



Measuring What Matters

ARACY Submission

January 2023

About ARACY

ARACY – Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth seeks to catalyse change by bringing people and knowledge together for the benefit of children and young people in Australia. We strive to achieve this by advocating for evidence-based policy and practice, focusing on prevention and early intervention. Our consultations with over 4000 children and young people, their families, and experts have shown us what wellbeing means to them: to be loved, valued, and safe; to have material basics; to be physically and mentally healthy; to be learning; to be participating; and to have a positive sense of identity and culture. These six domains are reflected in ARACY’s wellbeing framework for children and young people — [the Nest](#).

We have been operating within this framework since 2013 and have progressed our work including publication of trackable indicators in our 5-year Report Cards and our most recent ARACY-UNICEF report [The Wellbeing of Australia’s Children](#)ⁱ incorporating both internationally comparable and Australian-specific indicators. Our experiencing in conceptualising, measuring, and tracking wellbeing for children and young people at a national level puts us in a position of unique expertise to advise on a national Australian wellbeing framework.

Summary & Recommendations

- **A dedicated national child and young person’s wellbeing and progress framework should be implemented alongside and in addition to a national wellbeing and progress framework.** This is necessary to appropriately reflect needs of children and young people which differ from adults, and to maximise the social and economic benefits of enhanced intergenerational mobility. This approach has been implemented by the OECD and internationally.
- ARACY’s *The Nest* wellbeing framework and accompanying ARACY-UNICEF report *The Wellbeing of Australian Children* have unique advantages over every other child wellbeing framework in Australia. **We recommend the ARACY-UNICEF *Wellbeing of Australia’s Children* report be implemented immediately as the wellbeing framework and reporting mechanism for children and young people**, with planned enhancement aligned with additional recommendations in this report.
- ARACY’s *The Nest* wellbeing framework and accompanying ARACY-UNICEF indicator report *The Wellbeing of Australian Children* is participatory, age-appropriate, incorporates evidence-based principles of child wellbeing, tailored to the Australian context, and internationally comparable. Key features of an ideal child and young person wellbeing framework would additionally include:

- **Measures of the effectiveness of systems**, such as measures which drive and monitor collaboration, should be included to ensure the wellbeing framework influences and guides decisions.
- **Measures that can be disaggregated by geographic and demographic level** must be included wherever possible to advance equity by empowering organisations outside Treasury to engage with the data and thus draw attention policy issues affecting subpopulations that may not be evident across national measures.
- **Data gaps that are meaningfully acknowledged**, and attempts made to establish appropriate measures when needed.
- **Regular updates incorporating evidence and data updates as well as consultation with children, young people, and families** to maintain currency with social, economic, and environmental changes should be embedded.
- **Consider the wellbeing of current as well as future generations** of children and young people.
- **Include a greater breath of information sensitive to a child's age and developmental stage.**

Introduction

Measuring what matters can support a new approach to shape the economy that brings wellbeing to the centre of how we think about purpose, value, and development. Rather than a machine to maximise economic growth, the economy should be a societal instrument to promote human wellbeing. New measures can promote progress that is people centred, equitably distributed and environmentally and socially sustainable. The outcome will be a society that is more just, inclusive, equitable and sustainable.

Wellbeing for Children & Young People

Budget Paper Number 1ⁱⁱ Statement 4 acknowledges supporting children's wellbeing is a key mechanism to lift living standards of Australians now and into the future. The statement cites "intergenerational mobility" (referring to the ability of children to transcend the socio-economic status of their parentsⁱⁱⁱ), and the established economic and societal benefits of reducing disadvantage among children based on research by James Heckman. It is for these reasons ARACY strongly supports the prioritisation of children's wellbeing in a national wellbeing framework, and therefore recommend measures of child wellbeing are embedded in reporting.

In its current form, only 2 of the 36 OECD headline indicators directly examine wellbeing of young people. The two indicators are 15-year-old students with low skills, and 15-year-old student skills in science. Both measures are narrow in scope and age and do not capture the importance of wellbeing throughout the life course, including the social and economic return on early years investment.

Other limitations include:

- No measures for early learning/education - this is a precursor to young adult education attainment.
- No measures for identity and belonging
- No measures for access and connectivity
- No measures of our institutions
- No measures for the performance of our services.
- Most measures are objective (which are important), however, having subjective measures (perception, satisfaction) in the framework can provide a better indicator of impact on the lives of individuals.






Some bodies have addressed this by developing a dedicated children's wellbeing and progress framework. Examples include the OECD itself, through the *Measuring What Matters for Child Well-being and Policies*^{iv}, alongside New Zealand (*Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy 2019*)^v, Finland (*National Child Strategy 2021*)^{vi}, and Ireland (*Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2017-2020*)^{vii}. The strength of this approach is the proportional significance of children's wellbeing is represented and appropriately prioritised, both by population (with people aged 0-24 years constituting more than 30% of the national population of Australia^{viii}) and by social and economic return on investment.

➤ **A dedicated, specialised national wellbeing and progress framework should be implemented to monitor and address the wellbeing of children and young people.**

Comparison of Existing Frameworks

At present there are several wellbeing reports of relevance to a national wellbeing and progress framework for children and young people in Australia. These have been summarised in Table 1. The frameworks and associated indicators have various strengths and weaknesses, and none are ideal. However, we consider ARACY's wellbeing framework *The Nest* and the associated ARACY-UNICEF compendium of indicators (*The Wellbeing of Australia's Children*^{ix}) to have strengths exceeding the others. These are outlined in the following section.

Table 1: Comparison of wellbeing frameworks and indicators relevant to Australian Children.

Org.	Title	Basis of Framework (Participatory)	Age	Wellbeing Domains	Coverage of Nest Domains	Indicators	Australian-specific
OECD	<i>Measuring What Matters for Child Well-being and Policies</i>	Literature-based “...outcome areas most frequently used in multi-dimensional child well-being research” ^x	0-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Material ▪ Physical health ▪ Social, Emotional & Cultural ▪ Cognitive & Educational 		120+	No
ARACY/ UNICEF	<i>The Wellbeing of Australia’s Children</i>	Literature review + extensive consultation including direct consultation with children, young people, and families	0-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Valued, loved and safe ▪ Material basics ▪ Healthy ▪ Learning ▪ Participating ▪ Positive sense of identity & culture 		63	Yes
AIHW	<i>Australia’s Children</i>	Modified general population model “...developed to measure and report on health and welfare of the general population. It has been modified for child reporting” ^{xi}	0-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual health ▪ Education ▪ Family social support ▪ Household income and finance ▪ Parental employment ▪ Housing ▪ Justice and safety 		38	Yes
AIHW	<i>Children’s Headline Indicators</i>	Unclear “...endorsed by 3 ministerial councils” ^{xii}	0-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Health ▪ Early learning and care ▪ Family and community 		19	Yes
AIHW	<i>National Youth Information Framework</i>	Unclear	12-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Education, employment, and economic situation ▪ Factors influencing health ▪ Family, relationships, and community ▪ Health status and wellbeing ▪ Health system performance 		38	Yes



The Nest Wellbeing Framework: Key Strengths

Participatory

The greatest strength of *The Nest* is the development of a robust foundational framework based on direct consultation, expert knowledge, and evidence. What matters should be determined by people. Research shows that the act of participating itself is critical to wellbeing. Indeed, participation is a wellbeing domain identified by young people as essential to wellbeing. Developing progress measures needs the engagement of citizens working with academics and policy makers. The engagement can also produce a wellbeing vision with priority outcomes founded on what matters. This means enabling individuals and communities to contribute to regular updates, including children and young people themselves.

The Nest was developed in consultation with over 4000 children, young people, families, researchers, policymakers, and service providers and coupled with the best available evidence. From this, we distilled six interdependent domains which work together to support children and young people thrive. These are: to be valued, loved and safe; to have material basics; to be physically and mentally healthy; to be learning; to be participating in family, community and decision making; and to have a positive sense of their identity and culture. Importantly, none of the other frameworks cover in whole the wellbeing domains identified by children and young people in The Nest as necessary for them to thrive. Most omitted, both in the above frameworks and more generally, are measures of participation and positive sense of identity and culture (see Table 1).

Strengths-based, Collaborative, Holistic, and Child-Centred

A wellbeing framework for children and young people should incorporate evidence-based principles. ARACY's *The Nest* wellbeing framework was developed upon these principles. While we acknowledge there are limitations especially around data, ideally a wellbeing and progress framework for children should be:

- **Strengths-based:** many indicators are framed from a deficits-lens. For example, we report of 'child mortality' in the first 5 years rather than 'child survival'. A strengths-based approach is widely recognised as best practice to working with children and young people. In addition, the way information is framed impacts on audience support for initiative. For example, deficits framing deters support of parenting initiatives compared to a strengths-based approach^{xiii}. While it is critical to identify areas needing improvement, identifying strengths that can be harnessed to enhance other aspects of wellbeing.
- **Collaborative:** enable children, young people, and those who care for them to have a say in what matters most
- **Holistic:** incorporate all elements necessary for a child's wellbeing, thereby recognising that these 'domains' are indeed interlocking, and support each other (e.g., a child cannot thrive in an educational setting if they are hungry or preoccupied the concerns about family violence).

- Child-centred:** this means that the outcomes being monitored are meaningful for the individual or community they are designed to support. For example, over 75% of Australians believe that government's chief objective should be to promote policies designed to maximise human wellbeing rather than greater wealth. So, while an indicator like GDP may have value, it is not person-centred.

More information on these principles and the evidence behind them can be found via ARACY's Common Approach^{xiv}.

Age Appropriate

The Nest framework and associated indicators covers ages 0 through to 24, which maps best with known phases of the developing brain. Neuroplasticity – i.e., the flexibility and adaptability of brain tissue which is heightened in developing brains - is the biological underpinnings of the high returns on investment in children and young people.

Tailored & Comparable

ARACY-UNICEF framework and report is both specific to the Australian context as well as including indicators that are internationally comparable. Where able, data has been disaggregated to highlight inequitable outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Figure 1: ARACY's The Nest Wellbeing Wheel



ARACY's *The Nest* wellbeing framework and accompanying ARACY-UNICEF report (*The Wellbeing of Australian Children*) has been developed with extensive consultation including children and young people, incorporates indicators of participation, identity and culture, utilises evidence-based principles of child wellbeing, spans an age range aligned with current understanding of brain developmental, has been developed in the Australian context, and includes indicators enabling international comparability. These features confer unique advantages over every other child wellbeing framework in Australia.

- **We recommend immediate funding and implementation of the ARACY-UNICEF children and young person's wellbeing framework and indicator set, with scheduled enhancements to occur in alignment with the recommendations below.**

Enhancing Features

Measure Systems

Measuring what matters to people is an important element of a national wellbeing and reporting framework. However, systems and processes to ensure these measures influence and guide decisions will be essential. The OECD has reported on countries experiences with wellbeing metrics including mechanisms for embedding in government through detailed case studies. Wellbeing can be embedded through government priorities, legislation, budget rules and frameworks, performance targets, statutory agencies, and reporting requirements. For example, Wales has introduced legislation supported by governance arrangements and New Zealand has incorporated frameworks into budget and policy making processes:

- Wales - the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act requires national goals and progress measures, entrenches clear values and reporting requirements in public agencies, and creates mechanisms to implement them including a Commissioner for Future Generations, a National Advisory Panel, annual audits, and a future trends report.
- New Zealand – we support the New Zealand's introduction of a wellbeing budget that links to national priorities. Citizens identify wellbeing priorities and requests for funding by Ministers must show how the initiative advances these priorities. Government must define wellbeing objectives and use them to guide financial decisions.

- **A national wellbeing and progress framework should include measures of the effectiveness of systems, such as measures which drive and monitor collaboration, to ensure these measures influence and guide decisions.**

Increase Comparability

An important element of any wellbeing framework is comparability, not just internationally but within jurisdictions. However, national data may not capture issues of federal significance if the affected population is too small. Taking the opportunity to advance equity and reduce disadvantage, especially among children, will require measures able to be disaggregated for groups experiencing

disadvantage. Data that can be disaggregated empowers research or other organisations to identify and draw attention to important trends affecting subpopulations. Ideally, indicators should be able to be disaggregated to reflect populations of interest (such as marginalised groups and state or local government jurisdictions). The specific inclusion of measures able to be disaggregated at a level meaningful to vulnerable populations is an important opportunity to advance equity and reduce disadvantage and should be considered during development. This empowers research and other organisations to identify and draw attention to important trends affecting subpopulations that may not be evident across national measures.

- **Measures able to be disaggregated at a meaningful level for populations of interest (both geographical and demographic) should be included wherever able to address inequity. This will empower organisations outside of Treasury to engage with the data and highlight important trends affecting subpopulations that may not be evident across national measures.**

Highlight Data Gaps

ARACY notes the OECD *Measuring What Matters for Child Wellbeing and Policies* makes clear where indicators of an element of wellbeing should be available, but are not, thus highlighting important data gaps.

- **A national Australian framework should acknowledge data gaps and seek to establish appropriate measures where this data is needed.**

Dynamic

A wellbeing framework and reporting mechanism should be flexible and dynamic, enabling regular updates consistent with emerging evidence, evolving community values and priorities, and to account for social, economic, and environmental changes. This includes regular engagement with community members, including children and young people, as part of the updating process.

- **A national Australian framework for children and young people should embed regular updates that incorporated evidence and data updates as well as consultation with children, young people, and families to maintain currency with social, economic, and environmental changes.**

Other Features

The OECD's *Measuring What Matters for Child Wellbeing and Policies*^{xv} suggests several general principles that should be considered in developing a wellbeing framework and reporting measure for children. These include:

- Forward looking – where children can enjoy a positive childhood in the present, as well as develop skills and knowledge that enable them to thrive into adulthood. Additionally, this includes considerations for climate.
- Capture information that is sensitive to a child’s age and developmental stage, and aim to include indicators which represent all ages (presently there is a sparsity of indicators which capture the wellbeing of younger children)
- Capture inequities across subpopulations (which links to the ability to disaggregate data)

Additional Resources

There are many existing frameworks and initiatives that can support Measuring What Matters. The UN Sustainable Development Goals provide a robust starting point for improved metrics and indicators for measuring the value. Australian National Development Index is an incorporated not for profit company supporting governments to develop new measures and is strongly connected internationally. The WHO Council on the Economics of Health for All was established in 2020 to provide guidance on creating a wellbeing economy. The Council is interested in piloting and scaling up activities including country-led applications with willing stakeholders. The Wellbeing Economy Alliance’s Policy Design Guide has resources, tools, case studies, and suggestions to help develop a framework.

Where to Next?

Wellbeing extends beyond measurement and must encompass the whole of government system approach, embedding wellbeing throughout the system. In time, we must address the relationships and intersections of systems and sectors, their context and conditions, their cultures and norms, their goals, roles and capabilities, and their collective performance and impact to truly shift wellbeing outcomes for people.

In a report by [ANZSOG and Every Child \(2021\) on System Leadership for Children and Youth Wellbeing](#), which brought together over 80 system leaders, identified six ways of working if we are to improve wellbeing outcomes, that are similar to Wales 5 Ways of Working. These include the following:

- **Changing minds:** culture change; challenging assumptions and norms; shifting mental models; reframing the narratives; listening for and hearing lived experience, expertise, and evidence.
- **Sharing power:** citizen and community leadership; collaborative and inclusive governance; diverse public participation; devolved decision making; participatory design.
- **Trust and relationships:** building connections; trusting others; guiding not directing; loosening control; working together; diverse and inclusive partnerships.
- **Seeing the whole and being focused:** broadening the view; breaking down silos; joining the pieces; seeing connections; addressing root causes; focusing on high value and high impact change.
- **Taking time:** a long-term outlook; beyond political cycles; more than a quick fix; try, test, and learn; an ongoing commitment; champions to hold firm over time.

- **Skin in the game:** having courage; being purposeful; taking risk; reflection and learning; seeing our part in the system

➤ **In future, established ways of working should be identified to guide people, policies and practices and processes as a mechanism to combat siloing of accountability especially given the holistic nature of improving wellbeing. These ways of working would complement the framework and help support policy design, implementation, and evaluation.**

Conclusion

➤ **We recommend the ARACY-UNICEF *Wellbeing of Australia's Children* report be implemented immediately as the wellbeing framework and reporting mechanism for children and young people, with planned enhancement in the form of additional health-of-systems indicators, indicators included with specific consideration of disaggregate potential, conscious highlighted of data gaps, embedded updates including regular community consultation, with greater breadth of indicators sensitive to developmental ages, and a formulation that reflects both current and future wellbeing of young people.**

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THE WELLBEING OF AUSTRALIA'S CHILDREN

A story about data,
a story about change.

A collaboration between
ARACY and UNICEF Australia
December 2021

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About UNICEF Australia

UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund, is the world's largest children's charity working to protect the rights of children, globally and here in Australia. Established in 1946 in the aftermath of World War II, we now operate in more than 190 countries and territories.

Run entirely on voluntary donations, UNICEF works to improve the lives of every child, no matter who they are or where they live. Our teams are on the ground to ensure every child has safe water, food, health care, education, and a safe place to grow up.

UNICEF Australia was formed in 1966 to support this mission. From sending emergency supplies to children during conflict, natural disasters, or humanitarian crises, to long-term survival and development programs, UNICEF Australia works to protect children, no matter what.

About ARACY

ARACY catalyses change by bringing people and knowledge together for the benefit of children and young people in Australia.

Our aspiration is that all children and young people are loved and thriving. We believe that all children and young people in Australia should have every opportunity to flourish.

To thrive, children and young people need to be valued, loved and safe; they need their basic material needs met; they need to be healthy; learning; participating in family, community and decision making; and have a positive sense of their identity and culture.

Listening to children and young people is integral to what we do. The right of every child to have a say about issues that affect them is upheld in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1989). When we listen to the views of children and young people, we make better decisions, write better policy, and directly benefit young Australians.

ARACY believes we can create more significant change by working together. When we channel the efforts of our partners and stakeholders, we can create lasting and transformative change in systems, policies, and practice, and ultimately, improvements in the daily lives and futures of children and young people.

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Executive summary

This report aims to describe how Australian children are faring across all aspects of wellbeing and how this is changing. We want to know what we are doing well, and which areas need special attention to help all Australian children thrive. This report ultimately aims to set policy priorities and guide action to ensure Australia is an equitable place to grow up and improve outcomes for all Australian children.

The data we have used to describe the wellbeing of Australian children builds on earlier work undertaken by ARACY and UNICEF Australia. Seminal works include ARACY's *Report Card* (ARACY, 2018), a series of indicators which provide a snapshot of wellbeing for Australian children; UNICEF's *Innocenti Report Card* (Gromada, Rees, & Chzhen, 2020), which compares wellbeing of children across wealthy countries; and UNICEF Canada's *Canadian Index of Child and Youth Well-being* (UNICEF Canada, 2019), which inspired this Australian index. ARACY and UNICEF Australia have combined our expertise to provide a high-level analysis of the most recent indicators of child wellbeing coupled with a discussion of emerging issues including the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of climate change on wellbeing.

