadily since 2009, with more than half (52.1%) of children attending in 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the 2021 AEDC cohort experienced changes in their access to Early Education and Care from late March 2020 onwards in their year prior to entering school. This included remote learning for 7 weeks for school-based preschools and some parents decisions to reduce or increase daycare attendance in response to the pandemic and/or daycare becoming fee-free for a period between April and June 2020.

Grandparent care is becoming more popular, with significantly higher proportion of children now accessing childcare from a grandparent than in 2009 (21.0% in 2021, 3.9% 2009). However, the slight decrease from 22.2 per cent in 2018 to 21.0 per cent in 2021 may be associated with restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 5 ACT early education and care experience (%)

ECEC	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021
Preschool	93.9	97.8	96.9	97.0	97.3
Day care	28.4	35.5	39.6	49.8	52.1
Childcare from grandparent	3.9	15.8	17.2	22.2	21.0

Preschool attendance

Schools and teachers completing the AEDC are asked to indicate, to the best of their knowledge, whether children have attended a preschool program in the year before entering full-time school. This includes preschool programs in both school-based and day care settings.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the 2021 AEDC cohort experienced changes in their access to preschool experience from late March to late May 2020 as school-based preschool changed to remote learning and some families chose to reduce or cease their children's attendance at preschool in day care settings while other families chose to increase or begin day care as it became fee-free for a period between April and June 2020, or family situations changed.

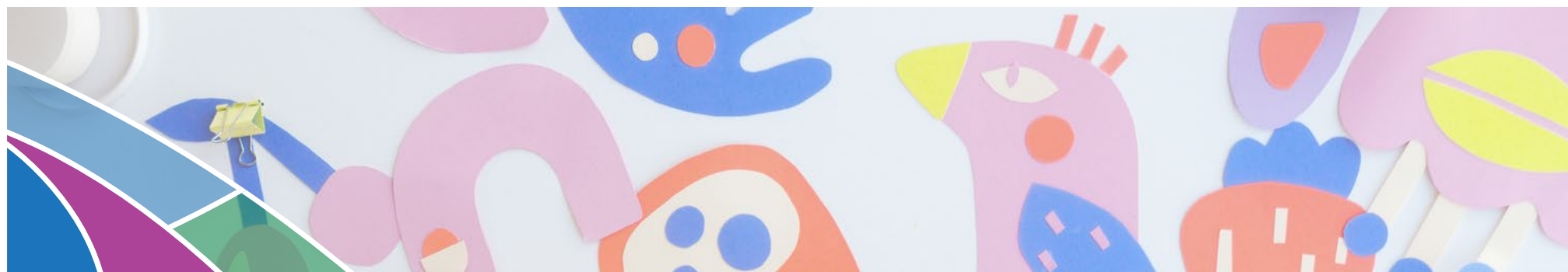
AEDC data show that the proportion of children in the ACT who are recorded by their school or teacher as having attended a preschool program in the year before starting full-time school is remaining high, with 97.3 per cent attending in 2021 (Table 6).

The proportion of children in the ACT who did not, to the best of their school and teacher's knowledge, attend a preschool program before starting full-time school has decreased from 6.1 per cent in 2009 to 2.7 per cent in 2021 (from 242 children in 2009 to 147 children in 2021).

ACT 2021 AEDC data show that the small group of children who were identified as not attending a preschool program before starting full-time school were more likely to be developmentally vulnerable than children who did attend a preschool program (Table 6).

Table 6 ACT preschool attendance and AEDC summary indicators

Program attended		2009	2012	2015	2018	2021
Attended a preschool	No.	3,720	4,314	4,743	5,137	5,309
	%	93.9	97.8	96.9	97.0	97.3
	Vuln 1	20.6	21.0	21.1	23.6	26.0
	Vuln 2	10.1	9.4	9.6	11.8	12.8
	OT5	52.7	51.5	50.8	49.6	48.2
Didn't attend a preschool	No.	242	98	151	160	147
	%	6.1	2.2	3.1	3.0	2.7
	Vuln 1	29.5	34.1	42.4	46.7	44.4
	Vuln 2	16.7	13.3	25.4	29.3	31.1
	OT5	48.5	47.3	36.0	33.3	27.4



Transition to school indicators

In 2021, the majority (94.2%) of children included in the AEDC in the ACT had parents or caregivers who were considered by their child's teacher to be actively engaged with the school in supporting their child's learning.

This is a slight decrease from 94.6 per cent in 2018 (Table 7) which contributes to a very stable trend for ACT.

The majority (88.7%) of children included in the AEDC in the ACT were also considered by their child's teacher to be regularly read to/encouraged in their reading at home. This is a decrease from 91.1 per cent in 2018.

The vast majority (96.4%) of ACT children were reported by their teacher to be adapting to school in 2021.

Table 7 ACT parent and caregiver engagement (%)

	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021
Actively engaged with the school in supporting their child's learning [#]	94.1	94.1	94.4	94.6	94.2
Regularly read to/encouraged in their reading at home [#]	93.5	93.3	91.9	91.1	88.7
Children who are adapting to school [#]	98.4	97.6	97.6	96.3	96.4

[#] Respondent answered 'somewhat true' or 'very true'.

School type

In 2021, 68.6 per cent (3,975 children) of children included in the AEDC were attending a government school and 31.4 per cent (1,821) were attending a non-government (Catholic or independent) school. This is a slight decrease from 2018 when 70.0 per cent (4,000) were attending government schools (Table 8).

Previous AEDC cycles have shown that children attending a government school are more likely to be developmentally vulnerable than children attending a non-government school; this will be explored further in the series of ACT AEDC modules to be released in early 2023 by the ACT CSD.

Table 8 School type for ACT children

School type	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021
Government	No. 2,809	3,168	3,636	4,000	3,975
	% 63.6	64.8	67.3	70.0	68.6
Non-government (Catholic, independent)	No. 1,609	1,721	1,769	1,713	1,821
	% 36.4	35.2	32.7	30.0	31.4

Socio-economic advantage

AEDC data was compared to 2016 Socio-Economic Indexes for Area (SEIFA) data. SEIFA is a product developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics that ranks areas in Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage. The indexes are based on information from the 5-yearly Census of Population and Housing.

The 2021 AEDC data show that ACT children living in more advantaged Local Communities (suburbs) had increased percentages of developmental vulnerability on one or more and 2 or more domain(s) (Table 9). It is evident that children living in ACT suburbs with relative socio-economic advantage experience a lower percentage of developmental vulnerability than their peers living in ACT suburbs with relative socio-economic disadvantage.

A similar trend was evident in the percentage of children developmentally on track on 5 domains across the quintiles, with less children developmentally on track in the most disadvantaged quintiles. These trends will be explored further in the series of ACT AEDC modules looking at changes in demographics and social economic factors to be released by CSD in early 2023.