This report shows that most children are doing well in most areas. Most children and young people have adequate access to food and the educational resources they need, they participate in formal and informal educational opportunities, they feel optimistic about the future and have someone to turn to for support.

However, there are areas of growing concern and persistent inequity that, if addressed, could lift the wellbeing of many Australian children. Some notable findings include the persistently high rates of children in contact with the child protection system, with ongoing

disproportionate impacts on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Poverty too remains stagnant and unacceptably high, and the formal education system remains increasingly inequitable. Indicators of physical and mental health are demonstrating emerging issues of childhood obesity linked to diet and sedentary lifestyle and increasing rates of psychological distress and suicide. There is an increased awareness of the importance of culture and identity on health and wellbeing, yet indicators of children's participation and positive sense of identity and culture remain underemphasised in research and policy.

The key to enhancing the wellbeing of Australian children lies in addressing the main drivers of inequitable outcomes, which have been largely enhanced by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This report provides a powerful and comprehensive picture of how Australian children are faring now and over time. In doing so, we hope to highlight key policy areas that can be leveraged to enhance the wellbeing of all Australian children, ensuring that every child can thrive.

About The Index

This index was developed as a resource to:

- Show what life is like for children and young people aged 0 to 24 in Australia.
- Track progress on children’s rights and wellbeing.
- Influence decision-makers to make Australia among the best places to grow up.

The index is built on UNICEF Australia’s five Children’s Goals. Based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the Children’s Goals work together to capture everything a child needs to live a good life and thrive. They are:

- Every child thrives and survives
- Every child has a fair chance in life
- Every child is protected from violence and exploitation
- Every child lives in a clean and safe environment
- Every child learns

Data is organised using the Nest, Australia’s evidence-based framework for child and youth wellbeing. The Nest presents holistic wellbeing as six interdependent domains. A child or young person needs to be doing well in all six domains to thrive. These domains are:

- **Valued, Loved and Safe** – children have trusting relationships with family and friends
- **Material Basics** – children live in suitable housing with appropriate clothing, nutritious food, clean water, and clean air.
- **Healthy** – children have their physical, mental, and emotional health needs met.
- **Learning** – children and young people learn through a variety of experiences within the classroom, the home, and the community in which they live.
- **Participating** – children and young people having a voice, are listened to and have a say in decisions that impact them.
- **Positive Sense of Identity and Culture** – children feel safe and supported to express their identity and have a sense of belonging.

Together, the Children’s Goals and the Nest align as shown below:

ARACY’s Nest wellbeing domains	UNICEF Children’s Goals
Valued, Loved and Safe	Every child thrives and survives Every child is protected from violence and exploitation Every child lives in a clean and safe environment
Material Basics	Every child thrives and survives Every child has a fair chance in life Every child lives in a clean and safe environment
Healthy	Every child thrives and survives Every child lives in a clean and safe environment
Learning	Every child learns
Participating	Every child has a fair chance in life Every child thrives and survives
Positive Sense of Identity and Culture	Every child has a fair chance in life Every child thrives and survives Every child learns

We have collected indicators of wellbeing within each domain and used these to describe the wellbeing of Australia children now and, where the data is available, over time to track our progress and detect important trends. The data we have presented here are key indicators accompanied by an analysis. More detailed data including a breadth of indicators within each domain can be found in our accompanying Technical Report (ARACY and UNICEF Australia, 2021).



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Who are we?

Australian children and young people bring a rich diversity of culture, identity, and experience. At the latest Australian census, children and young people aged 0-24 years make up 30% of the Australian population (ABS, 2021). About 6% of children fall into each of the 0-4, 5-9, 10-14, 15-19, and 20-24 years age groups (ABS, 2020).

Just under one third of people aged 0-24 years live outside a greater capital city region (ABS, 2020).

Around 7% live with a disability (AIHW, 2020) and 2.9% are carers (ARACY and UNICEF Australia, 2021).

1 in 5 speak a language other than English at home (ARACY, 2018). 14.6% were born overseas with the most common countries of birth after Australia were India, China, New Zealand, England, and the Philippines (ABS, 2020). More than 90% of 15–24-year-olds participated in at least one organised cultural activity in the last year and about 9 in every 10 report being tolerant of society being comprised of different cultures (ARACY, 2018).

About 60% of 15–24-year-olds identify with a religious affiliation (ARACY, 2018).

4.2% identify as Aboriginal, 0.2% identify as Torres Strait Islander, and 0.2% identify as both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ABS, 2016). About 1 in 3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders aged 15-24 years speak at least some words of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language (ARACY, 2018).

48.6% of people aged 0-24 years reported female sex and 51.4% male sex in the most recent Australian census (ABS, 2021). The Australian Bureau of Statistics did not provide population level data on people who are gender diverse. Estimates based on smaller data sets found 1.2% of school aged children (The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne, 2020) and 2% of people aged 15-19 years identified as transgender or gender diverse (Tiller, et al., 2021). 75.6% of young people aged 16-27 who identify as LGBTQI years feel pretty good or great about it (The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne, 2020).

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, data referenced in the 'What Does This Mean For Children?' headlines are drawn from our accompanying Technical Report (ARACY and UNICEF Australia, 2021).

What is Wellbeing?

Wellbeing can be thought of as a child or young person having everything they need to thrive and reach their full potential. It encompasses all areas of a child's life, which are linked and interdependent. Children have the right to live a safe, full and rewarding life, under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF Australia's Children's Goals are drawn from the UNCRC.

The Nest is Australia's national wellbeing framework for children and young people aged 0 to 24 years. It's a way of thinking about the whole child in the context of their daily lives, viewing wellbeing in a way that brings together the different elements a child or young person needs to thrive.

The Nest was developed in consultation with over 4000 experts and children, young people, and families about what they need to thrive. Children and young people told

us that what they needed to have a good life fell into six interlinked domains which support a child or young person's wellbeing. These domains are: to be Valued, Loved, and Safe; to have Material Basics; to be physically and mentally Healthy; to be Learning; to be Participating, and to have a Positive Sense of Identity and Culture. To have optimal wellbeing, a child or young person needs to be adequately supported in all six domains.

Wellbeing is therefore seen as a holistic term with domains sitting within it. When many people talk about wellbeing, they are often referring to certain aspects only, such as mental health or social-emotional learning. While these are crucial elements, we need to ensure everyone working with, and for, children and young people, understands that wellbeing refers to ALL the areas of a child's life.



Valued, Loved and Safe

Positive relationships with family and peers. Trusting connections with adults in their life. Personal and community safety. Feeling secure, valued and loved.



Material Basics

Living in secure, stable and suitable housing, with appropriate clothing, healthy food, clean water, and with the materials needed to be an active member of society. Access to suitable transport and local services.



Healthy

Physically, emotionally and mentally well and supported. All health needs are met. Appropriate health services received including preventative measures to address potential or emerging physical, emotional or mental health concerns.



Learning

Learning through formal and informal experiences within the classroom and more broadly at home and in the community. Realising full learning potential and appropriate learning support is provided. Family values and is engaged in child's learning.



Participating

Able to have a voice and feels heard. Involvement and activities with peers and the community. Involved in decision-making processes that affect them. Access to technology for social connections.



Positive Sense of Identity and Culture

Identity is respected and valued. Feeling culturally connected, a sense of spiritual wellbeing. A positive sense of self and a feeling of belonging. Feeling accepted at home and in the community.



Two young students show their creation at an outdoor session of Indi Kindi in Australia's Northern Territory © Moriarty Foundation/Quilliam

Where does Australia stand?

The wellbeing of Australian children is mixed when compared to the international standards of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Children and young people in Australia have good life expectancy from birth, most receive a good education and graduate from high school, and they have friends and family they can count on.

However, Australia's children and young people are still lagging in other areas, and there remain significant inequities among outcomes for different children.

Below are a few key indicators which give a snapshot of where we are doing well by Australia's children and where we need to improve.

What Australia is doing well:

- More than 4 in every 5 children attend preschool.
- About 4 in every 5 adults aged 18-24 years report feeling able to have a say among family and friends on important issues all or most of the time.
- 91% of children are fully immunised at age 2.

What Australia needs to improve:

- 1 in 6 children live below the national poverty line.
- Almost 95% of children do not meet the daily recommended intake of vegetables.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children under 18 years are 7 times more likely to be in out of home care than the population average.

It's important to note that in some instance the data indicates improvements in outcomes over times despite the absolute number being below target. These trends are just as critical as they provide information on what we are doing well (which can be amplified) and help identify when we need to do something differently.

What's New?

Collecting and analysing data is a complex undertaking. Major collections such as the Australian Census only take place every few years. Therefore, validated data can lag behind what is happening in the daily lives of children and young people. This section considers recent world events and priorities that have yet to be reflected in the major data collections used in Australia.

The Impact of COVID-19

This section summarises some of the key findings of the effect of COVID-19 on children and young people across Australia. Comprehensive information on the effects of COVID-19 on children can be found in ARACY and UNICEF Australia's Knowledge Acceleration Hub, which includes a suite of digests detailing the impacts of COVID-19 and suggested policy responses (ARACY, n.d.; Harris, Seriamlu, Dakin, & Sollis, 2021).

COVID-19 has had mixed results regarding family dynamics. While some families have experienced benefits such as increased time spent with children for learning and recreational activities, prolonged lockdowns have also resulted in increased stress and feelings of isolation for others. Linked to this is an increase in family violence.

Children and young people have been relatively spared from the physical effects of COVID-19. However, COVID-19 living conditions have created an environment fostering reduced mental wellbeing for children and young people. For example, young people had the largest drop-off in life satisfaction due to the pandemic (Biddle & Gray, 2021). Three in four people aged 12 – 25 reported worse mental health in August 2020 than before the pandemic, and half reported the pandemic had hurt their confidence in achieving their future goals (Biddle & Gray, 2021). This has highlighted significant gaps in the present mental health system.

The pandemic has seen large fluctuations in employment rates corresponding to the onset and easing of lockdowns, which has disproportionately affected people in insecure employment; namely, women, young people, and low-income earners (Harris, Seriamlu, Dakin, & Sollis, 2021). The direct effects of poverty have been at least partially addressed by Australia's internationally commended financial support packages in response to the pandemic (Richardson, Carraro, Cebotari, & Gromada, 2020). However, ARACY's *To Have and Have Not* report demonstrates parental unemployment is associated with negative effects on multiple wellbeing areas (Sollis K., 2019). Furthermore, young people affected by early unemployment are at risk of "labour force scarring" in recessions which can reduce employability and incomes in the long run (Borland & Charlton, 2020).

Learning has seen significant shifts in response to COVID-19. The move to online learning has benefitted some children (Gore, Fray, Miller, Harris, & Taggart, 2021). However, the net effect of the pandemic has seen a widening of already inequitable educational outcomes for vulnerable children. For example, disadvantaged children and those in rural and remote areas were less able to access and engage in digitalised learning. Policy responses must be centred on effective catch-up programs and focus on mitigating the widening gap experienced by children throughout the education system. Conversely, the policy response to early childhood education facilitated continued access to childcare and prevented closures of childcare facilities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the difficulties children and young people face in having a say in issues that affect them. Media representation is one example, with less than 4% of news articles featuring young people and a 14% reduction in media coverage of young people during the pandemic (Sollis & Noble, 2020). Children and young people do not feel that they were considered equal stakeholders in the pandemic responses and that communication with children and young people had been inadequate (UNICEF Australia, 2020). Mitigating this is centred on meaningful engagement with children and young people in the design and implementation of policies and programs.

Children and young people appreciate the importance of positive sense of identity and culture on wellbeing (Sollis & Noble, 2020). However, the pandemic resulted in widespread closures of recreational activities of children and young people such as sporting competitions and music festivals. Additionally, the pandemic fostered racism directed at people of multicultural backgrounds including young people, despite Australia's rich multicultural society and high levels of tolerance for diversity among children and young people.



Much data describing the impact of COVID-19 on young people is missing. The normal data sources used for this report and previously for the ARACY Report Card either is not released quickly or periodically enough to have already captured the effects of COVID-19 or collection of data for these sources has been postponed due to the pandemic. Ongoing data collection and an evolving policy response as the effects of COVID-19 become better understood is central to enhancing the wellbeing of Australian children.

Climate change

Climate change and the environment present major concerns for young people, evidenced by a range of recent surveys conducted both in Australia and globally (The Red Cross, 2020; Tiller, et al., 2020; Harrabin, 2021). Climate change is an issue that concerns many young people and which deeply affects their future lives. For example, young Australians feel very strongly that Australia is not doing enough to reduce carbon emissions (The Red Cross, 2020). Young people's lives worldwide are being impacted by climate change, focusing upon the themes of disrupted educations, starting families, finding work, migration, and emotional impacts (Barford, Mugeere, Proefke, & Stocking, 2021).

Climate change and care for the environment runs throughout the domains of wellbeing. The UNICEF Children's Goals including *Every child thrives and survives* and *Every child has a fair chance in life* require the consideration of climate change and sustainability, and these are explicitly referenced in the goal *Every child lives in a clean and safe environment*.

In ARACY's recent publication, *What's in the Nest?* (Goodhue, Dakin, & Noble, 2021), climate change and sustainability are explicitly referenced in both Valued, Loved and Safe and Material Basics. Health is also directly affected by climate change and will increasingly be influenced by a child's environment unless climate change is controlled.

The growing importance young people place on climate change and sustainability is being recognised by many decision makers. The Tasmanian Government recently released their Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy, *It Takes a Tasmanian Village* (Tasmanian Government, 2021) using the Nest as the conceptual framework for the development of the strategy. To be true to the many voices heard about the importance of the environment to child and youth wellbeing, they created a new descriptor and icon across all six of the Nest's domains to give precedence to environmental concerns. Their icon was inspired by a submission from a 12-year-old, who wrote "*Let the Earth Breathe – let it heal and let it live to sustain the generations after ours.*"



As stated in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, every person under the age of 18 has the right to participate in the decision-making processes that impact them. This includes a public forum to express their views, and support for them to do it. Governments and key stakeholders have a responsibility to ensure these rights are granted, but to also provide deep and equitable engagement with young people to *learn* from them and with them about how best to tackle this challenge.

For some time, we've known that many experts see climate change as an intergenerational issue and unanimously support an intergenerational dialogue to tackle the problems posed by climate change by breaking the silos and engaging in healthy conversations and discussions (Strazdins & Skeat, 2011). We also know that young people offer knowledge, ideas, dynamism, and political activism to contribute to solutions, and to hold those in formal positions of power to account.

Children and young people are speaking loud and clear about climate change – are we ready to listen to their voices?



Our Children's Wellbeing: Snapshots by Domain and Goals.

ARACY'S NEST WELLBEING DOMAINS

UNICEF CHILDREN'S GOALS

Valued, Loved and Safe

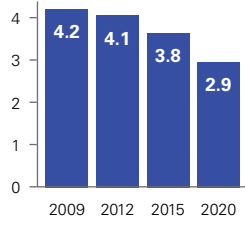
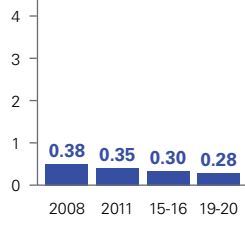
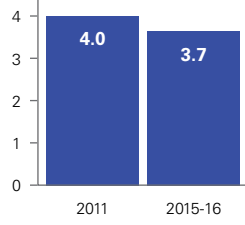
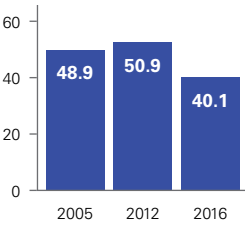
Every child thrives and survives

Every child is protected from violence and exploitation

Every child lives in a clean and safe environment

Being valued, loved, and safe means having loving, trusting relationships with family and friends. It involves a child or young person feeling valued by teachers and other adults in their life and knowing that they are important to others and that others are caring and supportive of them. It involves feeling safe at home, in the community and online. Safety also means feeling safe about their future, which includes the knowledge that the environment and climate are a priority and are being protected.

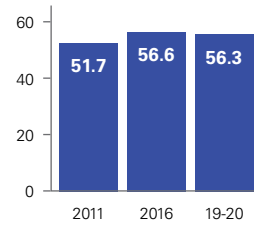
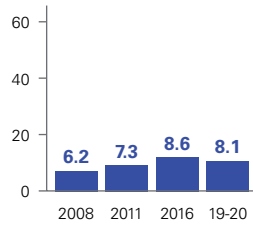
Headline Indicators

Indicator	Measure	National Statistics	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics	Previous rank	Current rank																
Children as carers	% 0-24 yrs who are carers	 <table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2009</td><td>2012</td><td>2015</td><td>2020</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>4.2</td><td>4.1</td><td>3.8</td><td>2.9</td></tr> </table>	Year	2009	2012	2015	2020	Value	4.2	4.1	3.8	2.9									
Year	2009	2012	2015	2020																	
Value	4.2	4.1	3.8	2.9																	
Detention of children and youth	10-17 yrs in detention on an average day (per 1,000)	 <table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2008</td><td>2011</td><td>15-16</td><td>19-20</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>0.38</td><td>0.35</td><td>0.30</td><td>0.28</td></tr> </table>	Year	2008	2011	15-16	19-20	Value	0.38	0.35	0.30	0.28	 <table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2011</td><td>2015-16</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>4.0</td><td>3.7</td></tr> </table>	Year	2011	2015-16	Value	4.0	3.7		
Year	2008	2011	15-16	19-20																	
Value	0.38	0.35	0.30	0.28																	
Year	2011	2015-16																			
Value	4.0	3.7																			
Family conflict	% adults who had children in their care while experiencing violence from a current partner	 <table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2005</td><td>2012</td><td>2016</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>48.9</td><td>50.9</td><td>40.1</td></tr> </table>	Year	2005	2012	2016	Value	48.9	50.9	40.1											
Year	2005	2012	2016																		
Value	48.9	50.9	40.1																		

Indicator	Measure	National Statistics	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics	Previous rank	Current rank
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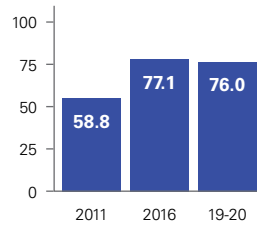
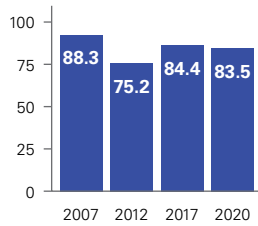
Out of home care

0-17 yrs in out of home care (per 1,000)



Positive peer relationships

% 15-19 yrs turning to others for support ...friends

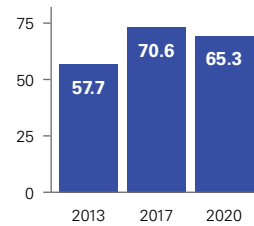
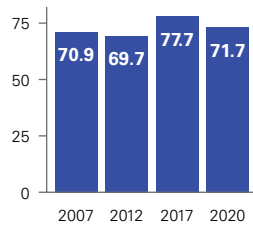


11/43
(OECD rank 2006 -14)

NB: Ranking based on OECD Gallup Wordpoll data where young people say they have relatives and friends they can count on. The same statistic was used for both the positive relationship with parents and positive peer relationship indicators.

Positive relationship with parents

% 15-19 yrs turning to others for support ...parents

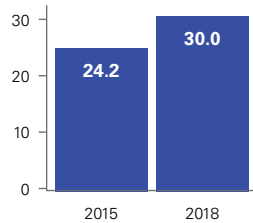


11/34
(OECD rank 2006- 14)

NB: Ranking based on OECD Gallup Worldpoll data where young people say they have relatives and friends they can count on. The same statistic was used for both the positive relationship with parents and positive peer relationship indicators.

Bullying

% 15 yrs who reported any type of bullying act at least a few times a month



30/33
(PISA OECD rank 2015)

31/36
(PISA OECD rank 2018)

What does this mean for children and young people?

Indicators for children regarding their families, neighbourhoods, and social networks are positive for most children and young people. Family cohesion is high, concern about family conflict and family health is low, trends in bullying are improving and most young people have someone they can turn to for support (ARACY and UNICEF Australia, 2021). Young people are also increasingly utilising school supports and the internet as additional forms of social support. However, child protection issues are increasing with inequitable outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Data gaps remain an issue with limited data regarding the early years and environmental indicators.

Indicators regarding families are largely positive for children and young people in Australia. Most children live with both parents, with about 3 in every 4 children living with both parents in one home (ARACY and UNICEF Australia, 2021). About 1 in 7 children between the ages of 10 to 14 years live with a family member who has a disability or chronic illness, and about 3% of children and young people are carers. The proportion of children concerned about family conflict has steadily declined over the last decade, having roughly halved between 2007 and 2020. This trend is present for children generally as well as specifically within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

However, there is room for improvement in both cohorts: only about 84% of children overall and 79% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are not concerned about family conflict (ARACY and UNICEF Australia, 2021). Extreme forms of family conflict are uncommon. For example, parents lying to their children with the intent of turning them against another parent, threatening to harm their children, or threatening to take their children away generally occur at a rate of about 5% or less. Indicators around domestic violence are less promising. For children, witnessing domestic violence can cause lifelong harms to themselves and those around them (Richards, 2011). Of the adults who experience violence at home, a high proportion of them have children in their care at the time. The most recent data indicates that about 40% have children in their care while experiencing violence from a current partner.

Indicators of social networks and peer relationships generally show a positive trend for children and young people alongside a shift in the types and format of support networks. Social networks for adolescents and young adults appear robust: most young adults have a reasonable support network with about 70% of adults aged 18-24 years reporting at least three people they can confide in, a slight upward trend since 2006. Of all support options, young people aged 15-19 years remain most likely to turn to their friends for support (83.5%) followed by their parents (71.7%) with both figures roughly stable since 2007.



Notably there has been a change in who and how young people turn to for support over the last 14 years, with indicators showing a trend toward increased engagement with supports outside of family and friends, as well as a shift toward utilising digital connections. For example, the percentage of young people aged 15-19 years turning to a school counsellor or teacher for support tripled between 2007 and 2020 (30-35% in 2020 compared to about 10% in 2007) and the percentage of young people aged 15-19 years turning to the internet has more than doubled over the same timeframe (from about 22% in 2007 to about 48% in 2020).

Support networks of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people of this age groups have some overlapping features and trends, also being most likely to turn to their friends (76%) and parents (65.3%) for support and showing an increasing tendency to turn to teachers. There are also some differences, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people slightly more likely to turn to a sibling or other relative/family friend and slightly less likely to turn to the internet.

Bullying indicators are improving with the rate of young people with high levels of concern about bullying has almost halving since 2007. Presently about 12% of people aged 15-19 years are very or extremely concerned about bullying or emotional abuse compared to 21% in 2007. Rates are just slightly higher for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people at about 17% in 2020 and show a promising trajectory. Most children are not regularly excluded from peer activities; about 1 in 7 Year 4 students are deliberately ignored or left out of a group at least every few weeks. This decreases slightly with age to about 1 in every 8 or 9 students in Years 6 and 8.

While most children perceive their neighbourhood as safe a significant proportion do not. About 30% of children and just under 20% of adults do not feel safe walking around their neighbourhood at night with similar figures for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults (no data for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children).

It is worth noting that there are substantial gaps and weaknesses in the data available to us in this dimension. Issues around Valued, Loved and Safe are often not collected in administrative data outside of crime reporting and are difficult to survey due to their sensitivity. Respondents may be unwilling to discuss their experiences or falsely report not being victims of violence or neglect, particularly when the survey is not designed with these questions in mind (for example if procedures are not in place to make sure respondents will not be overheard).

In addition to this, there are two very specific gaps in our data here. The first is a lack of representation of younger children. Younger children are obviously much harder to study than older children on sensitive questions like these. Additional data on their experience on this dimension would be extremely valuable.

We also lack data on the effect that environmental degradation is having on the lives of children, and how this relates to their feelings of safety. This is extremely hard to measure given the difficulty of drawing a causal link between climate change and other environmental issues and the many events related to it that harm the safety of children; for example, bushfires, respiratory disease, or

effects like climate-related distress. There is an emerging field of study around “climate anxiety” as well as more sophisticated research and analysis of the impact of “natural” or climate-related disasters. We can also track the importance of these issues to children and young people by the recent test cases in various Australian and international courts on the duty of care governing and corporate bodies hold to ensure children and young people are not adversely affected by decisions relating to climate protection (e.g., Sharma vs the Minister for the Environment; Milieudefensie et al. v. Royal Dutch Shell.; Pabai and Guy Paul Kabai v. Commonwealth of Australia).

These indicators suggest that most young people are doing well in this domain. Concerns about family conflict are decreasing as are concerns about bullying and emotional abuse, and most young people have a range of people they can turn to for support. While friends and parents remain the most frequent forms of support, young people are also increasingly embracing additional supports such as teachers, school counsellors and the internet. The critical issue within this domain is supporting the increasing rates of children and young people in contact with the child protection system and addressing the drivers of inequity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Indicator	Measure	National Statistics	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics	Previous rank	Current rank																		
Family conflict	% 15-19 yrs extremely or very concerned about family conflict	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2007</td><td>2012</td><td>2017</td><td>2020</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>29.3</td><td>22.9</td><td>20.0</td><td>15.7</td></tr> </table>	Year	2007	2012	2017	2020	Value	29.3	22.9	20.0	15.7	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2013</td><td>2017</td><td>2020</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>28.7</td><td>26.4</td><td>21.0</td></tr> </table>	Year	2013	2017	2020	Value	28.7	26.4	21.0		
Year	2007	2012	2017	2020																			
Value	29.3	22.9	20.0	15.7																			
Year	2013	2017	2020																				
Value	28.7	26.4	21.0																				
Out of home care	0-17 yrs in out of home care (per 1,000)	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2008</td><td>2011</td><td>2016</td><td>19-20</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>6.2</td><td>7.3</td><td>8.6</td><td>8.1</td></tr> </table>	Year	2008	2011	2016	19-20	Value	6.2	7.3	8.6	8.1	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2011</td><td>2016</td><td>19-20</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>51.7</td><td>56.6</td><td>56.3</td></tr> </table>	Year	2011	2016	19-20	Value	51.7	56.6	56.3		
Year	2008	2011	2016	19-20																			
Value	6.2	7.3	8.6	8.1																			
Year	2011	2016	19-20																				
Value	51.7	56.6	56.3																				
Receiving child protection services	0-17 yrs receiving child protection services (per 1,000)	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2017</td><td>2018</td><td>2019</td><td>2020</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>30.7</td><td>28.7</td><td>30.5</td><td>31.0</td></tr> </table>	Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	Value	30.7	28.7	30.5	31.0	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2017-18</td><td>2018-19</td><td>2019-20</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>164</td><td>166</td><td>156</td></tr> </table>	Year	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Value	164	166	156		
Year	2017	2018	2019	2020																			
Value	30.7	28.7	30.5	31.0																			
Year	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20																				
Value	164	166	156																				



Child protection

Child protection issues represent the most extreme form of problematic family dynamics. As a surrogate marker of neglect, rates of parental supervision are high; about 95% of parents of Year 8 children would know if they didn't come home on time. However, child protection remains a key policy issue due to the devastating impact on children and young people, the tendency for intergenerational transmission (Datta, Stratford, Julian, & Shelley, 2019), and because Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children remain highly over-represented (ARACY and UNICEF Australia, 2021).

Out of home care represents the most extreme response within the child protection system. Rates of children in out of home care have generally been increasing, although there has been a modest improvement at the most recent data collection: 8.1 children aged 0-17 years per 1000 were in out of home care in 2020 compared to 8.6 per 1000 in 2016 (ARACY and UNICEF Australia, 2021). This is approximately 1 child in every 125 living in out of home care overall, and 7 in 125 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Ultimately this represents deeply inequitable social determinants coupled with an inability of the present child protection system to adequately meet the needs of vulnerable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. The following quote from Absec NSW captures this well (Absec NSW, 2020):

“ *The voices of Aboriginal people are often marginalised in public policy conversations about Aboriginal children and families, particularly those families doing it tough to overcome the challenges they face and support their children to thrive.* ”

“ *The dominant narrative is relatively straightforward. Aboriginal children are more likely to be reported at risk of significant harm, and are more likely to be removed from their families. Further, having been removed from their families, Aboriginal children tend to stay in care longer, and are less likely to be returned home. This deficit focus frames the conversation in terms of dysfunctional Aboriginal families and communities, requiring the desperate intervention of the state to rescue Aboriginal children from harm... Absec rejects this narrative. Our communities acknowledge the higher rates of poverty and disadvantage inflicted upon Aboriginal communities, and the impact this has on family functioning. However they also describe a system that, despite the clear lessons of past policies and practices, continues to be focused on intervention and removal, the exercise of statutory authority over families and the imposition of external, non-Aboriginal “solutions” that continues on ongoing cycle of harm.* ”

Children from remote communities are more likely to be the subject of a child protection substantiation. In addition, there is a strong discrepancy in child protection by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status both in use of any child protective services and in out-of-home care. This is the largest disparity across any measure in this report.

It is also worth noting that COVID-19 is likely to have an impact on child protection over the course of the pandemic. The ‘child protection in the time of COVID-19’ report from the AIHW lays out numerous findings around changes in child protection in 2020 (AIHW, 2021). Their main findings were that the number of children in out-of-home care was relatively stable during the period, but notifications to child protection services changed across the year, falling during the ‘first wave’ lockdown but then increasing after that. In addition, they point out that many risk factors for child abuse and neglect have increased during the pandemic





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ARACY'S NEST WELLBEING DOMAINS

UNICEF CHILDREN'S GOALS

Material basics

Every child thrives and survives
 Every child has a fair chance in life
 Every child lives in a clean and safe environment

Children and young people who have access to material basics have the things they need. They live in suitable, secure, stable housing, with appropriate clothing, nutritious food, clean water, and clean air. They have access to transport, to required local services and to open spaces in nature. Their family has enough money for necessities. They have the material items needed to develop as an active member of society such as school supplies, suitable technology, or sporting equipment.

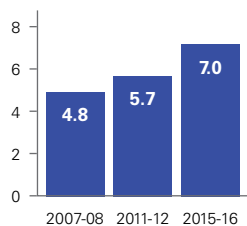
Headline Indicators

Indicator	Measure	National Statistics	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics	Previous rank	Current rank																		
Access to educational resources	15 yrs reporting less than four educational possessions (per 1,000)	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2000</td><td>2009</td><td>2015</td><td>2018</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>46.0</td><td>32.0</td><td>41.1</td><td>43.4</td></tr> </table>		Year	2000	2009	2015	2018	Value	46.0	32.0	41.1	43.4	21/34 (OECD rank 2009)	29/37 (OECD rank 2018)								
		Year	2000	2009	2015	2018																	
Value	46.0	32.0	41.1	43.4																			
Homelessness	% of all those accessing Specialist Homelessness Services in past year who were aged 0-24 yrs	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2009</td><td>11-12</td><td>15-16</td><td>18-19</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>53.7</td><td>46.1</td><td>43.8</td><td>43.7</td></tr> </table> <table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2012</td><td>2016</td><td>18-19</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>57.5</td><td>53.9</td><td>53.0</td></tr> </table>		Year	2009	11-12	15-16	18-19	Value	53.7	46.1	43.8	43.7	Year	2012	2016	18-19	Value	57.5	53.9	53.0		
		Year	2009	11-12	15-16	18-19																	
Value	53.7	46.1	43.8	43.7																			
Year	2012	2016	18-19																				
Value	57.5	53.9	53.0																				

Indicator	Measure	National Statistics	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics	Previous rank	Current rank
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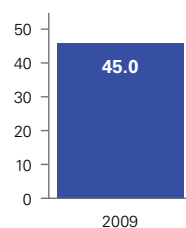
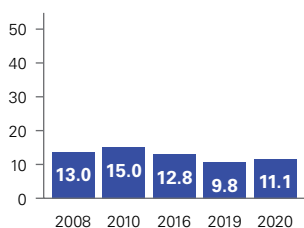
Overcrowding

% families with dependent children in overcrowded housing



Parental unemployment

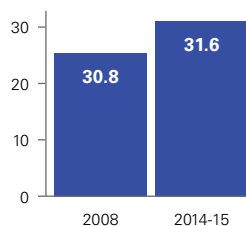
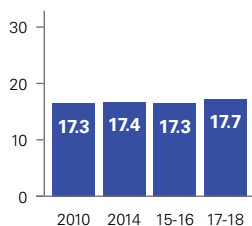
% 0-14 yrs in jobless families



22/27 (OECD rank 2008) 29/32 (OECD rank 2014)

Child poverty

% 0-14 yrs in relative poverty (<50% national median income)

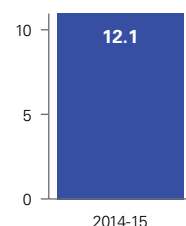
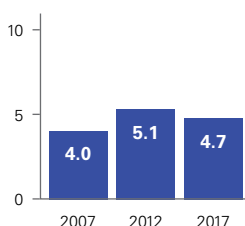


13/41 (OECD rank 2014) 15/41 (OECD 2018)

NB: for international comparisons, relative poverty is measured as under 60% of median income rather than the 50% which is used for the national statistics.

Youth unemployment

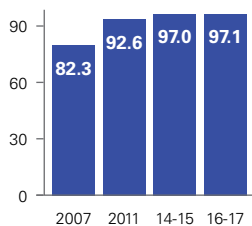
% 15-24 (15-19 in 2007) yrs unemployed and seeking fulltime work



14/35 (OECD rank 2016) 16/34 (OECD 2019)

Information Technology and Internet

% of households with children under 15 with access to internet at home



12/31 (OECD rank 2014) 12/33 (OECD rank 2016)



What does this mean for children and young people?

Most children and young people in Australia have access to the material basics they need to thrive. Most children live in adequate, affordable housing; they have at least one working parent; the majority have access to home internet; rates of hunger are low; and the percentage of young adults in education or employment is generally increasing (ARACY and UNICEF Australia, 2021). However, inequitable conditions mean a small subset of children and young people experience profound deprivation, such as inadequate food, housing, and educational resources, and these disadvantages compound each other. Policy and practice need to target these inequitable conditions to enable all children and young people in Australia to thrive.

Most young people have access to the things they need. Access to technology is widespread and at a record high, with 97% of children aged under 15 years with access to internet and home. This is particularly important as the internet becomes more of an essential good (especially during the COVID-19 pandemic when school may be online-only during lockdowns) (Horrigan, 2019). However, a significant proportion of children aged 0-18 years experience material deprivation with 16% deprived of two or more items considered essential. The deprivation extends to educational resources with about 4% of 15-year-olds reporting less than four educational possessions.

Housing is adequate and affordable for most children and their families. The rate of overcrowding is low, with 93% of families with dependent children living in housing that is not

overcrowded. Housing is affordable for most families with approximately 4 in every 5 families spending less than 30% of their gross income on housing. This figure has remained stable over the last fifteen years. However, the rate of overcrowding has steadily increased over the last 10-15 years. Home ownership for young people however appears to be a challenge. Median house prices in Australia have risen 70.27% between 2011 and 2021 (Bellavance, 2021). Over 90% of homeowners are aged 35 years and above, and this has shown an increase over the last fifteen years.

While this trend may represent changes in the composition of the population (i.e., an aging population), young people are still under-represented amongst homeowners, as only 10% of homeowners were aged 15 - 34 years in 2018 despite constituting 28% of the population (ABS, 2019). Approximately 19,400 children (0.4%) aged 0-14 years were homeless on census night in 2016 (AIHW, 2020). A significant proportion of people accessing homelessness services are children and young people; about 44% are aged less than 25 years overall and about 53% are aged less than 25 years among the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population seeking homelessness services.

Income indicators are mixed for children, young people, and their families. While most families live within an acceptable income range, poverty is very prevalent. About 1 in 6 children aged 0-14 years live below the national poverty line, defined as living off less than half the national median income. A very large proportion of families are below or only just above the poverty line, with more than 25% of children aged 0-14 years living off less than 60% of the national median income. Child poverty is more prevalent amongst Indigenous families with 3 in 10 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children living below the national poverty line.

In Australia, child poverty is ultimately a product of income inequality, where national resources are inequitably distributed amongst the population. Compared to other wealthy countries, income inequality is moderate to high in Australia, which was ranked 23rd out of 37 OECD countries for income inequality in 2019. Income inequality is not just a matter of economic justice: it affects a variety of social indicators such as outcomes in health (Lynch, et al., 2004) or education (Papay, Murnane, & Willett, 2015). There has been no change in indicators of income inequality or poverty in the last decade.

Employment indicators have shown an overall improvement over the last decade with a few exceptions. The rate of joblessness in young families has steadily decreased aside from a small increase in 2020 which may be related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Presently 9 in every 10 families with children aged 0-14 years have at least one parent working. The rate is even higher for families with dependent students aged 0-24 years, although the trajectory is relatively stable rather than improving.

Most dependent young people aged 15-24 years are either in education or employment, and again this has shown steady improvement over the last decade aside from an increase in the context of COVID-19. This improving trajectory is also seen for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. The percentage of dependent students in either education or employment sat at 88% in 2020, down from 91.6% the preceding year.

Aside from COVID-19, there are other challenges to employment for young people. Firstly, the rate of long-term employment for people aged 15-24 years has increased almost ten-fold since 2006 and was last measured at about 6% in 2014 (the most recent year for which data is available). In August 2021, total unemployment for people aged 15-24 years was 10.2%, much higher than the overall population rate at 4.5% (ABS, 2021). On an international scale, this puts Australia at 16th out of 34 comparable countries in 2019.

Lastly, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people face inequitable opportunities for employment. However, more young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people are in education or employment than not, and the trajectory is increasing. The latest measure in 2015 showed 67.5% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people were either in education or employment, up from 60% in 2011.

Access to material basics is a strength for most children and young people in Australia. However, a significant proportion of children and young people remain deprived of very basic needs including food, adequate housing, and educational resources. Relative poverty among families with younger children is high and our indicators suggest pressure on cost of living such as overcrowding. Adolescents and young adults face increasing rates of long-term unemployment and are under-represented regarding homeownership. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people also face more inequitable conditions, with higher rates of poverty and joblessness among families with dependent children and higher rates of unemployment for young people.