Table 9 Relationship between SEIFA data and AEDC summary indicators in the ACT, 2021

	SEIFA quintile		
	1-3 Most disadvantaged	4 Least disadvantaged	5
No. of children	1,178	1,513	2,821
Vuln 1	30.3%	▲ 29.5%	▲ 23.3%
Vuln 2	15.3%	14.9%	▲ 11.3%
OT5	▼ 42.4%	44.1%	51.3%



Significance key for changes 2018 to 2021

- ▲ **Significant increase** (development worsening used for Vuln1, Vuln2, and vulnerable in domains)
- ▼ **Significant decrease** (development improving used for Vuln1, Vuln2, and vulnerable in domains)
- ▲ **Significant increase** (development improving used for OT5, and on track in domains)
- ▼ **Significant decrease** (development worsening used for OT5, on track on 5 domains)



Libraries ACT

Libraries, face-to-face public programs were impacted by COVID-19 throughout 2020–21 with various programs being delivered online instead, including popular 0–5-year-old children's activities Story Time and Giggle & Wiggle.

In 2022 Libraries ACT has developed a wide range of in person activities for children and their families. New activities include:

- Sensory Story time — aimed at children who are living with autism or who are living with challenges related to sensory experiences.
- Nourishing Little Minds — designed to explore healthy food through song, stories and a few giggles.
- Bilingual Story Time and Giggle & Wiggle (songs, dance and rhymes).
- Look Who's Talking workshops — developed by the Tasmanian Education Directorate with speech pathologists, play therapists and early childhood teachers in response to Language and Communication AEDC data. It explores 8 different ways to interact with your children to increase language and pre-literacy development and build positive parenting practices.
- Using and Accessing First Readers — parent information sessions about supporting children's reading journey at home, including how to find books at the right level they will enjoy.

These programs target early literacy and relate to development in the AEDC domains of language and cognitive skills (school-based) and communication skills and general knowledge.

Appendix 1: ACT AEDC 2021 data

Table 10 AEDC profile of ACT students and Australia

		ACT										Australia									
		2009		2012		2015		2018		2021		2009		2012		2015		2018		2021	
Category	Sub-category	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Children who completed AEDC (based on school state)	Total ³	4,611	104.2 ⁴	5,106	99.9	5,604	99.3	5,886	98.2	5,951	98.4	261,147	97.5	289,973	96.5	302,003	96.5	308,953	96.4	305,015	95.5
	Total living in ACT	4,425	-	4,898	-	5,415	-	5,727	-	5,803	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Teachers contributing to the results		265	-	277	-	306	-	320	-	360	-	15,522	-	16,425	-	16,968	-	17,508	-	17,571	-
Mean age of children		5 yrs 7 mths		5 yrs 8 mths		5 yrs 7 mths		5 yrs 8 mths		5 yrs 7 mths		5 yrs 7 mths		5 yrs 7 mths		5 yrs 7 mths		5 yrs 7 mths		5 yrs 7 mths	
Sex	Male children	2,291	51.8	2,570	52.5	2,751	50.8	2,931	51.2	2,992	51.6	134,031	51.3	148,985	51.4	154,846	51.3	158,894	51.4	156,737	51.4
	Female children	2,134	48.2	2,328	47.5	2,664	49.2	2,796	48.8	2,811	48.4	127,116	48.7	140,988	48.6	147,157	48.7	150,059	48.6	148,278	48.6
Children born in another country		340	7.7	501	10.2	502	9.3	523	9.5	454	7.8	16,834	6.5	21,675	7.5	21,212	7.1	22,971	7.5	17,908	5.9
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children		109	2.5	117	2.4	145	2.7	172	3.1	188	3.2	12,416	4.8	15,490	5.3	17,351	5.7	19,074	6.2	20,646	6.8
Children with a LBOTE	Total	757	17.1	962	19.6	1,223	22.6	1,557	27.2	1,618	27.9	46,967	18.0	55,489	19.1	64,881	21.5	78,298	25.3	81,885	26.8
	Proficient in English	623	83.1	808	85.7	1,042	85.6	1,381	89.2	1,408	87.3	38,513	83.3	46,880	85.3	56,127	87.1	68,885	88.5	71,882	88.3
	Not proficient in English	125	16.7	129	13.7	172	14.1	166	10.7	201	12.5	7,596	16.4	7,893	14.4	8,252	12.8	8,766	11.3	9,410	11.6
Children reported as having diagnosed special needs		204	4.6	238	4.9	234	4.3	229	4.0	258	4.4	11,484	4.4	14,173	4.9	14,065	4.7	14,059	4.6	15,895	5.2
Children identified by teachers as requiring further assessment		373	8.6*	394	8.2*	581	11.0*	816	14.7*	989	17.6	27,218	10.7	29,628	10.5	34,793	11.8	39,861	13.3	47,913	16.3

* Note that the percentages of ACT children needing further assessment may have changed slightly from previously reported figures due to reporting differences in baseline numbers.

³ Demographic data presented in this row of the table is based on state/territory of the school a child was attending, not the residence of the child. The remaining data in the AEDC is reported based on the residence of the child i.e population of children living in the ACT (ACT kindergarten students) and excludes those attending ACT schools who reside in NSW.

⁴ More children were included based on school state in the ACT than the estimated number of eligible children based on residence i.e., includes NSW children attending ACT schools.