It is especially important to consider and address COVID-19 as an exacerbating factor. However, there are promising trajectories in several areas, including employment amongst young families and the proportion of young people in either education or employment seen in both the overall population and among ASTI young people. It is necessary to understand and amplify these trajectories whilst implementing strategies to address inequity in order equip all children and young people with the material basics they need to thrive.



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Healthy

Every child thrives and survives

Every child lives in a clean and safe environment

Healthy children and young people have their physical, mental, and emotional health needs met. All their developmental health needs are provided for in a timely way and they receive appropriate health services, including preventative measures to address potential or emerging physical, emotional, and mental health concerns.

Headline Indicators

Indicator	Measure	National Statistics	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics	Previous rank	Current rank																		
Disability	% children with a disability 0-24	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2009</td><td>2012</td><td>2015</td><td>2016</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>6.8</td><td>7.3</td><td>7.7</td><td>8.3</td></tr> </table>	Year	2009	2012	2015	2016	Value	6.8	7.3	7.7	8.3	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2012</td><td>2015</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>15.2</td><td>13.8</td></tr> </table>	Year	2012	2015	Value	15.2	13.8				
Year	2009	2012	2015	2016																			
Value	6.8	7.3	7.7	8.3																			
Year	2012	2015																					
Value	15.2	13.8																					
Health at birth	% of liveborn babies with low birthweight	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2000</td><td>2010</td><td>2015</td><td>2019</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>6.3</td><td>6.2</td><td>6.5</td><td>6.6</td></tr> </table>	Year	2000	2010	2015	2019	Value	6.3	6.2	6.5	6.6	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2010</td><td>2015</td><td>2019</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>12.0</td><td>11.9</td><td>10.6</td></tr> </table>	Year	2010	2015	2019	Value	12.0	11.9	10.6	14/39 (OECD rank 2009)	23/43 (OECD rank 2014)
Year	2000	2010	2015	2019																			
Value	6.3	6.2	6.5	6.6																			
Year	2010	2015	2019																				
Value	12.0	11.9	10.6																				
Immunisation	% children fully immunised at age 2	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2008</td><td>2013</td><td>2017</td><td>2019</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>92.7</td><td>92.2</td><td>90.5</td><td>92.5</td></tr> </table>	Year	2008	2013	2017	2019	Value	92.7	92.2	90.5	92.5	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2013</td><td>2016</td><td>2019</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>91.7</td><td>89.1</td><td>91.7</td></tr> </table>	Year	2013	2016	2019	Value	91.7	89.1	91.7	29/34 (OECD rank 2009)	23/44 (OECD rank 2018)
Year	2008	2013	2017	2019																			
Value	92.7	92.2	90.5	92.5																			
Year	2013	2016	2019																				
Value	91.7	89.1	91.7																				
Mental Health 18 - 24	% 18-24 yrs with high or very high psychological distress	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2007</td><td>2011</td><td>14-15</td><td>17-18</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>11.8</td><td>11.8</td><td>15.4</td><td>15.2</td></tr> </table>	Year	2007	2011	14-15	17-18	Value	11.8	11.8	15.4	15.2	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2008</td><td>2014-15</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>29.3</td><td>32.4</td></tr> </table>	Year	2008	2014-15	Value	29.3	32.4				
Year	2007	2011	14-15	17-18																			
Value	11.8	11.8	15.4	15.2																			
Year	2008	2014-15																					
Value	29.3	32.4																					

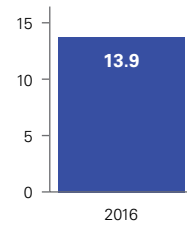
Note: The age range for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics is 0 – 14 years old

NB: The age range for the Aboriginal and Torre Strait Islander statistics is 15-24 years old

Indicator	Measure	National Statistics	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics	Previous rank	Current rank
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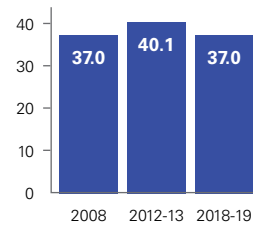
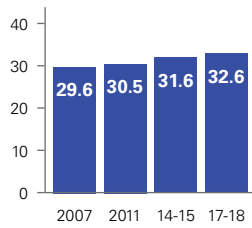
**Mental Health
4 - 17**

% 4-17 yrs with any mental disorder



Physical health

% 5-24 yrs overweight or obese



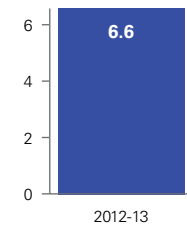
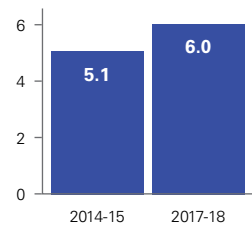
28/39
(OECD
rank 2013)

28/36
(OECD
rank 2016)

NB: The age range for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics is 2-14 years old

Nutrition

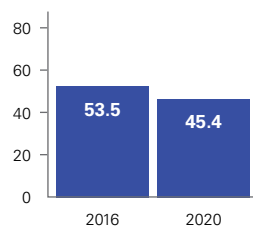
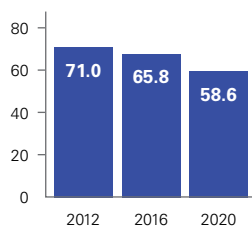
% 2-17yrs meeting minimum recommended consumption of fruit and vegetables



NB: The age range for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics is 5-17 years old.

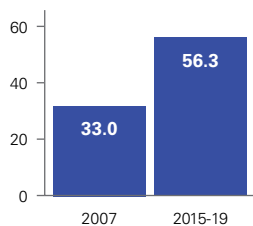
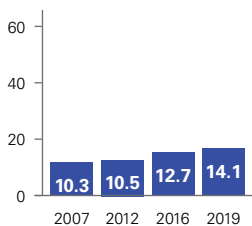
Subjective wellbeing

% 15-19 rating themselves as happy or very happy



Suicide

15-24 yrs suicide rate (deaths per 100,000)



21/29
(OECD
rank 2008)

23/37
(OECD
rank 2012-13)



What does this mean for children and young people?

Our snapshot indicators show that most children in Australia enjoy good health, with many promising trends and some key areas that could be targeted to lift the health of children overall.

Key strengths start early in life, with increasing rates of women participating in early antenatal care and decreasing rates of maternal smoking over the last decade. Current figures indicate that 3 in every 4 women overall and 2 in every 3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women access antenatal care before 14 weeks. Of note are the improvements in infant mortality and low birth weight among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women which have improved over the last decade compared to relatively consistent rates in the Australian population overall. Presently, approximately 95% of babies overall and 90% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies are not born at a low birthweight.

Another encouraging finding is high immunisations rates with 95% of children overall and 97% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 5 years being fully vaccinated (Australian Government Department of Health, 2021). These promising trajectories in antenatal care, maternal smoking, and low birth weight and infant mortality rates (for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies) can be harnessed to address inequities in health outcomes and to lift the health of Australian children overall. For example, maternal smoking rates remain relatively high among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers, with 4 in every 10 mothers smoking prior to 20 weeks.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies are also more likely to be born with a low birthweight. The link between maternal cigarette exposure and low birthweight infants is well-established (Kataoka, et al., 2018), therefore targeting a reduction in smoking among all mothers has the potential to positively impact inequities in low birthweight as well as reduce the rate of low birthweight overall. Given that pre-term and low birthweight complications is the leading

contributor to the burden of disease in Australian children under age 5 years (AIHW, 2021), this is an important opportunity for intervention.

Disability rate among children and young people are variable depending on the age group. In young children aged 0-4 years, disability rates have remained stable over the last 20 years at a rate of about 3-4%. Older children aged 5-14 years show just a slight upwards trend over the last decade and presently sits at around 1 in every 10 children. Conversely, incidence of disability among adolescents and young adults aged 15-24 has increased by approximately 50% and sits at around 1 in every 10 young people. This may represent increasing awareness and diagnosis of disability rather than increased incidence.

The physical health indicators of Australian children show some important strengths and trends, although also demonstrate some key areas that need to be addressed. Most young people rate their health highly, with over 90% of children self-reporting their health as good or excellent. Injury deaths in children aged 0-14 are declining overall. Regarding nutrition, Australian children generally experience very low levels of hunger with approximately 97% of children having adequate access to food; increasing rates of children are meeting the daily recommended intake of fruit and vegetables; and most children fall within a healthy weight range.

However, there are some important caveats. Firstly, there are inequities in health outcomes, with injury deaths about three times higher for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and this rate is not falling as it is in the general population. And although small, an important 3% of children report regularly going to bed hungry due to inadequate food supply at home. In a high-income country like Australia, our target should be zero.

On a larger scale, rates of fruit and especially vegetable consumption are presently inadequate. For example, almost 95% of children aged 2-18 years do not meet the daily recommended intake of vegetables. This is coupled with concerningly low rates of physical activity with more than half of young people aged 15-24 years reporting they are sedentary or engage in low levels physical activity, and just a quarter of children aged 10-14 playing sports outside of school on an almost daily basis. Although most children fall within a health weight range, rates of overweight children are climbing with approximately 1 in 3 children aged 5-24 years overweight or obese and slightly higher than this for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. These indicators are alarming as they are risk factors for important diseases in adulthood such as coronary heart disease, the largest contributor to disease burden in Australia (AIHW, 2021).

In short, Australian children are experiencing large-scale, high-risk behaviours such as low intake of vegetables, sedentary lifestyle, and obesity, while subpopulations are

susceptible to important inequitable outcomes including increased rates of injury among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and hunger.

Fortunately, these factors are considered modifiable, and children and young people remain optimistic about their health. Policies and programs that enhance physical activity and improve diet among children and young people are critical to addressing their present and future health trajectory, while targeted interventions to address injury rates and hunger is also needed to reduce health inequities and brings all Australian children to optimal physical health.

Adolescent-specific health indicators particularly alcohol and drug use are stand out among young Australians on a global scale. Previous data (from 2014) ranked Australian rates of daily smoking among 18–24-year-olds and consumption of risky amounts of alcohol among 12–17-year-olds as the lowest in the developed world, with rates in both indicators continuing to decline. About 1 in every 8 young people aged 12-17 years have ever used illicit substances. However, inequitable health outcomes are present with rates of daily smoking around 3 times higher among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people ages 18-24 years.

We want children and young people in Australia to be thriving and in many ways, they are. Most infants in Australia are off to a good start in life, being born at a healthy birthweight with most mothers accessing early antenatal care. Rates of hunger are low, immunisation rates are high, and children and young people feel positive about their physical health and optimistic about the future. Young people continue to have low levels of cigarette and alcohol consumption among the lowest in the world.

However, there are some key opportunities for improvement. These include improving the physical activity and diets of children and young people and implementing evidence-based interventions that can address increasing rates of mental health problems and suicide. In addition, key areas of health inequities persist for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people particularly around perinatal health, childhood injuries, and mental health outcomes.

However important gains have also been made among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, with increasing rates of babies being born a healthy birthweight, increased uptake of antenatal care, and declines in infant mortality, maternal smoking, and youth suicide. This represents an important opportunity to learn what works to improve health outcomes for children and young people. Capitalising on these strengths and addressing areas of improvement and inequity is needed to lift the health of children and young people in Australia overall.



Mental health

Children and young people in Australia are optimistic about their future despite a trend towards increased mental health concerns. More than 95% of children feel positive about their future. However, there has been trend towards increased rates of psychological distress, mental illness, and suicide over the last ten to fifteen years and the gap between mental health indicators for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous young people remains high.

The incidence of probable serious mental illness for people aged 15-19 years is 1 in 3 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and 1 in 4 for the overall population of 15–19-year-olds. Suicide rates in similar age groups remain about 4 times higher for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people despite a reduction in recent years not seen in the overall population.

Fortunately, there has been increasing recognition of the importance of fostering good mental health in recent years and improved understanding of risk and protective factors (Australian Government Department of Health, 2003). Experience of mental health also varies notably by gender and gender identity. Young women are more likely to suffer from depression and anxiety disorders. They are also more likely to report high or very high psychological distress (AIHW, 2020). However, young men are more likely to be diagnosed with any mental health condition driven by much higher rates of behavioural disorders (particularly ADHD) (Lawrence, et al., 2015).

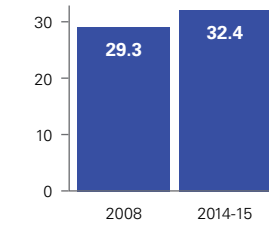
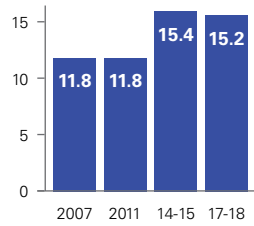
Transgender and gender diverse children and young people have severely worse mental health outcomes than their cisgender peers. Transgender and gender diverse people aged 14 to 25 are seven times more likely to have been diagnosed with depression, five and a half times more likely to have been diagnosed with anxiety; they are 15 times more likely to attempt suicide; and 90.2% of those aged 14 to 21 reported high or very high levels of psychological distress.

Many children report regular difficulties with sleep, with 12-16% of those in Years 4 to 8 reporting difficulty sleeping almost every day.

There are some indicators to suggest that COVID-19 may have worsened the mental health of young people. According to polling conducted by the Australian National University, COVID-19 was a serious stressor of youth mental health with 18 – 24-year-olds reporting the greatest fall in subjective wellbeing of any age bracket of adults between January 2020 and August 2021 (Biddle & Gray, 2021). In addition, 58% of parents and carers rated COVID-19 as having a negative impact on their child's mental health in 2021 (Biddle & Gray, 2021)..

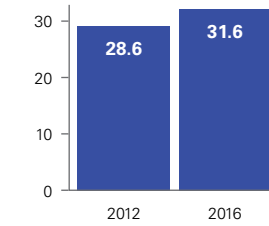
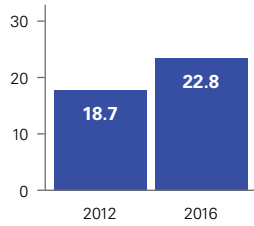
Measure	National Statistics	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics	Previous rank	Current rank
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% 18-24 yrs with high or very high psychological distress

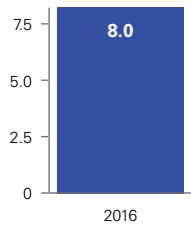


NB: The age range for the Aboriginal and Torre Strait Islander statistics is 15-24 years old

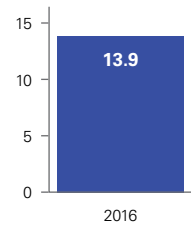
% 15-19 yrs with probable serious mental illness



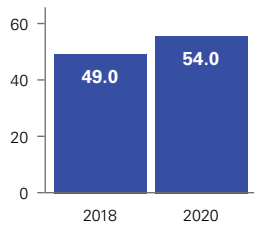
% 12-17 yrs self-harming in previous 12 months



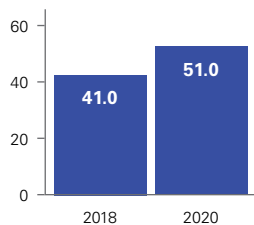
% 4-17 yrs with any mental disorder



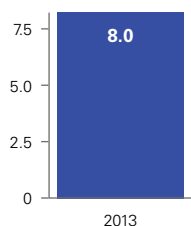
% reporting lacking companionship some of the time / often



Ability to carry out usual activities in past two weeks – % unable on at least one day



% 12-17 yrs who have self-harmed in past 12 months





ARACY'S NEST WELLBEING DOMAINS

UNICEF CHILDREN'S GOALS

Learning

Every child learns

Children and young people learn through a variety of experiences within the classroom, the home, and the community in which they live. Their individual learning needs are addressed to allow them to realise their full learning potential. Families are engaged in their child's learning. Children and young people are supported and encouraged to learn in a wide variety of settings, including formal education. They have opportunities to participate in a breadth of experiences where their learning is valued and supported by their family and in the wider community.

Headline Indicators

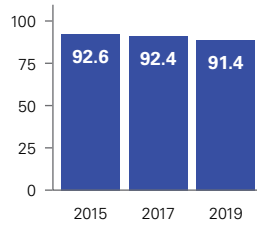
Indicator	Measure	National Statistics	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics	Previous rank	Current rank																
Early childhood education	% 4-5 yrs (who do not attend primary school) usually attending preschool	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><th>Value</th></tr> <tr><td>2008</td><td>82.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2011</td><td>85.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2014</td><td>83.3</td></tr> <tr><td>2017</td><td>86.8</td></tr> </table>	Year	Value	2008	82.0	2011	85.0	2014	83.3	2017	86.8	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><th>Value</th></tr> <tr><td>2015</td><td>79.8</td></tr> <tr><td>2018</td><td>81.0</td></tr> </table>	Year	Value	2015	79.8	2018	81.0	35/40 (OECD 2014)	29/48 (OECD 2019)
		Year	Value																		
2008	82.0																				
2011	85.0																				
2014	83.3																				
2017	86.8																				
Year	Value																				
2015	79.8																				
2018	81.0																				
Parent engagement	% parents read from book or told story to child 0-2yrs in past week	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><th>Value</th></tr> <tr><td>2008</td><td>80.0</td></tr> <tr><td>2011</td><td>80.2</td></tr> <tr><td>2014</td><td>80.8</td></tr> <tr><td>2017</td><td>83.6</td></tr> </table>	Year	Value	2008	80.0	2011	80.2	2014	80.8	2017	83.6	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><th>Value</th></tr> <tr><td>2008</td><td>67.2</td></tr> <tr><td>2014</td><td>70.3</td></tr> </table>	Year	Value	2008	67.2	2014	70.3		
		Year	Value																		
2008	80.0																				
2011	80.2																				
2014	80.8																				
2017	83.6																				
Year	Value																				
2008	67.2																				
2014	70.3																				

NB: For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children this data measured parents of 4-14-year-olds who read from a book, told child a story or listened to child read in last week

Indicator	Measure	National Statistics	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics	Previous rank	Current rank
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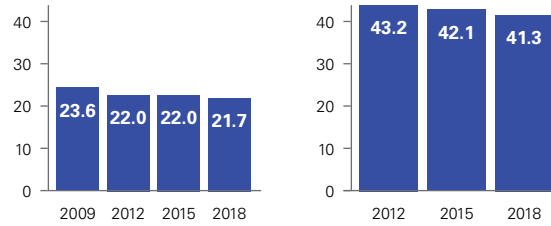
School attendance

% attendance for students in Years 1-10 in all schools



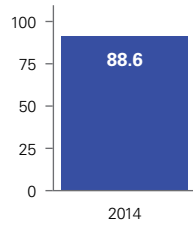
School readiness

% children at first year of school developmentally vulnerable on one or more domain



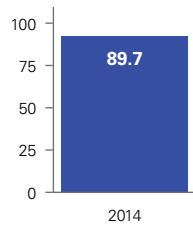
School satisfaction

% children reporting that school is a place where they feel happy - Year 4

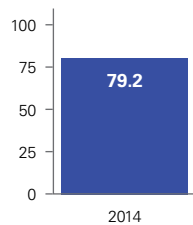


26/34
(across all years)

% children reporting that school is a place where they feel happy - Year 6



% children reporting that school is a place where they feel happy - Year 8



What does this mean for children and young people?

The early years have become a key policy area due to its role in perpetuating or mitigating inequities, not just in educational outcomes but wellbeing more generally. Education particularly is an important social determinant of health. For most children, indicators around early childhood education are positive. More than 4 in every 5 children not in primary school attend preschool. Rates are similar for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children overall, and both cohorts have shown a slight upwards trend.

However, there is room for improvement. On an international scale, Australia performs in the middle with a rank of 29 out of 48 comparable countries regarding rates of preschool attendance. Preschool in the years before school is important for school readiness and is particularly beneficial for children who face challenges in other areas of their life (AIHW, 2015). In this sense preschool represents an important opportunity to reduce educational inequity.

Another factor which influences school readiness is parents engaging children in learning activities at home. Activities such as reading books, telling stories, singing, and cooking with young children help teach them foundational skills in literacy and numeracy. At present, about 4 in every 5 parents report reading or telling a story to their infant (age 0-2 years) in the last week, and about half of parents report that they often engage their child in early literacy and numeracy activities before starting school.

While these statistics show significant room for improvement, they also represent a very promising target for intervention. Supporting families to access quality preschool programs, and to sing, talk and play with their young children is not only a widely acceptable policy goal for parents and children, but is also an important step in lifting educational outcomes and thereby altering the trajectory of an important social determinant of health.

Developmental vulnerability as measured at school commencement considers both academic and non-academic elements of school readiness, incorporating measures of physical health and wellbeing, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills, and communication skills and general knowledge (AEDC, 2021). Developmental vulnerability is important due to the associated risk of poorer educational outcomes in later schooling years.

For example, developmental vulnerability at school entry is associated with lower NAPLAN scores, lower subjective wellbeing, and increased risk of school disengagement and bullying from Years 3 and beyond (Evans-Whipp, Mundy, Miller, Canterford, & Patton, 2018). Developmental vulnerability is predictive of Year 7 educational performance, where almost half the children commencing school



developmentally vulnerable will not meet threshold performance levels for reading and numeracy in Year 7 (Evans-Whipp, Mundy, Miller, Canterford, & Patton, 2018). Importantly, the gap between developmentally vulnerable children and not-vulnerable children is enhanced throughout the school years, with developmentally vulnerable children about 2 years behind their peers by Year 7 (Evans-Whipp, Mundy, Miller, Canterford, & Patton, 2018).

While most children who commence school do not have developmental vulnerability, about 1 in 5 children overall and 2 in 4 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children will be developmentally vulnerable in at least one or more domain by school entry. Addressing developmental vulnerability requires a coordinated approach beyond the education sector and is again an important avenue for addressing the growing inequity that presently occurs as children pass through the schooling system.

Indicators around schooling incorporate academic performance as well as non-academic outcomes and parental engagement in their child's learning. Current non-academic indicators are generally more positive for primary school years and tend to decline with age and especially on entry to secondary school.

Parent engagement is the exception, remaining relatively stable through the school years with about 85% of children reporting their parents make sure they set aside time for homework and ask them what they learned at school at least once a week, measured at Years 4, 6, and 8. Engagement through dialogue with teachers is lower and appears to show a decrease with age: about 68% of Year 4 children report their parents talk to their teacher at least once or twice a term, dropping off of 61% in Year 6 and falling heavily to 38% by Year 8. Two recent systematic reviews have shown that parental engagement is an important predictor of student success across both primary and secondary education (Evidence for Learning, 2021). No data is available regarding parent engagement indicators for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.



Similar patterns are seen for other non-academic indicators including school attendance, school satisfaction, teacher support, and school pressure as reported by students. About 10-12% of students in Years 4, 6, and 8 miss school at least once a week. Year 8 students miss about 10% of school days overall, slightly above the 7-8% of school days missed by students in Years 4 and 6, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children of the same age miss roughly twice the amount of school days. No data are available on trajectories of school attendance.

Both school satisfaction and teacher support are strengths, especially in the younger school years: about 90% of primary school children (measured in Years 4 and 6) report that school is a place they feel happy, dropping to about 80% in Year 8. About 80% of children in Years 4 and 6 report they have a teacher that really cares for them and who listens to them when they have something to say.

School pressure on the other hand shows some concerning trends, with about one third of students in Year 6 reporting feeling some or a lot of pressure from schoolwork, increasing to about half of students by Year 8. Importantly no data are available on the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children regarding school satisfaction, teacher support, and school pressure.

The tendency for these non-academic indicators to decline between Years 4 and 8 has important policy and practice implications, as negative schooling experienced in the middle years have been identified as a predictor of lower academic performance in Year 7 (Evans-Whipp, Mundy, Miller, Canterford, & Patton, 2018). While developmental vulnerability at school entry remains a strong risk factor for poorer academic outcomes in Year 7, a recent longitudinal

study of students through the middle years found that most students who did not meet reading and numeracy performance thresholds in Year 7 were not developmentally vulnerable at school commencement (Evans-Whipp, Mundy, Miller, Canterford, & Patton, 2018).

This implies that experiences in the middle years such as bullying, school disengagement, low wellbeing, and emotional and behavioural challenges can independently influence Year 7 academic outcomes. Despite the importance of non-academic outcomes on academic performance, data gaps remain including for all high school students (above Year 8) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students across all age groups.

Regarding higher school years, the Year 12 retention rate has been gradually increasing for students overall and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, aside from a slight dip in 2020 in both cohorts which may be related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Inequities persist with notably lower rates of Year 12 retention for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students than the overall population. Prior to 2020, the trajectory of Year 12 retention was improving at a much faster rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and represents an important learning opportunity about how best to support students in their higher school education.

Above: UNICEF Australia supports Indi Kindi, an inclusive and culturally-appropriate early childhood education program for children in remote communities. © Moriarty Foundation/Quilliam



International testing performance

Academic performance is closely monitored on a national and international scale. There are two major sets of internationally comparable standardised tests for assessing student learning across countries.

The first is PISA which is overseen by the OECD, it measures the performance of 15-year-old students across maths, science and reading. The second is the TIMSS/PIRLS program run by the IEA – an international non-profit. TIMSS focuses on maths and science while PIRLS focuses on reading, although they gather data on a much broader range of indicators than PISA including on educational context. Both TIMSS and PIRLS cover students in the equivalent of Australian Years 4 and 8.

Here we have included TIMSS/PIRLS for students in Year 4 to measure performance of students in this age range. Where PISA and TIMSS/PIRLS cover the same age group at Years 8 and 9, we have reported PISA results. This is because PISA allows for comparison with a broader group of countries, is reported more frequently, and results between the two correlate strongly (Swenson, 2017). In addition, while TIMSS/PIRLS changes to test how well students have learnt the local curriculum, PISA content is standardised.

The Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration (Department of Education, 2019) made by all Australian Education Ministers, has two distinct but interconnected goals:

Goal 1: The Australian education system promotes excellence and equity.

Goal 2: All young Australians become confident and creative individuals, successful lifelong learners, and active and informed members of the community.

Meeting minimum educational thresholds is one measure of this. Most Australian students meet educational thresholds, with roughly 4 in 5 primary and secondary school students overall above the low benchmark for reading, mathematics, and science on international examinations. However, there are several concerning points arising from the data.

The first is the deeply inequitable outcomes faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, who face about a 50% chance of scoring above the low threshold for each academic domain throughout high school and secondary school. This means that about half of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students are not adequately supported to achieve sufficient skills in literacy, numeracy, and science to engage effectively in society. As

a social determinant of health, this has implications beyond educational attainment. This calls for drastic policy and practice changes including and beyond education to learn how to better support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through their schooling.

The second concerning point is the trajectory of school performance in secondary school. The proportion of students meeting the minimum benchmark for reading, science, and mathematics has steadily declined over the last 10-15 years, with one exception: an improvement in the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students meeting the minimum benchmark for mathematics. Unpicking this finding represents an important opportunity to learn what works to improve academic outcomes.

Interestingly, the concerning trajectories in academic performance in secondary school are not reflected in academic performance in primary school, where the proportion of students above the low benchmark have either remained stable or improved over time. This is an interesting finding given the tendency for non-academic educational outcomes to decline upon high school entry and the growing understanding of the impact of non-academic outcomes on educational performance.

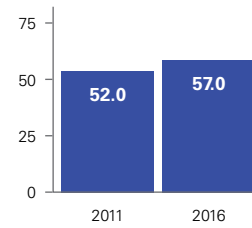
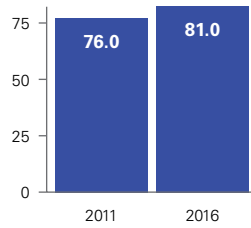
Taken together these trends in academic performance – particularly the discrepancy between primary and secondary school trajectories, and the improving trajectory of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student performance in mathematics as an outlier among the remaining secondary school academic trajectories – and trends in non-academic outcomes across primary and secondary school years provide important clues as to how to best enhance educational outcomes for students.



Indicator	Measure	National Statistics	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics	Previous rank	Current rank
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Performance in Reading, Maths & Science (Year 4)

% year 4 above the low benchmark for reading

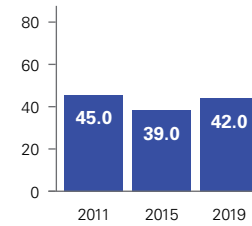
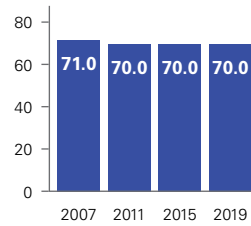


19/24
(TIMMS
PIRLS
2011)

28/50
(TIMMS
PIRLS
2015)

Performance in Reading, Maths & Science (Year 4)

% year 4 above the low benchmark for maths

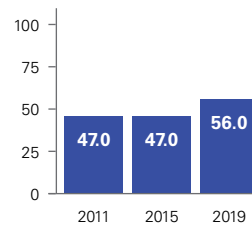
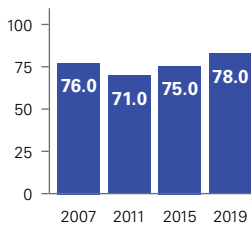


28/49
(TIMMS
PIRLS
2015)

27/58
(TIMMS
PIRLS
2019)

Performance in Reading, Maths & Science (Year 4)

% year 4 above the low benchmark for science

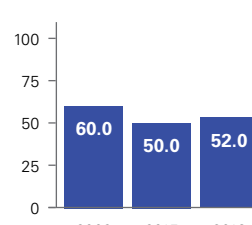
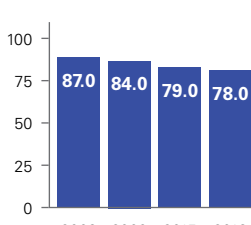


28/47
(TIMMS
PIRLS
2015)

14/58
(TIMMS
PIRLS
2019)

Performance in Reading, Maths & Science 15 yr olds (PISA)

% 15 yrs at level 2 and above for maths

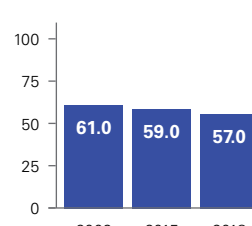
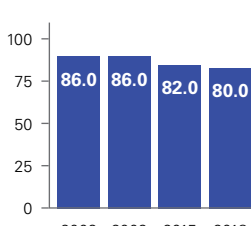


25/57
(PISA
2015)

29/79
(PISA
2018)

Performance in Reading, Maths & Science 15 yr olds (PISA)

% 15 yrs at level 2 and above for reading

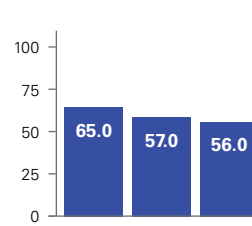
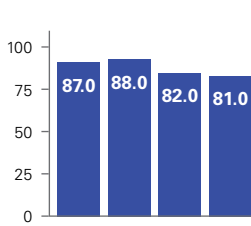


16/57
(PISA
2015)

16/77
(PISA
2018)

Performance in Reading, Maths & Science 15 yr olds (PISA)

% 15 yrs at level 2 and above for science



14/57
(PISA
2015)

17/79
(PISA
2018)



ARACY'S NEST WELLBEING DOMAINS

UNICEF CHILDREN'S GOALS

Participating

Every child has a fair chance in life Every child thrives and survives

Participating is about children and young people having a voice, being listened to, and taken seriously within their family and community. It means having a say in decisions that impact them. It is being empowered to speak out and express themselves. Participating includes involvement with peers and groups through a variety of activities, including online communities. Participating means being an active member of society.

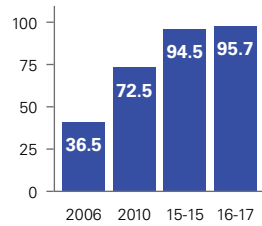
Headline Indicators

Indicator	Measure	National Statistics	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics	Previous rank	Current rank										
Engagement in sport or recreation	% 15-24 yrs who have participated in sport or recreational physical activity in past year	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><th>Percentage</th></tr> <tr><td>2014-15</td><td>82.1</td></tr> </table>	Year	Percentage	2014-15	82.1	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><th>Percentage</th></tr> <tr><td>2008</td><td>93.4</td></tr> <tr><td>2014-15</td><td>97.1</td></tr> </table>	Year	Percentage	2008	93.4	2014-15	97.1		
Year	Percentage														
2014-15	82.1														
Year	Percentage														
2008	93.4														
2014-15	97.1														
Civic engagement	% 18-24 yrs participated in groups in past year...civic and political groups	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><th>Percentage</th></tr> <tr><td>2006</td><td>11.1</td></tr> <tr><td>2010</td><td>10.7</td></tr> <tr><td>2014</td><td>5.4</td></tr> </table>	Year	Percentage	2006	11.1	2010	10.7	2014	5.4			22/31 (OECD 2011 14)		
Year	Percentage														
2006	11.1														
2010	10.7														
2014	5.4														

Indicator	Measure	National Statistics	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics	Previous rank	Current rank
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Engagement through technology

% 18-24 yrs spent time in Internet social activity in past 3 months

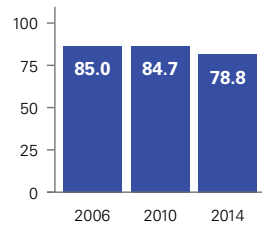


22/32
(OECD rank 2014)

NB: for 2014 – 15 national statistics, this measured social media use.

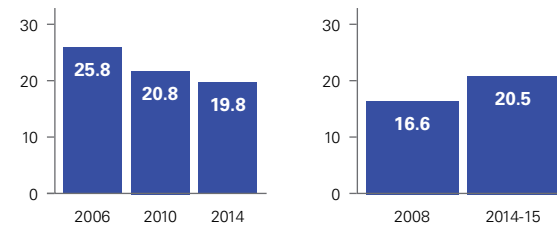
Having a voice with friends and family

% 18-24 yrs feel able to have a say among family and friends on important issues all or most of the time



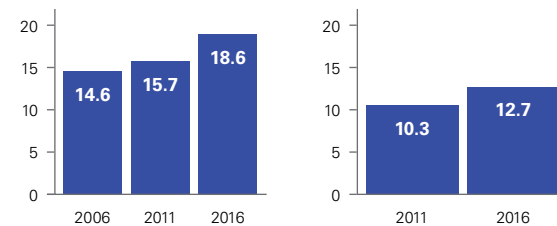
Having a voice in the community

% 15-24 yrs feel able to have a say within community on important issues all or most of the time



Volunteering

% 15-24 yrs who spent time doing unpaid voluntary work in the previous 12 months



5/35
(OECD rank 2006-15)

What does this mean for children and young people?

Indicators of participation consider engagement with technology, community participation, and having a voice, both amongst family and friends and within political systems. There has been a shift in the patterns of engagement, with the main pattern being a shift from community participation to engaging with online communities.

While young people generally have high participation in sporting and cultural activities and feel comfortable having a say among family and friends, there are notable limitations on their ability to have a say among their community and on civic and political issues. It is also noteworthy that there is a general lack of data on children's participation, with available data mainly focused on the 18-25 age range. Much more work is needed to identify indicators and data sources that adequately reflect this dimension.

Participation through technology is high and increasing for children and young people. Over 90% of people aged 14-17 years own a mobile phone, up from 80% 5 years earlier. Over 95% of young adults 18-24 years have spent time on internet social activity in the past 3 months, a figure that has almost tripled over the last 15 years.

Community participation has shown some mixed trends. Volunteering of young adults (18-24 years) has increased, with the latest data in 2016 showing just over 1 in 6 young adults spent time doing unpaid voluntary work in the last 12 months. Most young people participate in physical and cultural activities at least annually, with about 82% of people aged 15-24 years participating in a sport or recreational activity in the last year and about 94% involved in a least one organised cultural activity.

A single indicator of young people with disability shows high rates of community participation, with 95% of children aged 5-14 years with a disability report having engaged in a social activity away from home in the previous 3 months. Concerningly, participation within the neighbourhood appears to decrease significantly with age. While about 73% children in Year 4 report having lots of fun things to do in their neighbourhood, this decreases to 67% in Year 6 and 47% in Year 8.

Children and young people being able to have a say in issues that affect them is consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1989). Most young adults feel able to have a say amongst family and friends, with about 4 in every 5 adults aged 18-24 years reporting feeling able to have a say among family and friends on important issues all or most of the time. Importantly, this has shown a slight decrease over time. Much lower are the figures for being able to have a say within community on important issues all or most of the time, with just 1 in 5 young people aged 15-24 years

feeling able to have a say within community on important issues all or most of the time, with steady decrease since 2006. Interestingly, this contrasts with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of the same age who are more likely to feel able to have a say amongst community and show an increasing trend over time (see Breakout box: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation).

Limited indicators are available which detail political participation, but the data that is available suggests young people need much more support actively engaging in civic and political issues. Despite expressing concerns about highly political issues including the environment, discrimination, and mental health (Tiller, et al., 2020), participation in civic and political groups is at an all-time low: just 5% of people aged 18-24 years participated in civic and political groups in past year, a number that has halved in the last decade.

While voting participation is high on an international scale, this is very likely a function of mandatory voting in Australia – an arrangement which is uncommon internationally – and does not necessarily reflect meaningful participation within the democracy (OECD, 2020). Taken together, young people appear concerned and engaged about political issues but are either unable or unconvinced that their participation is meaningful. Young people have a strong vested interest in political decisions, including employment, education, and environmental issues, and have a right to have a say.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation

There are important lessons to be learned from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, who have very high and increasing rates of participation in sport or recreational physical activity compared to the overall population: in 2015, 97% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 15-24 years participated in sport or recreational physical activity in the past year compared to 82% of young people overall, an increase from 93% in 2008. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young adults are also more likely to feel able to have a say within their community. Importantly this has shown an increase over time, unlike for young people in general whose ability to have a say among family and friends and within their community has been decreasing steadily since 2006.