AEDC summary indicators

Table 11 Summary indicators

Cat.	Sub-cat.	OT5										Vuln 1										Vuln 2									
		2009		2012		2015		2018		2021		2009		2012		2015		2018		2021		2009		2012		2015		2018		2021	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
ACT		2,127	50.8	2,332	50.6	2,556	49.5	2,667	48.7	2,615	▼47.3	927	22.2	1,010	22.0	1,161	22.5	1,350	24.6	1,474	▲26.7	456	10.9	454	9.8	531	10.3	680	12.4	735	▲13.3
Australia		125,130	50.7	146,362	53.6	155,238	54.2	162,440	55.4	157,436	▼54.8	58,036	23.6	59,933	22.0	62,960	22.0	63,448	21.7	63,264	▲22.0	29,227	11.8	29,543	10.8	31,754	11.1	32,434	11.0	32,718	▲11.4
Region	Belconnen	520	49.0	607	49.3	618	47.5	598	47.4	494	▼41.0	246	23.2	268	21.9	327	25.1	333	26.4	368	▲30.5	131	12.3	123	10.0	158	12.1	180	14.3	201	▲16.7
	Gungahlin	370	50.5	399	46.3	609	52.5	595	44.6	680	▲48.0	173	23.6	192	22.3	266	23.0	331	24.8	357	25.3	77	10.5	88	10.2	113	9.8	158	11.8	186	13.1
	Molonglo	-	-	-	-	17	58.6	49	43.8	93	▲52.8	-	-	-	-	6	20.7	23	20.5	46	26.1	-	-	-	-	4	13.8	14	12.5	24	13.6
	Nth Canberra	190	46.7	212	49.6	256	52.9	272	53.8	295	56.7	93	22.9	75	17.7	94	19.4	92	18.2	116	▲22.3	48	11.8	36	8.4	45	9.3	46	9.1	44	8.4
	Sth Canberra	131	58.0	163	62.7	145	55.1	132	45.7	144	46.5	28	12.4	52	20.2	52	19.8	82	28.4	80	25.8	15	6.6	28	10.8	20	7.6	46	15.9	35	▼11.3
	Tuggeranong	568	49.7	576	50.8	523	46.2	556	47.6	504	▼44.7	256	22.4	278	24.6	247	21.8	316	27.0	339	▲30.1	117	10.2	126	11.1	111	9.8	163	13.9	168	14.9
	Weston Ck	147	50.9	149	49.0	164	53.9	198	62.7	169	▼56.1	80	27.9	67	22.0	61	20.1	52	16.5	60	20.0	45	15.5	24	7.9	34	11.1	17	5.4	34	▲11.3
	Woden	215	58.9	222	58.0	221	45.8	264	54.3	233	▼50.4	65	17.8	77	20.2	106	22.0	118	24.3	105	22.7	30	8.2	29	7.6	44	9.1	54	11.1	41	8.9
Sex	Male	900	42.0	1,018	43.0	1,035	40.2	1,140	41.2	1,082	▼38.8	621	29.0	663	28.1	755	29.4	879	31.7	952	▲34.2	324	15.1	332	14.0	388	15.1	481	17.4	515	▲18.5
	Female	1,227	60.1	1,314	58.6	1,521	58.7	1,527	56.3	1,533	56.0	306	15.0	347	15.5	406	15.7	471	17.4	522	▲19.1	132	6.5	122	5.4	143	5.5	199	7.3	220	8.0

* Molonglo: 2009 and 2012 data are not available due to it being a new region.

Significance key for changes 2018 to 2021

- ▲ **Significant increase**
(development worsening used for Vuln1, Vuln2, and vulnerable in domains)
- ▲ **Significant increase**
(development improving used for OT5, and on track in domains)
- ▲ **Significant increase**
(used for developmentally at risk)

- ▼ **Significant decrease**
(development improving used for Vuln1, Vuln2, and vulnerable in domains)
- ▼ **Significant decrease**
(development worsening used for OT5, and on track in domains)
- ▼ **Significant decrease**
(used for developmentally at risk)

Note At risk significance symbols have not been colour coded as any changes should be interpreted in context with changes in the percentage of children who are vulnerable and on track.

Physical health and wellbeing

Table 12 Physical health and wellbeing domain

Cat.	Sub-cat.	Developmentally on track										Developmentally at risk										Developmentally vulnerable									
		2009		2012		2015		2018		2021		2009		2012		2015		2018		2021		2009		2012		2015		2018		2021	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
ACT		3,202	76.3	3,358	72.6	3,755	72.7	3,840	70.0	3,898	70.4	601	14.3	780	16.9	846	16.4	978	17.8	929	▼16.8	395	9.4	490	10.6	564	10.9	666	12.1	708	12.8
Australia		192,031	77.7	211,806	77.3	221,855	77.3	229,542	78.1	226,006	▲78.5	32,157	13.0	36,637	13.4	37,347	13.0	36,105	12.3	33,677	11.7	23,044	9.3	25,479	9.3	27,711	9.7	28,247	9.6	28,341	▲9.8
Region	Belconnen	774	72.7	882	71.4	906	69.6	885	70.1	751	▼62.2	178	16.7	208	16.8	238	18.3	215	17.0	263	▲21.8	112	10.5	145	11.7	158	12.1	162	12.8	193	▲16.0
	Gungahlin	527	72.0	595	68.9	896	77.3	886	66.4	1,011	▲71.1	122	16.7	175	20.3	143	12.3	275	20.6	235	▼16.5	83	11.3	94	10.9	120	10.4	174	13.0	175	12.3
	Molonglo*	-	-	-	-	23	79.3	86	76.8	136	77.3	-	-	-	-	4	13.8	15	13.4	22	12.5	-	-	-	-	2	6.9	11	9.8	18	10.2
	Nth Canberra	314	76.8	302	70.4	354	73.1	372	73.5	398	76.4	59	14.4	81	18.9	83	17.1	93	18.4	68	▼13.1	36	8.8	46	10.7	47	9.7	41	8.1	55	10.6
	Sth Canberra	188	82.8	218	83.5	203	77.2	187	64.7	215	▲69.4	27	11.9	21	8.0	36	13.7	67	23.2	60	19.4	12	5.3	22	8.4	24	9.1	35	12.1	35	11.3
	Tuggeranong	884	77.3	829	72.8	782	69.0	788	67.4	797	▲70.7	150	13.1	193	16.9	219	19.3	215	18.4	157	▼13.9	110	9.6	117	10.3	132	11.7	166	14.2	173	15.4
	Weston Ck	230	78.8	218	71.2	236	76.9	262	82.4	797	70.7	33	11.3	49	16.0	37	12.1	35	11.0	42	13.9	29	9.9	39	12.7	34	11.1	21	6.6	23	7.6
	Woden	303	82.1	307	79.9	352	72.9	370	76.1	349	75.4	42	11.4	51	13.3	86	17.8	61	12.6	79	▲17.1	24	6.5	26	6.8	45	9.3	55	11.3	35	▼7.6
Sex	Male	1,536	71.5	1,617	68.1	1,756	68.2	1,815	65.5	1,844	66.0	341	15.9	428	18.0	435	16.9	516	18.6	489	17.5	270	12.6	328	13.8	383	14.9	439	15.8	459	16.4
	Female	1,666	81.2	1,741	77.2	1,999	77.2	2,025	74.6	2,054	74.9	260	12.7	352	15.6	411	15.9	462	17.0	440	16.0	125	6.1	162	7.2	181	7.0	227	8.4	249	9.1

* Molonglo: 2009 and 2012 data are not available due to it being a new region.

Significance key for changes 2018 to 2021

- ▲ **Significant increase**
(development worsening used for Vuln1, Vuln2, and vulnerable in domains)
- ▲ **Significant increase**
(development improving used for OT5, and on track in domains)
- ▲ **Significant increase**
(used for developmentally at risk)

- ▼ **Significant decrease**
(development improving used for Vuln1, Vuln2, and vulnerable in domains)
- ▼ **Significant decrease**
(development worsening used for OT5, and on track in domains)
- ▼ **Significant decrease**
(used for developmentally at risk)

Note At risk significance symbols have not been colour coded as any changes should be interpreted in context with changes in the percentage of children who are vulnerable and on track.