Above: Indi Kindi educator Deandra has been delivering inclusive and culturally-appropriate early childhood education in her remote community in the Northern Territory for over five years. © Moriarty Foundation/Lister

Indicator	Measure	National Statistics	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics														
Having a voice in the community	% 15-24 yrs feel able to have a say within community on important issues all or most of the time	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2006</td><td>2010</td><td>2014</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>25.8</td><td>20.8</td><td>19.8</td></tr> </table>	Year	2006	2010	2014	Value	25.8	20.8	19.8	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2008</td><td>2014-15</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>16.6</td><td>20.5</td></tr> </table>	Year	2008	2014-15	Value	16.6	20.5
Year	2006	2010	2014														
Value	25.8	20.8	19.8														
Year	2008	2014-15															
Value	16.6	20.5															
Having a voice with friends and family	% 18-24 yrs feel able to have a say among family and friends on important issues all or most of the time	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><td>2006</td><td>2010</td><td>2014</td></tr> <tr><th>Value</th><td>85.0</td><td>84.7</td><td>78.8</td></tr> </table>	Year	2006	2010	2014	Value	85.0	84.7	78.8							
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Year	2014-15																
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Year	2008	2014-15															
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Positive Identity & Culture

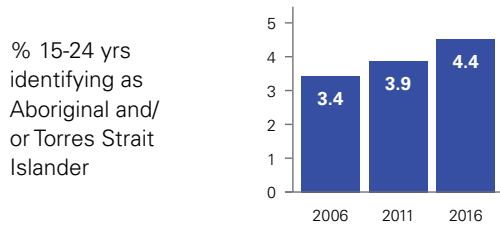
Every child has a fair chance in life
Every child thrives and survives
Every child learns

Having a positive sense of identity and culture is central to the wellbeing of all children and young people. This is important for all, regardless of background, but in Australia, especially for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. It encompasses having spiritual needs met, a sense of cultural connectedness, belonging and acceptance at home and in the community – and confidence that their identity, culture, and community is respected and valued. It involves feeling safe and supported in expressing one’s identity, regardless of gender, sexuality, culture, or language.

Headline Indicators

Indicator	Measure	National Statistics	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics	Previous rank	Current rank																		
Acceptance of other cultures	% 15-24 yrs who report being tolerant of society being comprised of different cultures	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><th>Value</th></tr> <tr><td>2010</td><td>83.5</td></tr> <tr><td>2014</td><td>89.6</td></tr> </table>	Year	Value	2010	83.5	2014	89.6															
Year	Value																						
2010	83.5																						
2014	89.6																						
Body image	% 15-19 yrs reporting that body image is an issue of personal concern	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><th>Value</th></tr> <tr><td>2007</td><td>33.1</td></tr> <tr><td>2013</td><td>30.8</td></tr> <tr><td>2017</td><td>31.1</td></tr> <tr><td>2020</td><td>33.0</td></tr> </table>	Year	Value	2007	33.1	2013	30.8	2017	31.1	2020	33.0	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><th>Value</th></tr> <tr><td>2013</td><td>32.8</td></tr> <tr><td>2017</td><td>30.7</td></tr> <tr><td>2020</td><td>33.1</td></tr> </table>	Year	Value	2013	32.8	2017	30.7	2020	33.1		
Year	Value																						
2007	33.1																						
2013	30.8																						
2017	31.1																						
2020	33.0																						
Year	Value																						
2013	32.8																						
2017	30.7																						
2020	33.1																						
Experience of discrimination	% 15-19 yrs who have experienced discrimination in past year	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><th>Value</th></tr> <tr><td>2016</td><td>26.6</td></tr> <tr><td>2020</td><td>27.0</td></tr> </table>	Year	Value	2016	26.6	2020	27.0	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><th>Value</th></tr> <tr><td>2016</td><td>41.4</td></tr> <tr><td>2020</td><td>39.0</td></tr> </table>	Year	Value	2016	41.4	2020	39.0		22/31 (OECD 2011 14)						
Year	Value																						
2016	26.6																						
2020	27.0																						
Year	Value																						
2016	41.4																						
2020	39.0																						
Gender and sexuality	% 14 - 21 yrs who identify as LGBTQ+ and have told most of them/all of them... family	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Year</th><th>Value</th></tr> <tr><td>2020</td><td>25.9</td></tr> </table>	Year	Value	2020	25.9			22/32 (OECD rank 2014)														
Year	Value																						
2020	25.9																						

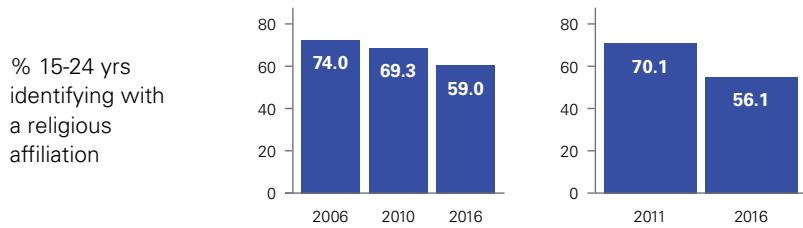
Indicator	Measure	National Statistics	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics	Previous rank	Current rank
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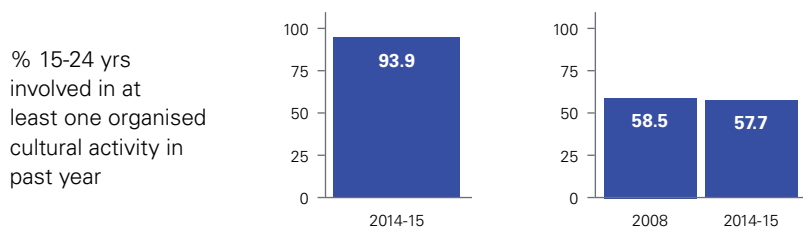
Indigenous identification



Religion



Engagement in cultural activities



What does this mean for children and young people?

A variety of indicators describe elements of identity and culture expressed by children and young people in Australia. About 1 in every 5 people aged 5-24 years were born overseas and a similar proportion speak a language other than English at home. Both indicators have increased notably over the last decade, with the proportion of overseas born children approximately doubling between 2006 and 2016. Just under 5% of people aged 15-24 years identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander which has also increased slightly over the last decade (4.4% in 2016 up from 3.4% in 2006). Religious affiliation on the other hand

has decreased, with about 60% of people aged 15-24 years identifying with a religious affiliation in 2016 compared to 74% in 2006. Similar proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people aged 15-24 years identify with a religious affiliation at 56%.

Gender, sexuality, and body image are important elements of identity and indicators around this aspect of identity are mixed. Most sexually and gender diverse young people feel positive about this aspect of their identity, with 3 in every 4 people aged 16-27 years who identify as LGBTQI feeling 'pretty good' or 'great' about identifying as LGBTQI. Disclosure to friends was relatively common, with 96% having told a female friend, about 90% having told a male

friend, and 65% having told most or all their friends. Parents were also often aware with 77% telling their mum and 66% telling their dad.

However, widespread disclosure of LGBTQI identity among community groups was uncommon, with widespread disclosure among teachers and sports teammates the least common. Just under 11% of young people aged 14-21 years who identify as LGBTQI have told most or all their teachers and a similar proportion reported telling most of all their teammates. Disclosure to most or all their co-workers, classmates, and family was slightly more common and ranged from 15 to 26%. This apparent reluctance to disclose LGBTQI identity beyond trusted friends or family may stem from the very high rates of abuse, with about 7 in every 10 people aged 16-27 years who identify as LGBTQI report having experienced abuse because of their sexuality and/or gender identity. Many adolescents rate LGBTQI issues as one of the most important issues facing Australia, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adolescents: about 10% of people aged 15-19 years rate LGBTQI issues as one of the most important issues facing Australia and about 13% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the same age group. A significant proportion of young people report being concerned about body image, with 1 in 3 people aged 15-19 years reporting body image as an issue of personal concern.

Multiple indicators describe young people's experience of acceptance and discrimination. Equity and discrimination were the most common issue of national concern in the 2020 Mission Australia Youth Survey of Australians aged 15-19 years (Tiller, et al., 2020). However, the great majority of young people describe acceptance of multiculturalism with an increase over time. The latest data from 2014 indicates 90% of people aged 15-24 years report being tolerant of society being comprised of different cultures.

Happily, the proportion of people aged 15-19 years reporting discrimination as an issue of personal concern has declined since 2007 and presently sits at 8.6% (down from 13.5% in 2007) although this trend is not reflected for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people which has remained stable at just under 20% over the same timeframe.

The most frequently identified reasons for personal experience of discrimination for people aged 15-19 years overall in decreasing order were: gender, race/cultural background, mental health, age, sexuality, religion and ranged from about 4 to 11%. Frequency patterns were altered for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 15-19 years. Race/cultural background the most frequent reason for experience of discrimination followed by gender, mental health, age, physical health or ability and sexuality (equally common), religion and ranged from 9 to 23%. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth were about twice as likely to experience all forms of discrimination except for gender which was about 1.5 times more common.

Young people's sense of identity and culture is seriously affected by perpetration of crime and incarceration. Both stigmatise and limit the young person's ability to meaningfully participate in society.

Violent offending by youth is reducing, with indicators showing a reduction in rates of offence of acts intended to cause injury across all age groups from 10 to 24 years..

The detention of minors (aged 10-17 years) has also shown a steady decrease overall and within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. Incarceration rates of young adults aged 18-24 years have not shown the same trends, with rates remaining approximately stable overall over the last decade and a slight upwards trend for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young adults.

While youth violence and incarceration are generally uncommon, inequities are visible through the high incarceration rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people sitting at about ten times the average rate within the same age group.

Another important point of consideration is the minimum age of criminal responsibility (MACR), with Australia's age of 10 years sitting well outside the international consensus of 14 years minimum. While some jurisdictions are legislating to change this, federally the Council of Attorneys-General deferred deciding on raising the MACR in July 2020 and gave no timeline for when the issue would be considered again.

Indicators of positive sense of identity and culture are more limited than other domains and tend not to capture the views and experiences of younger children. Of the available data, young people appear to be largely accepting of diversity, with tolerance of multiculturalism high and a general increase in willingness to disclose LGBTQI identity to peers over other social groups. Multiculturalism is increasing as is multicultural tolerance. There also appears to be a decreasing tolerance of discrimination seen in its prominence as an issue of concern despite a reduction in rates of personal experience of discrimination, perhaps a product of increasing awareness.

Conversely, religion appears to be playing a decreasing role in the lives of young people, with decreasing frequency of religious affiliation and religious reasons for discrimination being the least common among people aged 15-19 years. Important inequities are apparent in this domain with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people experiencing about twice the rate of personal discrimination and ten times the rate of incarceration.



Australia's Global Performance

In understanding Australia's progress, it is useful to also look at how we stand compared to similar countries. While the body of this report presented several international comparisons, this appendix presents a broader range of indicators. These indicators give a sense of our standing in the world. The indicators where Australia is in the top third of the cohort in green, those where we are in the middle third in yellow and those where we are in the bottom third in red.

Most of the data here is drawn from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), a group of 38 high-income countries which collects and publishes social and economic data on member countries. This report draws from international rankings made by the OECD, as well as a few other international rankings. In many of the comparisons, the OECD lacks sufficient data on all 38 member states so the denominator may be lower than 38. In other cases, there may be interesting comparisons with non-member countries, so the OECD has included more than 38 states in the ranking.

Comparable indicators within the time frame of this report that correspond to the domain of Positive Sense of Identity and Culture were severely limited; hence this domain is not covered in this section. More detail on these rankings including sources can be found in our Technical Report (ARACY and UNICEF Australia, 2021).

ARACY'S NEST WELLBEING DOMAINS










UNICEF CHILDREN'S GOALS

Valued, Loved and Safe

Every child thrives and survives

Every child is protected from violence and exploitation

Every child lives in a clean and safe environment

Measure	Cohort	Ranking	Year
 Percentage of 15-29 years who have relatives or friends they can count on	OECD	8/34	2006-2014
 Percentage of youth (under 18) in the prison population	OECD	8/35	2016
 The percentage of women married between 15 and 19 years	OECD	1/25	2014
 Daily minutes spent with children	OECD	1/21	2013
 Proportion of parents that are separated or divorced	OECD	19/33	2017
 Percentage of 15-29 years declaring feeling safe when walking alone at night in the area where they live	OECD	22/34	2006-2014
 Child homicide rate (deaths of children aged 0-19 by intentional assault per 100,000)	OECD	22/37	2010-2013
 Year 4 students not experiencing bullying	PIRLS	47/58	2019
 Percentage of the population declaring feeling safe when walking alone at night in the city or area where they live	OECD	27/36	2016-18

Material basics















Every child thrives and survives
 Every child has a fair chance in life
 Every child lives in a clean and safe environment

Measure	Cohort	Ranking	Year
● Percentage of 20-24 yrs who are not in education or employment	OECD	11/38	2015
● Percentage of 15-year-olds who have accessed career guidance	OECD	3/16	2012
● Percentage of 15–24-year-olds employed	OECD	4/35	2017
● Percentage of 15-year-old students in bottom socio-economic quartile who first used a computer when they were 6 years or younger	PISA	10/46	2015
● Housing expenditure as a percentage of gross adjusted disposable income	OECD	9/28	2012
● Percentage reduction in the rate of child poverty due to social transfers	OECD	12/37	2014
● Duration of paid maternity leave	OECD	11/39	2018
● Duration of paid paternity leave	OECD	6/39	2018
● Percentage of children aged 0–17 living in a household with income lower than 60 per cent of the median	OECD	15/41	2018
● The poverty gap is the ratio by which the mean income of the poor falls below the poverty line. Recorded for the whole population	OECD	12/33	2014
● Gini Coefficient	OECD	21/39	2020
● Percentage of the youth labour force (aged 15-24 yrs) who are unemployed and seeking work	OECD	14/35	2016
● Percentage of 15-19 yrs who are not in education or employment	OECD	18/33	2015
● Percentage of youth (15-29) worried very much or to a great deal about losing their job or not finding one	OECD	7/15	2010-14
● Percentage of all households having at least one working computer in their home	OECD	17/39	2020
● Paternity leave replacement rate (% of gross earnings replaced by maternity benefit for average earners)	OECD	24/41	2014
● Percentage share of children below the age of 15 living with a respondent who is food insecure	OECD	30/41	2014/15
● Percentage of children (aged 0-14) in all households with no adult in paid employment	OECD	29/32	2014
● Percentage of two-parent households with both parents working (full-time or part-time)	OECD	24/36	2014
● Percentage of single parent households with at least one child under 14 who are working (part-time or full-time)	OECD	33/36	2014
● Percentage of households who reported that they had access to the Internet.	OECD	26/39	2020
● Use of paid paternity leave	OECD	10/11	2019
● Maternity leave replacement rate (% of gross earnings replaced by maternity benefit for average earners)	OECD	38/41	2014

Healthy

Every child thrives and survives

Every child lives in a clean and safe environment

Measure	Cohort	Ranking	Year
 The rate of deaths of children under 1 year	OECD	15/48	2018
 Life expectancy at birth	OECD	6/44	2020
 13–14-year-olds who have smoked in last 30 days	International	1/18	2014
 13–14-year-olds who have been drunk in last 30 days	International	2/18	2014
 Life satisfaction on scale from 0-10 for youth aged 15-29	OECD	10/35	2014/15
 Percentage of liveborn babies who are low birthweight - under 2500grams	OECD	23/48	2018
 Deaths in the first 28 days of life, per 1,000 live births	OECD	19/36	2015
 Percentage of children at age 1 immunised against measles	OECD	20/38	2020
 Percentage of children at age 1 immunised against DTP	OECD	21/38	2020
 Percentage of children at age 1 fully immunised (measles, diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis)	OECD	23/44	2020
 Suicide rates of adolescents aged 15–19	OECD	23/37	2012/13
 Percentage of children experiencing one or more health complaints every day (headache, stomach ache, backache, feeling low, irritability or bad temper, feeling nervous, difficulties in getting to sleep, feeling dizzy)	OECD	13/35	2014
 Measured overweight (including obesity) among children	OECD	28/39	2013
 Teenage birth rate women aged 15-19	OECD	30/41	2015

Learning

Every child learns

Measure	Cohort	Ranking	Year
● Percentage above the low benchmark for science	TIMMS	14/58	2019
● Percentage at level 2 and above for reading	PISA	16/77	2018
● Percentage at level 2 and above for science	PISA	17/79	2018
● Percentage of 15-19 yrs full-time and part-time students in public and private institutions	OECD	5/34	2015
● Estimated percentage of people who will graduate from tertiary education over their lifetime	OECD	2/28	2015
● Percentage 25-34 years with tertiary education	OECD	7/36	2016
● Percentage of young people (16-29) in apprenticeship programmes	OECD	6/22	2012
● Child-to-staff ratios in pre-primary education services	OECD	1/32	2014
● Compulsory instruction time in general education (primary and lower secondary)	OECD	1/38	2017
● Percentage of adult respondents agreeing that "university education is more important for a boy than for a girl"	OECD	2/17	2010-2014
● Enrolment rate for 3-to-5-year-olds in pre-primary education or primary school	OECD	29/47	2018
● Enrolment rate of children under the age of 3 in formal childcare	OECD	15/42	2018
● Percentage above the low benchmark for maths	TIMMS	27/58	2019
● Percentage at level 2 and above for maths	PISA	29/79	2018
● Enrolment rate at age 18 in secondary, post-secondary non-tertiary and tertiary programmes	OECD	17/43	2015
● Estimated percentage of people who will graduate from post-secondary non-tertiary education over their lifetime	OECD	8/22	2015
● Percentage of young people (16-29) with low literacy skills	OECD	9/22	2012
● Percentage of young people (16-29) with low problem-solving skills	OECD	10/19	2012
● Percentage of 15-year-old students familiar with, or knowing something about, five or more environmental issues	OECD	18/37	2015
● Gender gap in low educational achievement: boys vs girls	OECD	14/39	2012
● Average class size in educational institutions	OECD	21/36	2015

Measure	Cohort	Ranking	Year
● Number of years 15-year-old students spent in early childcare education	PISA	42/48	2015
● Percentage participating in organised learning (one year before official age for entering primary school)	OECD	36/37	2013/14
● Percentage of children who feel they belong in their school	OECD	26/34	2012
● Percentage of 13–14-year-old boys and girls reporting ‘a lot’ of school pressure	International	24/26	2014
● Percentage of children aged 6 to 11 using centre-based out-of-school-hours (before and/or after school) care services during a usual week	OECD	26/34	2017
● Percentage of young people (16-29) with low numeracy skills	OECD	15/22	2012
● Childcare costs as a percentage of net family income for a couple with full-time earnings of 100+67% of average earnings	OECD	32/37	2020

ARACY'S NEST WELLBEING DOMAINS

UNICEF CHILDREN'S GOALS

Participating

Every child has a fair chance in life Every child thrives and survives

Measure	Cohort	Ranking	Year
● Voter turnout ratio for people aged 18-24 relative to people aged 25-50	OECD	3/31	2012/13
● Percentage of youth (15-29) who volunteered time to an organisation in the past month	OECD	5/35	2006-15
● Percentage of youth (15-29) reporting trust in others	OECD	10/35	2014
● Percentage of youth (15-29) reporting confidence in national government	OECD	14/34	2014/15
● Percentage of 15-29 yrs reporting that they are ‘not at all interested’ in politics	OECD	22/31	2012-14
● Percentage of youth (16-24) engaging in social networking online	OECD	22/32	2014

Appendix 1 - Correspondence between ARACY and UNICEF Canada frameworks

This report has used the UNICEF Australia and ARACY’s Nest framework. However, an alternative structure can be found in the Canadian Index of Child and Youth Well-being from UNICEF Canada which has nine dimensions, analogous to the Nest Framework’s five areas. This appendix provides a guide to matching up the two structures to allow for international comparisons. It is important to note that there are not just differences in the organisation of ideas, but also differences in the coverage of the two frameworks. Several concepts are considered differently, for example, in the Nest framework, disability is itself a measure of well-being whereas the UNICEF Canada framework measures impact of this, particularly by asking about barriers to participating in activities and ability to access disability support payments. Perhaps the largest example is that while UNICEF Canada considers connection to the environment a dimension, the Nest framework as used in this report considers environmental connection as a lens to analyse each area. There are also numerous small differences in how measures are organised within dimensions/areas even when they are very similar at a high level. Table 1 presents a high-level summary of how The Nest areas correspond to the UNICEF Canada dimensions. The full list of best matches can be found in the technical report.

Note: Dimensions that best correspond to each area are highlighted in bold.

Table 1: Correspondence between nest areas and index of child and youth well-being dimensions

		Nest areas					
		Healthy	Learning	Loved, safe and valued	Material basics	Participating	Positive Identity & Culture
Index of Child and Youth Well-being dimensions	No equivalent			5	2	3	5
	Belong			14			11
	Free to play	7		4		4	
	Happy and respected	3					12
	Healthy	31					
	Learning		48				
	Participating				2	7	
	Protected	4		7			
	Secure	3			11	5	

Appendix 2 - Data sources and notes

This report drew in data from a variety of sources and technical details of the data can be found in the full technical report. This includes the headline indicators and supplementary indicators that were included in text or were just updated from ARACY's 2018 Report Card but not included in this document.

The data used in this report builds on the data collected for ARACY's Report Card in 2018 (https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2018-02/apo-nid134246_3.pdf). These sources have been updated where possible and some new data has been added where improvements could be made. In addition, we have selected a new set of headline indicators. These indicators were chosen because they measure important concepts within the area. We also prioritised indicators that gave multiple years of data allowing for comparisons and which gave Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data.

Where possible, data has been drawn from official sources including the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Where these are not available, we have used data from well-regarded non-government sources for example Mission Australia's annual youth survey. In a few cases we have had to draw data from non-representative sources (for example, there is no research that draws a representative sample of queer youth as this population is very hard to identify and recruit). In these cases, the data can give an indication of the experience of these groups, but they have been used cautiously.

Much of the data used for global rankings was out of date. This is because different countries release data at different times, and it is challenging to gather data on an indicator across many countries on a regular basis. International testing data is released at regular intervals and the OECD does report on several key indicators regularly (for example infant mortality). However, for the majority of datapoints used in this report, data was released infrequently or as a once-off. To give an up-to-date picture, any source that was more than ten years out of date was not used in this report (although these indicators can be found in the technical report).

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REPORT CARD 2018

The Wellbeing of young Australians



ARACY

Australian Research Alliance for Children & Youth
Collaboration • Evidence • Prevention



AUSTRALIA

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REPORT CARD 2018

The Wellbeing of young Australians



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This report was also made possible with funding from the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

About ARACY

The Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) is a research and results focused, apolitical organisation. We work with government, researchers and those providing services to children and their families.

Our aim is to help children achieve a better life. We focus on heading off problems before they arise.

ARACY is unique in making the link between all areas of wellbeing for young Australians. We also make the link between all areas of government, policy making, research and service delivery to address the issues young Australians face.

The Nest

The Nest is a framework to align and support the efforts of children, young people, parents, service providers and policy makers in improving the wellbeing and prospects of children and youth.

The Nest is evidence-based and was developed in consultation with more than 4,000 children, youth, parents, researchers and practitioners. It outlines priorities for investment in six outcome areas which must be present for a young person to be said to have good/high wellbeing.

These areas are:

- Loved and Safe
- Material Basics
- Healthy
- Learning
- Participating
- Positive Sense of Identity and Culture

For more information on *The Nest* visit:

www.aracy.org.au/the-nest-in-action

About this report card

This is the third ARACY Report Card updating previous editions released in 2013 and 2008.

It uses the latest available data from a number of sources across a range of indicators to compare how Australian children and young people are faring in each of the six areas identified under *The Nest*. Where possible the Report Card includes comparisons using similar indicators for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population as well as international comparisons.

A technical report can be found on the ARACY website which contains additional indicators as well as detailed reference information.

Visit bit.ly/reportcard2018 for more information.



FOREWORD

This is the third Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) report card on how Australia's children and youth are faring. It provides international comparisons showing where we are doing well and where we need to improve. It is organised around *The Nest* framework, so it is based on solid evidence about what matters most for child and youth wellbeing. The Report Card incorporates the latest and most reliable international comparative data available.

Although this Report Card reveals many indicators are heading in the wrong direction, and that young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are facing extra obstacles, there is some good news. For example, Year 12 retention rates in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities improved faster than the average between 2011 and 2014. Such indicators provide pointers to policy makers to help identify what is currently working to improve outcomes for children.

The 2018 Report also shows Australia leading the developed world on some indicators, such as low rates of smoking among young people, and improvement in areas such as rates of alcohol abuse and illicit drug use. Nevertheless, we are still on average only middle of the pack by international comparisons, and some outcomes have worsened since the last Report Card.

A health indicator of particular concern is that the number of children who are fully immunised has fallen from 92.6 per cent in 2008 to 90.5 per cent in 2017. Australia is currently ranked near the bottom of the OECD for immunisation against measles and whooping cough.

Mental health is a growing issue for young Australians. In 2014-15, 15.4 per cent of Australians aged 18-24 years suffered high or very high psychological distress - up from 11.8 per cent in 2011.

The rate of mental illness is even higher amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth aged 15-19, with a third having a probable mental illness. Young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are over three times more likely to commit suicide than non-Indigenous youth.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children also suffer higher rates of educational disadvantage, with far fewer being able to reach international benchmarks in reading, mathematics and science than their non-Indigenous peers. Additionally, when viewed separately, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are almost ten times more likely to be in out-of-home-care, more than four times more likely to die of injury before the age of 14. Rates of teenage pregnancy are six times higher than the national level.

ARACY has produced this report card to contribute to the national discussion that we must continue to have about how we best ensure our young people have every opportunity to reach their potential.

Elaine Henry OAM
ARACY Board Chair

Stephen Bartos
ARACY CEO





THE INTERNATIONAL PICTURE

Australia is one of 35 member countries of the OECD. The OECD includes most of Europe, North America, and advanced Asian, Latin American and Oceanic economies.

The OECD collates data from these countries in relation to a number of economic, social, and environmental measures, providing a comparative and time-series body of evidence. Data for measures used in this report is in some cases unavailable for all OECD countries. Australia is ranked against those countries for which there is data and the denominator in the ranking varies for this reason. Other internationally comparable data is also incorporated where appropriate.

Overall, Australia performs moderately in relation to child and youth health and wellbeing indicators compared with other OECD countries.

Australia is ranked in the top third of OECD countries for around one-third of the indicators (26 out of 75 indicators). Australia continues to lead the world in areas such as low youth smoking rates, the amount of time parents spend with their children daily and life expectancy at birth.

Australia is ranked in the middle third of OECD countries for just over one-third of indicators (28 out of 75 indicators). This includes for areas such as the duration of paid paternity leave and year 4 performance in maths and science.

Australia is ranked in the bottom third of OECD countries for just under one-third of the indicators (21 out of 75 indicators). Areas of concern include levels of bullying experienced by year 4 students, food insecurity, low and declining immunisation rates, and the cost of childcare.

TOP THIRD	OECD RANK	MIDDLE THIRD	OECD RANK	BOTTOM THIRD	OECD RANK
Being loved and safe					
Children and youth in prison	4/35	Parental separation/divorce	18/32	Bullying (year 4)	40/49
Early female marriage	1/25	Neighbourhood safety - youth perceptions	22/34	Neighbourhood safety - adult perceptions	26/34
Parental time with children	1/21	Child homicide	22/37		
Support networks	8/34				
Having material basics					
Children living in relative poverty	13/41	Poverty severity	12/33	Food insecurity of households with children	30/41
20-24 yrs not in Employment, Education or Training	11/38	Income inequality	22/35	Children living in jobless households	29/32
Access to career guidance	3/16	Youth unemployed and seeking work	14/35	Children living in households with two working parents	24/36
Youth employment	4/35	15-19 yrs not in Employment, Education or Training	18/33	Children living in single-parent jobless households	33/36
Computer access for children in low socio-economic households	10/46	Youth job insecurity	7/15	Maternity leave replacement rate	38/41
Housing stress	9/28	Access to internet	12/31		
Duration of paid maternity leave	12/42	Access to computer	14/34		
		Duration of paid paternity leave	19/42		
		Paternity leave replacement rate	24/41		
Being healthy					
Life expectancy at birth	6/34	Low birthweight	23/43	Vaccination Measles	33/35
Youth smoking	1/18	Infant mortality	15/30	Vaccination Whooping Cough	31/35
Youth alcohol abuse	2/18	Neonatal mortality	19/36	Child obesity	28/39
Youth life satisfaction	10/35	Youth suicide	23/37	Teenage pregnancy	30/41
		Child health complaints	13/35		
Learning					
Reading performance (15 yrs)	16/57	Early childcare enrolment rate (under 3 yrs)	19/37	Pre-primary enrolment rate (3-5 yrs)	35/40
Science performance (15 yrs)	14/57	Maths performance (year 4)	28/49	Years spent in early childcare education	42/48
Youth participation in public and private educational institutions	5/34	Science performance (year 4)	28/47	Participation in organised learning one year prior to primary school	36/37
Youth participation in tertiary education	7/36	Maths performance (15 yrs)	25/57	Feeling of belonging in school	26/34
Youth participation in apprenticeship programmes	6/22	Participation in educational institutions (18 yrs)	17/43	School pressure	24/26
Child-to-staff ratios in pre-primary education services	1/32	Youth literacy skills	9/22	Use of centre-based out-of-school-hours care	25/33
Compulsory instruction time in primary and lower secondary education	1/38	Youth problem-solving skills	10/19	Youth numeracy skills	15/22
Gender equality in education	2/17	Familiarity with environmental issues (15 yrs)	18/37	Cost of childcare	20/30.
		Gender gap in educational achievement	14/39		
		Average class size in educational institutions	21/36		
Participation					
Youth voter turnout	3/31	Youth confidence in national government	14/34	Youth interest in politics	22/31
Youth volunteering	5/35			Engagement in social networking online	22/32
Trust of youth in others	10/35				







LOVED AND SAFE

LOVED AND SAFE

Being loved and safe embraces positive family relationships and connections with others, along with personal and community safety. Children and youth who are loved and safe are more likely to be confident, have a strong sense of self-identity, and have high self esteem. They have a greater capacity to form secure attachments, have pro-social peer connections, and have positive adult role models or mentors present in their life. Children and youth who are loved and safe tend to be more resilient: they can withstand life challenges, and respond constructively to setbacks and unanticipated events.

KEY

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data:

-  Data directly comparable with overall population
-  Data not directly comparable with overall population

OECD rankings:

-  Australia ranks in top third of OECD countries
-  Australia ranks in middle third of OECD countries
-  Australia ranks in bottom third of OECD countries

In 2017, 20.0 per cent of those aged 15-19 were extremely or very worried about family conflict. This was higher for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children at 26.4 per cent.

In 2016, more than 4 in 10 adults who had experienced violence from their partner had a child in their care at the time. This is a reduction from 50.9 per cent in 2012.

In 2017, 15.3 per cent of those aged 15-19 were very or extremely concerned about bullying.

Almost one quarter of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were very or extremely concerned about bullying.

FAMILY CONFLICT

POSITIVE PEER RELATIONSHIPS

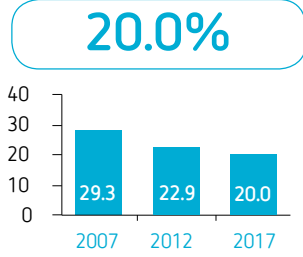
SUPPORT NETWORKS

NATIONAL
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

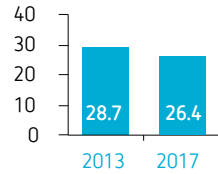
ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

AUS RANKING FOR OECD
EQUIVALENT INDICATOR

% 15-19 yrs extremely or very concerned about family conflict



26.4%



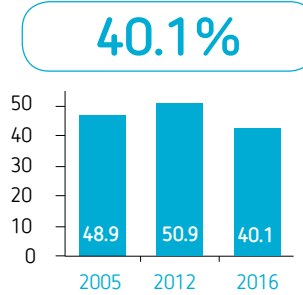
LAST REPORT

N/A

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N/A

% adults who had children in their care while experiencing violence from a current partner



N/A

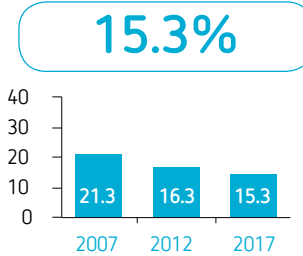
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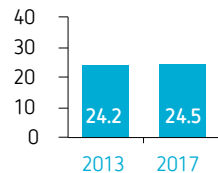
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N/A

% 15-19 yrs extremely or very concerned with bullying or emotional abuse



24.5%



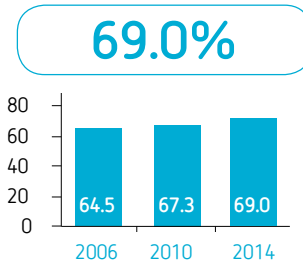
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40 / 49

% 18-24 yrs who have 3 or more friends they can confide in



N/A

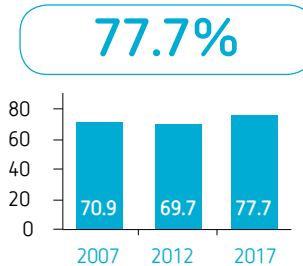
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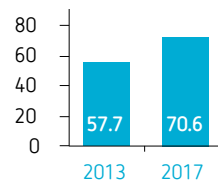
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N/A

% 15-19 yrs turning to parents for support



70.6%



LAST REPORT

N/A

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8 / 34

LOVED AND SAFE

Being loved and safe embraces positive family relationships and connections with others, along with personal and community safety. Children and youth who are loved and safe are more likely to be confident, have a strong sense of self-identity, and have high self esteem. They have a greater capacity to form secure attachments, have pro-social peer connections, and have positive adult role models or mentors present in their life. Children and youth who are loved and safe tend to be more resilient: they can withstand life challenges, and respond constructively to setbacks and unanticipated events.

KEY

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data:



Data directly comparable with overall population



Data not directly comparable with overall population

OECD rankings:



Australia ranks in top third of OECD countries



Australia ranks in middle third of OECD countries



Australia ranks in bottom third of OECD countries

The number of children in out-of-home-care (OOHC) has been on an upward trajectory, with 8.6 children per thousand in OOHC in 2016, up from 7.3 in 2011 and 6.2 in 2008. When viewed separately, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are almost 10 times more likely to be in OOHC.

The share of children aged 10-17 years in detention on an average day has been trending downwards, sitting at 0.3 per 1,000 in 2015-16. At the same time, the proportion of youth in prison aged 18-24 years has been increasing, reaching 2.7 per 1,000 in 2016.

When viewed separately, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are 25 times more likely to be in detention than non-Indigenous children, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth are about 15 times more likely to be in prison than non-Indigenous youth.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFETY

OUT OF HOME CARE

DETENTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

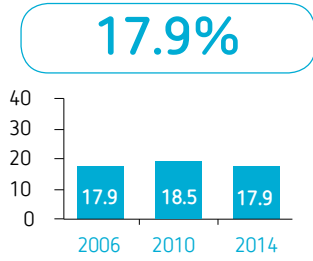
CHILDREN AS CARERS

NATIONAL
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

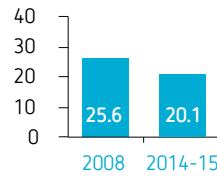
ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

AUS RANKING FOR OECD
EQUIVALENT INDICATOR

% adults feeling unsafe / very unsafe walking in the local area after dark



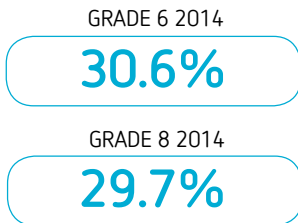
20.1%



LAST REPORT
14/29

THIS REPORT
26/34

% children reporting that they feel unsafe in their local area at night

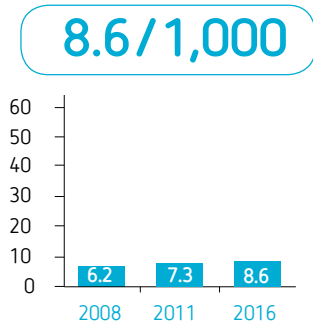


N/A

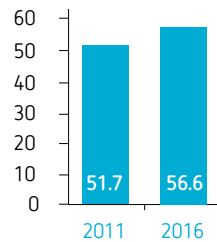
LAST REPORT
N/A

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22/34

0-17 yrs in out of home care (per 1,000)



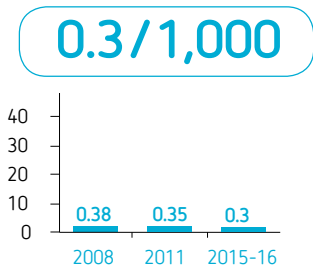
56.6 / 1,000



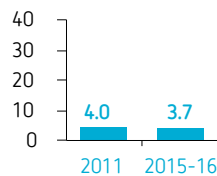
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N/A

10-17 yrs in detention on an average day (per 1,000)



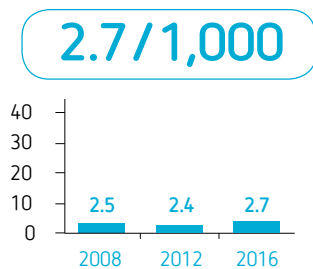
3.7 / 1,000



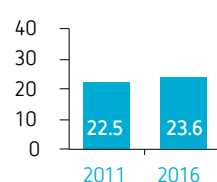
LAST REPORT
N/A

THIS REPORT
4/35

18-24 yrs in prison (per 1,000)



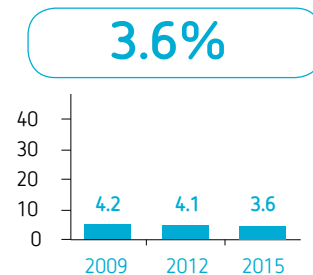
23.6 / 1,000



LAST REPORT
N/A

THIS REPORT
N/A

% 0-24 yrs who are carers



N/A

LAST REPORT
N/A

THIS REPORT
N/A





MATERIAL BASICS



MATERIAL BASICS

Children and youth who have material basics have access to the things they need to live a 'normal life'. They live in adequate and stable housing, with adequate clothing, healthy food, clean water, and the materials they need to participate in education and training pathways. For young people, access to material basics supports them to make effective transitions to adulthood: they have a greater capacity to secure housing, live independently, and receive an income that enables them to provide for themselves.