Social competence

Table 13 Social competence domain

Cat.	Sub-cat.	Developmentally on track										Developmentally at risk										Developmentally vulnerable									
		2009		2012		2015		2018		2021		2009		2012		2015		2018		2021		2009		2012		2015		2018		2021	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
ACT		3,142	74.9	3,489	75.5	3,845	74.5	3,969	72.4	3,893	▼ 70.3	683	16.3	734	15.9	836	16.2	841	15.3	966	▲ 17.5	372	8.9	396	8.6	483	9.4	674	12.3	675	12.2
Australia		186,265	75.4	209,149	76.5	215,605	75.2	222,771	75.8	218,679	▲ 75.9	37,499	15.2	39,018	14.3	42,892	15.0	42,434	14.4	41,528	14.4	23,425	9.5	25,367	9.3	28,351	9.9	28,673	9.8	27,788	▼ 9.6
Region	Belconnen	781	73.5	952	77.2	945	72.6	900	71.3	804	▼ 66.6	177	16.7	181	14.7	218	16.7	198	15.7	227	▲ 18.8	105	9.9	100	8.1	139	10.7	164	13.0	176	▲ 14.6
	Gungahlin	572	78.1	638	74.1	882	76.2	950	71.2	1,002	70.6	102	13.9	148	17.2	176	15.2	216	16.2	258	▲ 18.2	58	7.9	75	8.7	100	8.6	169	12.7	160	▼ 11.3
	Molonglo*	-	-	-	-	22	75.9	78	69.6	132	▲ 75.0	-	-	-	-	2	6.9	21	18.8	20	▼ 11.4	-	-	-	-	5	17.2	13	11.6	24	13.6
	Nth Canberra	304	74.3	328	76.6	367	75.8	380	75.1	399	76.6	72	17.6	69	16.1	73	15.1	76	15.0	91	17.5	33	8.1	31	7.2	44	9.1	50	9.9	31	▼ 6.0
	Sth Canberra	191	84.1	209	80.1	202	76.8	194	67.1	230	▲ 74.2	23	10.1	34	13.0	43	16.3	42	14.5	45	14.5	13	5.7	18	6.9	18	6.8	53	18.3	35	▼ 11.3
	Tuggeranong	822	71.9	832	73.2	832	73.4	829	70.9	752	▼ 66.7	214	18.7	183	16.1	198	17.5	186	15.9	205	▲ 18.2	108	9.4	122	10.7	103	9.1	154	13.2	170	▲ 15.1
	Weston Ck	212	72.6	228	74.8	234	76.2	267	84.0	226	▼ 74.8	42	14.4	51	16.7	44	14.3	35	11.0	42	13.9	38	13.0	26	8.5	29	9.4	16	5.0	34	▲ 11.3
	Woden	288	78.0	297	77.3	358	74.1	368	75.7	343	74.1	58	15.7	63	16.4	82	17.0	65	13.4	78	▲ 16.8	23	6.2	24	6.3	43	8.9	53	10.9	42	9.1
Sex	Male	1,445	67.3	1,624	68.6	1,714	66.6	1,800	65.0	1,723	▼ 61.7	432	20.1	460	19.4	510	19.8	499	18.0	598	▲ 21.4	269	12.5	285	12.0	349	13.6	471	17.0	470	16.8
	Female	1,697	82.7	1,865	82.9	2,131	82.2	2,169	79.9	2,170	79.1	251	12.2	274	12.2	326	12.6	342	12.6	368	13.4	103	5.0	111	4.9	134	5.2	203	7.5	205	7.5

* Molonglo: 2009 and 2012 data are not available due to it being a new region.

Significance key for changes 2018 to 2021

- ▲ **Significant increase**
(development worsening used for Vuln1, Vuln2, and vulnerable in domains)
- ▲ **Significant increase**
(development improving used for OT5, and on track in domains)
- ▲ **Significant increase**
(used for developmentally at risk)

- ▼ **Significant decrease**
(development improving used for Vuln1, Vuln2, and vulnerable in domains)
- ▼ **Significant decrease**
(development worsening used for OT5, and on track in domains)
- ▼ **Significant decrease**
(used for developmentally at risk)

Note At risk significance symbols have not been colour coded as any changes should be interpreted in context with changes in the percentage of children who are vulnerable and on track.



Emotional maturity

Table 14 Emotional maturity domain

Cat.	Sub-cat.	Developmentally on track										Developmentally at risk										Developmentally vulnerable									
		2009		2012		2015		2018		2021		2009		2012		2015		2018		2021		2009		2012		2015		2018		2021	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
ACT		3,160	75.5	3,651	79.0	3,910	75.9	4,173	76.1	4,078	▼73.9	652	15.6	636	13.8	819	15.9	764	13.9	857	▲15.5	376	9.0	333	7.2	423	8.2	543	9.9	585	▲10.6
Australia		186,210	75.6	213,059	78.1	218,341	76.4	225,739	77.1	221,057	77.0	38,160	15.5	38,778	14.2	43,594	15.3	42,390	14.5	41,667	14.5	21,827	8.9	20,845	7.6	23,866	8.4	24,677	8.4	24,271	8.5
Region	Belconnen	796	75.1	955	77.8	969	74.4	921	73.0	851	▼70.5	162	15.3	186	15.1	210	16.1	191	15.1	207	▲17.1	102	9.6	87	7.1	123	9.4	149	11.8	149	12.3
	Gungahlin	560	76.5	687	79.6	900	77.9	1,040	77.9	1,036	▼73.4	102	13.9	115	13.3	164	14.2	185	13.9	224	▲15.9	70	9.6	61	7.1	92	8.0	110	8.2	151	▲10.7
	Molonglo*	-	-	-	-	23	79.3	80	71.4	139	▲79.0	-	-	-	-	2	6.9	24	21.4	20	▼11.4	-	-	-	-	4	13.8	8	7.1	17	9.7
	Nth Canberra	300	73.3	338	78.8	390	80.6	407	80.4	398	▼76.7	64	15.6	59	13.8	62	12.8	55	10.9	74	▲14.3	45	11.0	32	7.5	32	6.6	44	8.7	47	9.1
	Sth Canberra	187	82.7	209	80.1	204	77.6	216	74.7	247	▲79.7	28	12.4	36	13.8	38	14.4	31	10.7	36	11.6	11	4.9	16	6.1	21	8.0	42	14.5	27	▼8.7
	Tuggeranong	862	75.5	891	78.2	854	75.6	862	73.7	799	▼71.0	179	15.7	144	12.6	193	17.1	183	15.7	193	17.1	100	8.8	105	9.2	82	7.3	124	10.6	134	▲11.9
	Weston Ck	204	70.3	250	82.0	232	76.6	270	85.7	238	▼79.1	55	19.0	46	15.1	46	15.2	27	8.6	40	▲13.3	31	10.7	9	3.0	25	8.3	18	5.7	23	7.6
	Woden	277	75.1	311	81.0	335	69.6	373	76.7	365	79.0	69	18.7	50	13.0	104	21.6	67	13.8	62	13.4	23	6.2	23	6.0	42	8.7	46	9.5	35	7.6
Sex	Male	1,429	66.7	1,672	70.6	1,679	65.4	1,859	67.2	1,796	▼64.6	427	19.9	428	18.1	553	21.5	479	17.3	541	▲19.4	287	13.4	268	11.3	337	13.1	430	15.5	445	16.0
	Female	1,731	84.6	1,979	87.9	2,231	86.4	2,314	85.3	2,282	▼83.3	225	11.0	208	9.2	266	10.3	285	10.5	316	11.5	89	4.4	65	2.9	86	3.3	113	4.2	140	▲5.1

* Molonglo: 2009 and 2012 data are not available due to it being a new region.

Significance key for changes 2018 to 2021

- ▲ **Significant increase**
(development worsening used for Vuln1, Vuln2, and vulnerable in domains)
- ▲ **Significant increase**
(development improving used for OT5, and on track in domains)
- ▲ **Significant increase**
(used for developmentally at risk)

- ▼ **Significant decrease**
(development improving used for Vuln1, Vuln2, and vulnerable in domains)
- ▼ **Significant decrease**
(development worsening used for OT5, and on track in domains)
- ▼ **Significant decrease**
(used for developmentally at risk)

Note At risk significance symbols have not been colour coded as any changes should be interpreted in context with changes in the percentage of children who are vulnerable and on track.



Language and cognitive skills (school-based)

Table 15 Language and cognitive skills (school-based) domain

Cat.	Sub-cat.	Developmentally on track										Developmentally at risk										Developmentally vulnerable									
		2009		2012		2015		2018		2021		2009		2012		2015		2018		2021		2009		2012		2015		2018		2021	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
ACT		3,505	83.8	3,987	86.5	4,312	83.5	4,613	84.2	4,611	▼ 83.4	440	10.5	440	9.5	549	10.6	514	9.4	561	10.1	238	5.7	182	3.9	303	5.9	352	6.4	357	6.5
Australia		190,298	77.1	226,260	82.6	242,518	84.6	247,870	84.4	237,499	▼ 82.6	34,579	14.0	29,072	10.6	25,597	8.9	26,291	9.0	29,091	10.1	21,933	8.9	18,564	6.8	18,533	6.5	19,417	6.6	21,107	▲ 7.3
Region	Belconnen	899	84.7	1,069	87.1	1,083	83.2	1,038	82.3	971	▼ 80.5	101	9.5	113	9.2	132	10.1	130	10.3	139	11.5	62	5.8	45	3.7	86	6.6	93	7.4	96	8.0
	Gungahlin	629	85.9	755	87.6	1,006	86.7	1,143	85.8	1,196	▲ 84.4	66	9.0	83	9.6	101	8.7	112	8.4	137	9.7	37	5.1	24	2.8	53	4.6	77	5.8	84	5.9
	Molonglo*	-	-	-	-	24	82.8	89	79.5	146	83.0	-	-	-	-	4	13.8	20	17.9	17	▼ 9.7	-	-	-	-	1	3.4	3	2.7	13	▲ 7.4
	Nth Canberra	333	82.0	385	89.5	426	87.8	439	86.8	466	▲ 89.4	45	11.1	34	7.9	30	6.2	45	8.9	37	7.1	28	6.9	11	2.6	29	6.0	22	4.3	18	3.5
	Sth Canberra	201	88.5	220	85.3	227	87.0	253	87.5	268	86.5	17	7.5	25	9.7	22	8.4	16	5.5	26	8.4	9	4.0	13	5.0	12	4.6	20	6.9	16	5.2
	Tuggeranong	919	80.5	961	84.5	878	77.5	959	82.0	887	▼ 78.7	159	13.9	113	9.9	172	15.2	119	10.2	144	▲ 12.8	64	5.6	63	5.5	83	7.3	91	7.8	96	8.5
	Weston Ck	228	79.2	255	83.9	257	83.7	282	88.7	265	88.0	31	10.8	34	11.2	28	9.1	22	6.9	21	7.0	29	10.1	15	4.9	22	7.2	14	4.4	15	5.0
	Woden	329	90.1	332	87.1	407	84.3	405	83.5	405	▲ 87.5	24	6.6	38	10.0	59	12.2	49	10.1	39	8.4	12	3.3	11	2.9	17	3.5	31	6.4	19	▼ 4.1
Sex	Male	1,736	81.0	2,000	84.5	2,064	80.3	2,245	81.2	2,254	80.8	246	11.5	251	10.6	319	12.4	303	11.0	320	11.5	160	7.5	116	4.9	188	7.3	218	7.9	215	7.7
	Female	1,769	86.7	1,987	88.6	2,248	86.7	2,368	87.3	2,357	▼ 86.0	194	9.5	189	8.4	230	8.9	211	7.8	241	8.8	78	3.8	66	2.9	115	4.4	134	4.9	142	5.2

* Molonglo: 2009 and 2012 data are not available due to it being a new region.

Significance key for changes 2018 to 2021

- ▲ **Significant increase**
(development worsening used for Vuln1, Vuln2, and vulnerable in domains)
- ▲ **Significant increase**
(development improving used for OT5, and on track in domains)
- ▲ **Significant increase**
(used for developmentally at risk)

- ▼ **Significant decrease**
(development improving used for Vuln1, Vuln2, and vulnerable in domains)
- ▼ **Significant decrease**
(development worsening used for OT5, and on track in domains)
- ▼ **Significant decrease**
(used for developmentally at risk)

Note At risk significance symbols have not been colour coded as any changes should be interpreted in context with changes in the percentage of children who are vulnerable and on track.



Communication skills and general knowledge

Table 16 Communication skills and general knowledge domain

Cat.	Sub-cat.	Developmentally on track										Developmentally at risk										Developmentally vulnerable									
		2009		2012		2015		2018		2021		2009		2012		2015		2018		2021		2009		2012		2015		2018		2021	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
ACT		3,154	75.2	3,393	73.4	3,898	75.5	3,974	72.5	3,961	▼71.6	665	15.9	853	18.5	870	16.8	1,083	19.7	1,065	19.2	375	8.9	376	8.1	397	7.7	427	7.8	507	▲9.2
Australia		185,484	75.0	204,702	74.7	219,023	76.3	227,163	77.3	222,056	▼77.1	39,027	15.8	44,633	16.3	43,415	15.1	42,473	14.5	41,882	14.5	22,701	9.2	24,520	9.0	24,475	8.5	24,232	8.2	24,064	▲8.4
Region	Belconnen	777	73.2	914	74.0	968	74.3	910	72.1	783	▼64.9	190	17.9	242	19.6	210	16.1	235	18.6	296	▲24.5	95	8.9	79	6.4	124	9.5	117	9.3	128	10.6
	Gungahlin	545	74.5	576	66.7	878	75.8	887	66.4	1,019	▲71.8	115	15.7	197	22.8	185	16.0	329	24.6	263	▼18.5	72	9.8	90	10.4	96	8.3	119	8.9	138	9.7
	Molonglo*	-	-	-	-	22	75.9	85	75.9	126	71.6	-	-	-	-	7	24.1	19	17.0	28	15.9	-	-	-	-	0	0.0	8	7.1	22	▲12.5
	Nth Canberra	313	76.5	307	71.7	370	76.4	388	76.7	411	78.9	54	13.2	95	22.2	81	16.7	93	18.4	75	▼14.4	42	10.3	26	6.1	33	6.8	25	4.9	35	6.7
	Sth Canberra	173	76.2	199	76.5	205	77.9	192	66.4	221	▲71.3	41	18.1	31	11.9	40	15.2	73	25.3	70	22.6	13	5.7	30	11.5	18	6.8	24	8.3	19	6.1
	Tuggeranong	846	74.0	863	76.0	833	73.5	854	73.1	808	71.8	213	18.6	177	15.6	229	20.2	229	19.6	213	18.9	84	7.3	96	8.5	71	6.3	86	7.4	105	▲9.3
	Weston Ck	225	77.1	224	73.2	248	80.8	276	86.8	237	▼78.5	29	9.9	63	20.6	39	12.7	34	10.7	41	13.6	38	13.0	19	6.2	20	6.5	8	2.5	24	▲7.9
	Woden	294	79.9	303	78.9	371	76.8	377	77.6	350	75.6	36	9.8	45	11.7	77	15.9	71	14.6	77	16.6	38	10.3	36	9.4	35	7.2	38	7.8	36	7.8
Sex	Male	1,515	70.6	1,632	68.8	1,811	70.4	1,923	69.4	1,849	▼66.2	381	17.8	498	21.0	520	20.2	578	20.9	597	21.4	249	11.6	242	10.2	242	9.4	269	9.7	345	▲12.4
	Female	1,639	80.0	1,761	78.3	2,087	80.5	2,051	75.6	2,112	▲77.0	284	13.9	355	15.8	350	13.5	505	18.6	468	▼17.1	126	6.1	134	6.0	155	6.0	158	5.8	162	5.9

* Molonglo: 2009 and 2012 data are not available due to it being a new region.






Significance key for changes 2018 to 2021

- ▲ **Significant increase**
(development worsening used for Vuln1, Vuln2, and vulnerable in domains)
- ▲ **Significant increase**
(development improving used for OT5, and on track in domains)
- ▲ **Significant increase**
(used for developmentally at risk)

- ▼ **Significant decrease**
(development improving used for Vuln1, Vuln2, and vulnerable in domains)
- ▼ **Significant decrease**
(development worsening used for OT5, and on track in domains)
- ▼ **Significant decrease**
(used for developmentally at risk)

Note At risk significance symbols have not been colour coded as any changes should be interpreted in context with changes in the percentage of children who are vulnerable and on track.

Appendix 2: AEDC domain descriptions

	Children developmentally on track	Children developmentally at risk	Children developmentally vulnerable
Physical health and wellbeing 	<p>Almost never have problems that interfere with their ability to physically cope with the school day. These children are generally independent, have excellent motor skills, and have energy levels that can get them through the school day.</p>	<p>Experience some challenges that interfere with their ability to physically cope with the school day. This may include being dressed inappropriately, frequently late, hungry or tired. Children may also show poor coordination skills, have poor fine and gross motor skills, or show poor to average levels of energy levels during the school day.</p>	<p>Experience a number of challenges that interfere with their ability to physically cope with the school day. This may include being dressed inappropriately, frequently late, hungry or tired. Children are usually clumsy and may have fading energy levels.</p>
Social competence 	<p>Almost never have problems getting along, working, or playing with other children; is respectful to adults, is self-confident, and is able to follow class routines; and is capable of helping others.</p>	<p>Experience some challenges in the following areas: getting along with other children and teachers, playing with a variety of children in a cooperative manner, showing respect for others and for property, following instructions and class routines, taking responsibility for their actions, working independently, and exhibiting self-control and self-confidence.</p>	<p>Experience a number of challenges with poor overall social skills. For example children who do not get along with other children on a regular basis, do not accept responsibility for their own actions and have difficulties following rules and class routines. Children may be disrespectful of adults, children, and others' property; have low self-confidence and self-control, do not adjust well to change; and are usually unable to work independently.</p>
Emotional maturity 	<p>Almost never show aggressive, anxious, or impulsive behaviour. Children will have good concentration and will often help other children.</p>	<p>Experience some challenges in the following areas: helping other children who are hurt, sick or upset, inviting other children to join in activities, being kind to other children, and waiting their turn in activities. They will sometimes experience problems with anxious behaviours, aggressive behaviour, temper tantrums, or problems with inattention or hyperactivity.</p>	<p>Experience a number of challenges related to emotional regulation. For example problems managing aggressive behaviour being prone to disobedience and/or is easily distracted, inattentive, and impulsive. Children will usually not help others and are sometimes upset when left by their caregiver.</p>
Language and cognitive skills (school-based) 	<p>Children will be interested in books, reading and writing, and basic math; capable of reading and writing simple sentences and complex words. Will be able to count and recognise numbers and shapes.</p>	<p>Have mastered some but not all of the following literacy and numeracy skills: being able to identify some letters and attach sounds to some letters, show awareness of rhyming words, know writing directions, being 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 difficulty remembering things, and show a lack of interest in books, reading, maths and numbers, and may not have mastered more advanced literacy skills such as reading and writing simple words or sentences.</p>	<p>Experience a number of challenges in reading/writing and with numbers; unable to read and write simple words, will be uninterested in trying, and often unable to attach sounds to letters. Children will have difficulty remembering things, counting to 20, and recognising and comparing numbers; and usually not interested in numbers.</p>
Communication skills and general knowledge 	<p>Children will have excellent communication skills, can tell a story and communicate easily with both children and adults, and have no problems with articulation.</p>	<p>Have mastered some but not all of the following communication skills: listening, understanding and speaking effectively in English, being able to articulate clearly, being able to tell a story and to take part in imaginative play. Children may not know some basic general knowledge about the world such as knowing that leaves fall in autumn, apple is fruit, and dogs bark.</p>	<p>Children will have poor communication skills and articulation; have limited command of English (or the language of instruction), have difficulties talking to others, understanding, and being understood; and have poor general knowledge.</p>

Appendix 3: Glossary

Term	Definition
AEDC community	AEDC communities are a geographic area, usually equivalent to a Local Government Area (LGA), made up of Local Communities (see 'Local Community' definition).
AEDC cut-off scores	For each of the 5 AEDC domains, children receive a score between zero and 10 where zero is most developmentally vulnerable. The cut off scores set in 2009 provide a reference point against which later AEDC results can be compared. These have remained the same across all collection cycles.
AEDC domains	The AEDC measures 5 areas, or domains, of early childhood development that form the foundations for later good health, education and social outcomes. These domains are: physical health and wellbeing; social competence; emotional maturity; language and cognitive skills (school-based); and communication skills and general knowledge. More information about these domains can be found on the AEDC website (https://www.aedc.gov.au/about-the-aedc/about-the-aedc-domains).
Australian Early Development Census (AEDC)	A population measure of young children's development based on a teacher completed Instrument across 5 developmental domains (AEDC domains). 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 Early Development Instrument which has been adapted for use in Australia is a teacher-completed Instrument that consists of approximately 100 questions measuring the 5 developmental domains. To ensure teacher judgement is moderated across Australia, teachers receive online training prior to completing the instruments.
Closing the Gap	Closing the Gap is a strategy aimed at improving the life outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with respect to health and wellbeing, education, employment, justice, safety, housing, land and waters, and languages. It is a formal commitment made by all Australian governments to achieve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health equality. The National Agreement on Closing the Gap (the National Agreement) has 17 national socio-economic targets. Target 4 'Children thrive in their early years' has set a target using AEDC data, that by 2031, the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children assessed as developmentally on track on 5 domains will reach 55 per cent.

Term	Definition
Community profiles and maps	All AEDC data collected in a geographic area are collated and analysed at the suburb or small area locality (Local Community) of the child. This is reported back to the community through AEDC Community Profiles. The AEDC Community Profiles report the percentage of children on track, developmentally at risk and developmentally vulnerable for each developmental domain (www.aedc.gov.au/resources/community-profiles).
Control for age variability at school entry	The ages of children in their first year of full-time school vary. As age is a factor contributing to children's development, the published AEDC results control for age.
Critical difference	The critical difference is the minimum level of change required between any 2 cycles of AEDC results for the comparative result to be significant. The difference between the percentage of children vulnerable across the cycles is statistically significant if it exceeds the critical difference. For further information see the Calculation of the critical difference Technical Report (www.aedc.gov.au/crit-diff-com).
Developmentally on track on 5 domains (OT5)	The percentage of children who are developmentally on track on 5 AEDC domains. Developmentally on track on 5 domains (OT5) is part of the summary indicators (see 'Summary indicators' definition). This was first introduced as a national AEDC summary indicator in 2021.
Developmentally vulnerable on one or more domain(s) (Vuln 1 or DV1)	The percentage of children who are classified as developmentally vulnerable on one or more AEDC domain(s). Developmentally vulnerable on one or more domain(s) (Vuln 1) are part of the Summary Indicators (see 'Summary indicators' definition).
Developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains (Vuln 2 or DV2)	The percentage of children who are classified as developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more AEDC domains. Developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains (Vuln 2) are part of the Summary Indicators (See 'Summary indicators' definition).
Early Development Instrument (EDI)	The Early Development Instrument (EDI) was developed in Canada to measure the developmental health and wellbeing of populations of young children. An Australian adapted version of the EDI is the teacher completed instrument used in the AEDC program, (see the 'Australian version of the Early Development Instrument'.)

Term	Definition
English as a Second Language (ESL)	Children are considered to have ESL status where English is not their first language and they need additional instruction in English; or where English is not their first language, they have conversational English, but are not yet proficient in English.
Further assessment	An item in the AvEDI to identify if the teacher feels the child needs further assessment.
Language background other than English (LBOTE)	Children are classified as having 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. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with a LBOTE are part of the LBOTE group. For example, it is possible for children to be both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and have a LBOTE.
Local community	A small area locality, usually representing a suburb or town. For its results to be reported, Local communities must have a minimum of 15 children and 2 teachers. Results are not reported if more than 20 per cent of children were identified as children with special needs.
Population of children enrolled to begin school	The population of Australian children enrolled to begin their first year of full-time school is data provided by the School Census, inclusive of government, Catholic and Independent schools across Australia. This number is used to determine the extent to which the AEDC is reflective of the entire population of Australian children starting school in any particular AEDC collection year.
Proficient in English	Proficient in English refers to what is expected of the average monolingual English speaker in a similar phase of development. For the AEDC, children are considered proficient in English if teachers answered 'average' or 'good/very good' to the Australian version of the Early Development Instrument question: 'How would you rate this child's ability to use language effectively in English?' This question refers to the child's use of the appropriate words and expressions at appropriate times, as well as the child's contribution to conversations. Effective use is defined as 'use sufficient to convey the desired message'. Only basic grammatical concepts need to be adhered to, so long as the meaning is clear. Teachers were asked specifically to consider English language skills.

Term	Definition
Quintiles	Quintiles are used for the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) (see definition for SEIFA). The lowest quintile (Quintile 1) represents the most socio-economically disadvantaged areas; the highest quintile (Quintile 5) represents the least socio-economically disadvantaged areas.
Remoteness Areas	<p>Geographic location for the AEDC is based on the Australian Statistical Geographical Standard (ASGS) Remoteness Areas, developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics to classify places of remoteness. The current version of the AEDC geography is based off the 2021 ASGS and has been applied retrospectively to all years of data collection. Geographical areas are given a score based on the road distance to service towns of different sizes. Scores for regions are derived by averaging scores from a one square kilometre grid. The 5 Remoteness Areas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 of goods, services and opportunities for social interaction. • Remote—very restricted accessibility of goods, services and opportunities for social interaction. • Very remote—very little accessibility of goods, services and opportunities for social interaction. <p>The ASGS Remoteness Areas classification is an all of Australia view. As such, remote parts of Tasmania are remote because of their location in the context of Australia, not their location in Tasmania</p>
Reported results	<p>Reported results refer to the information that is made publicly available at a community level from the AEDC data collection. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demographic data for all children included in the census • AEDC domain scores—includes scores only from children with valid domain scores, and for those who do not have any diagnosed special need.

Term	Definition
Summary indicators	The AEDC has 3 summary indicators that collectively can be used to monitor trends in child development. Two of these summary indicators measure developmental vulnerability across the domains and help identify groups of children who are most vulnerable and inequities in early years systems (see 'developmentally vulnerable on one or more domain(s) (Vuln 1 or DV1)' and 'developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains (Vuln 2 or DV2)'). The third summary indicator, 'developmentally on track on 5 domains (OT5)', is a strength-based indicator that helps identify where things are working well and what is working to support children's holistic development.
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. They are a set of measures, derived from Census data, that summarise different aspects of socio-economic conditions in an area. The Index for Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage, which is used in AEDC results, looks at Census information that reflects disadvantage such as low income, low educational attainment, high unemployment, and jobs in relatively unskilled occupations. Every geographical area in Australia is given a SEIFA score that ranks the disadvantage of an area, compared with other areas in Australia. The most recent SEIFA indices are based on the 2016 Census and have been backcast to all previous AEDC cycles (2009–21).
Special needs	A child requiring special assistance because of chronic medical, physical or intellectually disabling conditions (e.g., autism, cerebral palsy, down syndrome), based on a medical diagnosis or medical diagnoses.
Valid domain scores	A domain score is flagged as valid unless children have been in the class for less than one month, are less than 4-years-old or where teachers complete less than 75 per cent of the items in any given domain.





Appendix 4: Further AEDC Information

For ACT AEDC information:

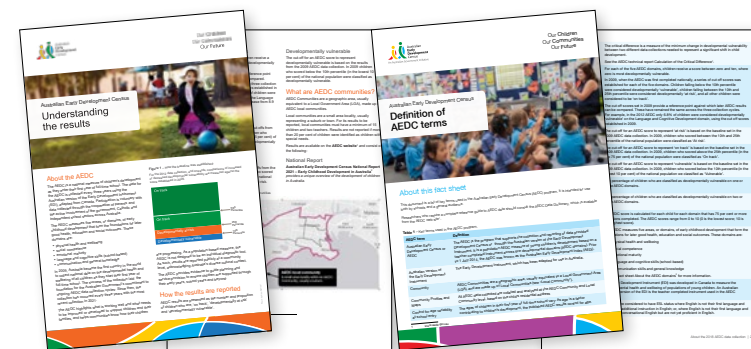
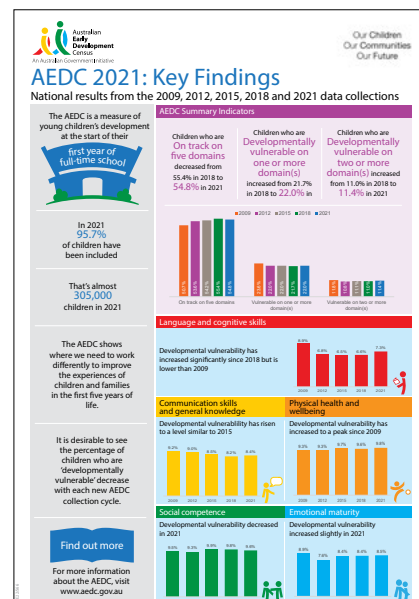
- email the ACT AEDC Coordinator aedc@act.gov.au
- visit the ACT AEDC website www.children.act.gov.au

The ACT CSD plans to release a series of AEDC modules in late 2022 with further information about special population groups and trend analysis within the ACT context.

These modules will be developed in partnership with ACT stakeholders and the community, if you would like to be involved or for more information contact the ACT AEDC Coordinator at aedc@act.gov.au.

A variety of resources are available online to help you understand AEDC results and learn more about the scope and purpose of the program. The resources listed below are just some of those available. These can be accessed through the AEDC website (www.aedc.gov.au/) or alternatively by clicking on the links provided.

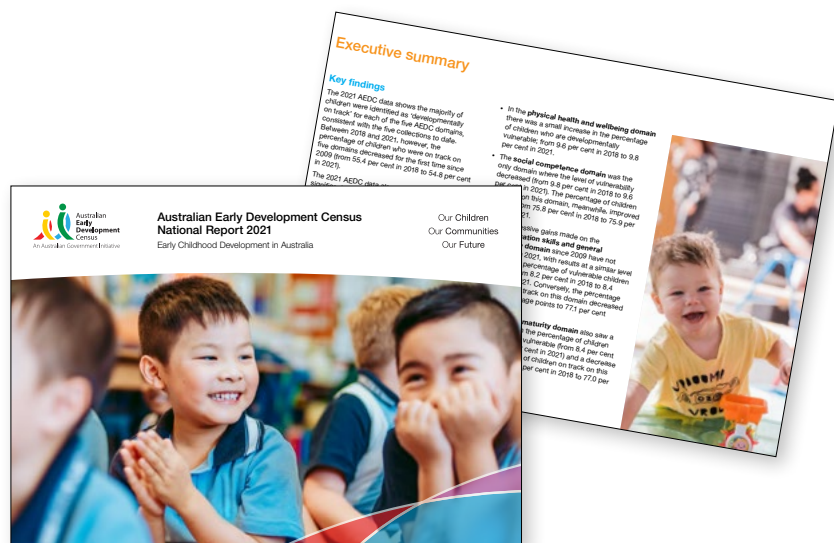
- Refer to the AEDC user guides for ideas and strategies on how to respond to AEDC data: www.aedc.gov.au/resources/using-aedc-data/user-guides-and-resources.
- For detailed information on AEDC results reporting, refer to the fact sheet Understanding the results www.aedc.gov.au/unders.
- The fact sheet Definition of AEDC terms is a valuable guide that describes terminology used throughout the program: www.aedc.gov.au/defterm.
- The 2021 AEDC community data was published in April 2022. The AEDC community results tables summarise results for each AEDC community and the local communities within it: www.aedc.gov.au/tables.
- The online Data Explorer is a searchable resource allows comparisons across years and communities: www.aedc.gov.au/data.



AEDC publications

Important AEDC resources include:

- Sector messages: www.aedc.gov.au/resources/using-aedc-data/sector-messages
- Calculation of the critical difference: www.aedc.gov.au/trcd
- Resources library: www.aedc.gov.au/resources
 - About the AEDC data collection: www.aedc.gov.au/abtdata
 - About the AEDC domains: www.aedc.gov.au/abtdom
 - Definition of AEDC terms: www.aedc.gov.au/defterm
 - Trends from the AEDC: www.aedc.gov.au/trends
 - Understanding community boundaries: www.aedc.gov.au/resources/resources-accessible/understanding-community-boundaries
 - Understanding the results: www.aedc.gov.au/unders



AEDC videos

- Introduction to the AEDC: www.aedc.gov.au/resources/detail/introduction-to-the-australian-early-development-census
- Informing your planning: [www.aedc.gov.au/resources/detail/informing-your-planning-\(hd\)](http://www.aedc.gov.au/resources/detail/informing-your-planning-(hd))
- Understanding the data: [www.aedc.gov.au/resources/detail/understanding-the-data-\(hd\)](http://www.aedc.gov.au/resources/detail/understanding-the-data-(hd))

Key AEDC web pages

- Communities FAQs www.aedc.gov.au/commfaqs
- History of the AEDC www.aedc.gov.au/history
- Resources for communities www.aedc.gov.au/rfc
- Using your AEDC results www.aedc.gov.au/communities/using-your-aedc-results
- Research snapshots www.aedc.gov.au/resources/research-findings/research-snapshots
- Validation and trial of the AEDC www.aedc.gov.au/valid

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