The absence of material basics can also be understood as living in poverty. Having material basics is important because children who experience poverty early in life are at risk of ongoing disadvantage.

KEY

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-  Australia ranks in bottom third of OECD countries

In 2014 17.4 per cent of children aged up to 14 were living in households earning less than half the national median household earnings, up from 17.3 in 2010.

In 2014-15, 31.6 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged up to 14 lived in households that ran out of money for basic living expenses in the previous 12 months.

POVERTY

INCOME
INEQUALITY

The percentage of children up to 14 living in homes where no one has a job has fallen from 15 per cent in 2010 to 12.8 per cent in 2016.

Australia's OECD ranking on this measure has remained in the bottom third, slipping from 22 of 27 nations in 2008 to 29 of 32 in 2014.

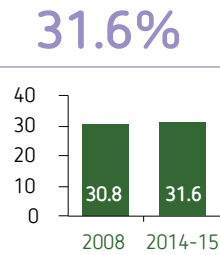
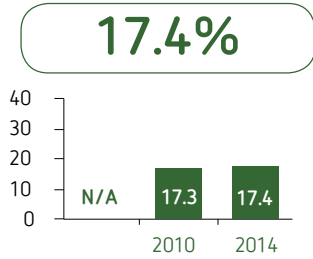
JOBLESS
FAMILIES

NATIONAL
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

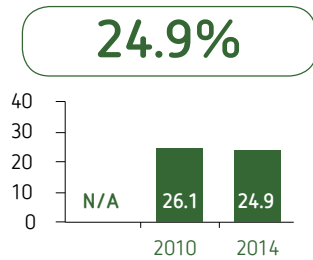
AUS RANKING FOR OECD
EQUIVALENT INDICATOR

% 0-14 yrs in relative poverty (<50% national median income)



LAST REPORT	THIS REPORT
N/A	N/A

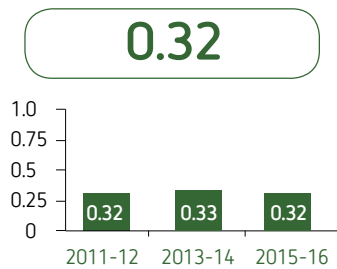
% 0-14 yrs in relative poverty (<60% national median income)



N/A

LAST REPORT	THIS REPORT
15/35	13/41

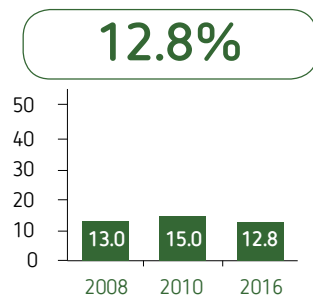
Gini coefficient (measure of inequality between 0 and 1 where 0 indicates complete equality and higher values indicate greater inequality)



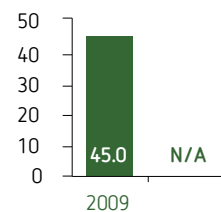
N/A

LAST REPORT	THIS REPORT
18/29	22/33

% 0-14 yrs in jobless families

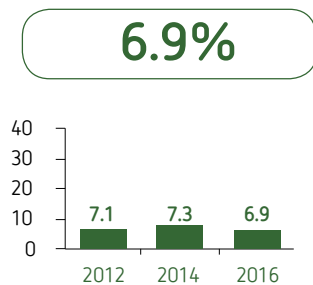


N/A

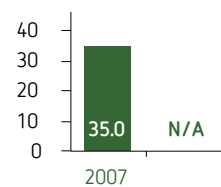


LAST REPORT	THIS REPORT
22/27	29/32

% dependent students aged 15-24 yrs in jobless families



N/A



LAST REPORT	THIS REPORT
N/A	N/A

MATERIAL BASICS

Children and youth who have material basics have access to the things they need to live a 'normal life'. They live in adequate and stable housing, with adequate clothing, healthy food, clean water, and the materials they need to participate in education and training pathways. For young people, access to material basics supports them to make effective transitions to adulthood: they have a greater capacity to secure housing, live independently, and receive an income that enables them to provide for themselves.

The absence of material basics can also be understood as living in poverty. Having material basics is important because children who experience poverty early in life are at risk of ongoing disadvantage.

KEY

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data:



Data directly comparable with overall population



Data not directly comparable with overall population

OECD rankings:



Australia ranks in top third of OECD countries



Australia ranks in middle third of OECD countries



Australia ranks in bottom third of OECD countries

Long-term youth unemployment shows a disturbing upward trend from 0.6 per cent in 2006 to 5.9 per cent in 2014.

YOUTH
UNEMPLOYMENT

INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY
AND INTERNET

EDUCATIONAL
DEPRIVATION

HOUSING
STRESS

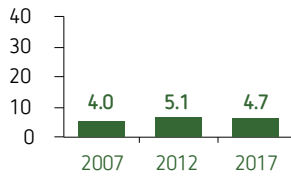
NATIONAL
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

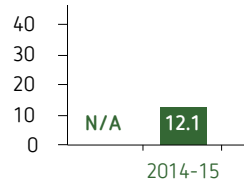
AUS RANKING FOR OECD
EQUIVALENT INDICATOR

% 15-24 yrs unemployed and seeking fulltime work

4.7%



12.1%



LAST REPORT

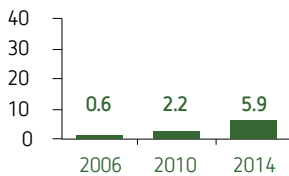
9/35

THIS REPORT

14/35

% 15-24 yrs in long-term unemployment

5.9%



N/A

LAST REPORT

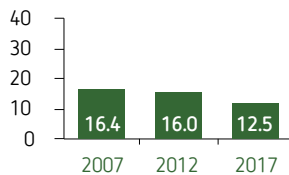
N/A

THIS REPORT

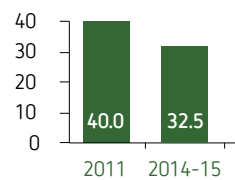
N/A

% 15-24 yrs not in education or employment

12.5%



32.5%



LAST REPORT
24/35
(15-19 YRS)

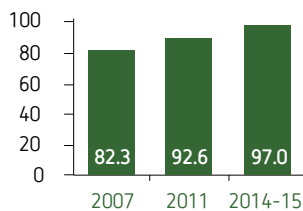
THIS REPORT
18/33
(15-19 YRS)

LAST REPORT
8/35
(20-24 YRS)

THIS REPORT
11/38
(20-24 YRS)

% households with children under 15 with access to internet at home

97.0%



N/A

LAST REPORT

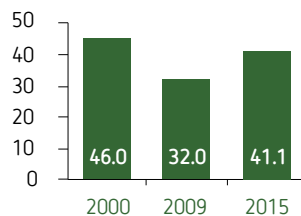
12/35

THIS REPORT

12/31

15 yrs reporting less than four educational possessions (per 1,000)

41.1/1,000



N/A

LAST REPORT

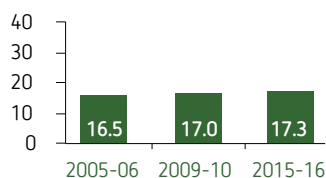
21/34

THIS REPORT

N/A

% households spending more than 30% of gross income on housing

17.3%



N/A

LAST REPORT

N/A

THIS REPORT

9/28



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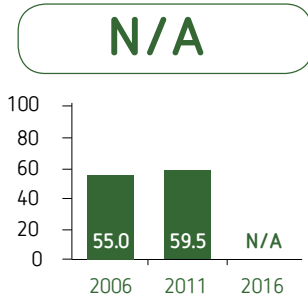
HOMELESSNESS
AND
OVERCROWDING

NATIONAL
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

AUS RANKING FOR OECD
EQUIVALENT INDICATOR

0-24 yrs homelessness rate (per 10,000 population)

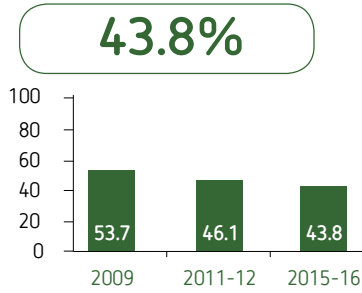


N/A

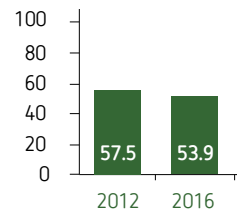
LAST REPORT
N/A

THIS REPORT
N/A

% of all those accessing Specialist Homelessness Services in past year who were aged 0-24 yrs



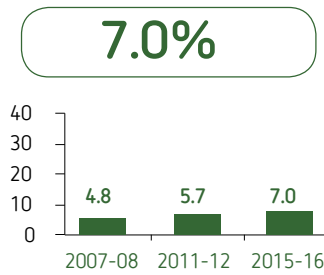
53.9%



LAST REPORT
N/A

THIS REPORT
N/A

% families with dependent children in overcrowded housing



N/A

LAST REPORT
9/26

THIS REPORT
N/A





HEALTHY

HEALTHY

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In 2015 6.5 per cent of babies were underweight at birth, with an infant mortality rate of 3.1 per 1,000 live births in 2016. On both measures the rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children was about double with 11.9 per cent of children born underweight and an infant mortality rate of 6.2 per 1,000.

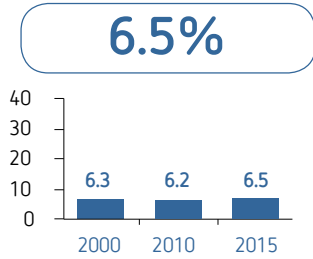
HEALTH
AT BIRTH

The percentage of children fully immunised has fallen from 92.7 per cent in 2008 to 90.5 per cent in December 2017.

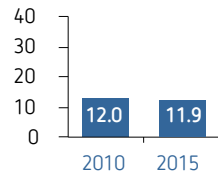
In 2015 Australia ranked near the bottom in the OECD for measles immunisation (33 of 35) and 31 of 35 for whooping cough vaccination.

IMMUNISATION

% low birthweight live born babies



11.9%



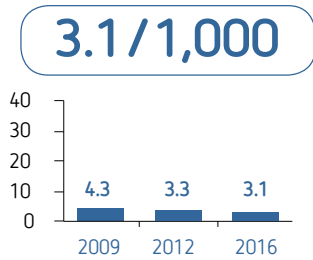
LAST REPORT

14/39

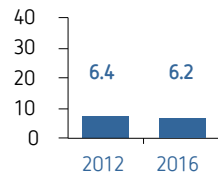
THIS REPORT

23/43

Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)



6.2/1,000



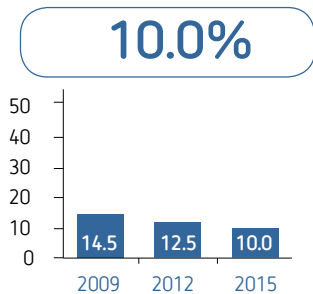
LAST REPORT

22/35

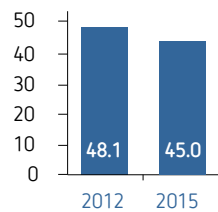
THIS REPORT

15/30

% pregnant mothers who smoked during first 20 weeks of pregnancy



45.0%



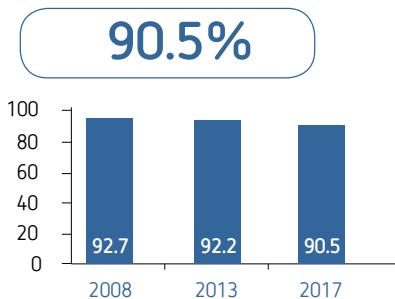
LAST REPORT

N/A

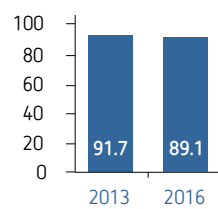
THIS REPORT

N/A

% children fully immunised at age 2



89.1%



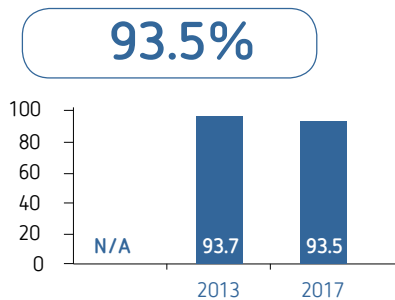
LAST REPORT

29/34

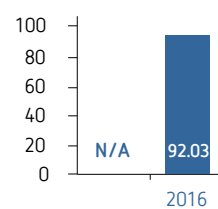
THIS REPORT

N/A

% immunised against measles at age 2



92.0%



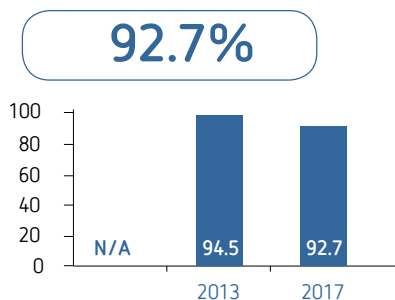
LAST REPORT

20/35

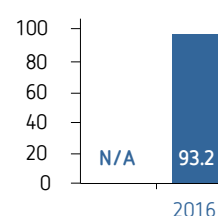
THIS REPORT

33/35

% immunised against whooping cough at age 2



93.2%



LAST REPORT

32/35

THIS REPORT



31/35

HEALTHY

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-  Australia ranks in bottom third of OECD countries

Obesity continues to increase with 31.6 per cent of those aged 5-24 being obese in 2014-2015, up from 29.6 per cent in 2007.

Rates of obesity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are higher at 40.1 per cent in 2012-13 for the same age group.

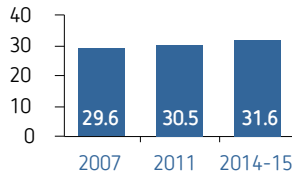
PHYSICAL HEALTH

Almost 60 per cent of children aged 5-10 years are free of tooth decay (58.3% in 2012-2014). However, the inverse is true for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (39.4% were free of decay in 2012-2014).

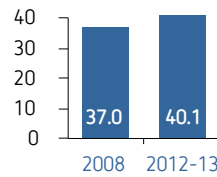
DENTAL HEALTH

% 5-24 yrs
overweight or
obese

31.6%



40.1%

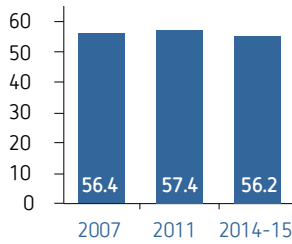


LAST
REPORT
22/33

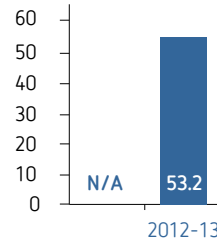
THIS
REPORT
28/39

% 15-24 yrs
engaged in
sedentary
or low levels
of physical
activity

56.2%



53.2%

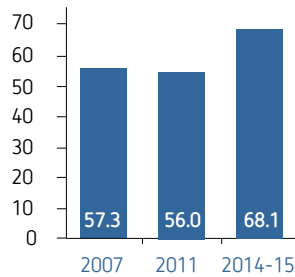


LAST
REPORT
N/A

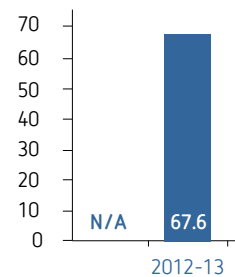
THIS
REPORT
N/A

% 2-18 yrs
meeting
minimum
recommended
consumption
of fruit

68.1%



67.6%

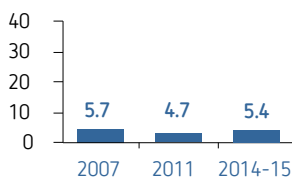


LAST
REPORT
N/A

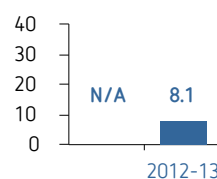
THIS
REPORT
N/A

% 2-18 yrs
meeting
minimum
recommended
consumption
of vegetables

5.4%



8.1%

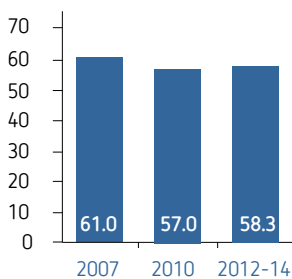


LAST
REPORT
N/A

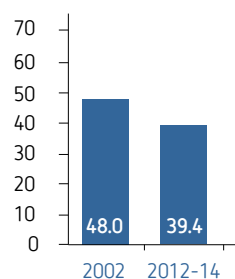
THIS
REPORT
N/A

% 5-10 yrs
free from
dental decay

58.3%



39.4%



LAST
REPORT
12/31



THIS
REPORT
N/A

HEALTHY

Healthy children and youth have their physical, developmental, psychosocial and mental health needs met. This means they have a greater opportunity to achieve their optimal developmental trajectories. They have access to services that support their optimum growth and development, and have access to preventative measures to redress any emerging health or developmental concerns. Mental health is a key aspect of what it means to be healthy. Having good mental health is important for all age groups, including in infancy. Risk factors and behaviours can influence the health and wellbeing of children and youth. Preventing ill health and intervening early when illness emerges is important.

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In 2014-15 15.4 per cent of Australians aged 18-24 years suffered high or very high psychological distress, up from 11.8 per cent in 2011.

MENTAL HEALTH

Suicide rates continue to increase amongst youth aged 15-24, rising from 10.3 (per 100,000 population) in 2007 to 12.7 in 2016.

SUICIDE

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth were more than three times more likely to take their own lives at a rate of 39.2 (per 100,000 population) in 2016, up from 33.0 in 2007.

INJURY

TEENAGE PREGNANCY

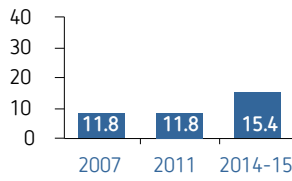
NATIONAL
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

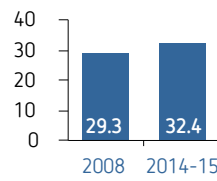
AUS RANKING FOR OECD
EQUIVALENT INDICATOR

% 18-24 yrs with high or very high psychological distress

15.4%



32.4%

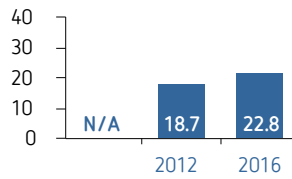


LAST REPORT
N/A

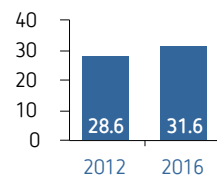
THIS REPORT
N/A

% 15-19 yrs with probable serious mental illness

22.8%



31.6%

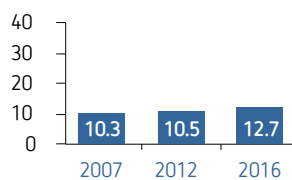


LAST REPORT
N/A

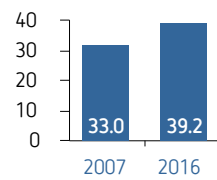
THIS REPORT
N/A

15-24 yrs suicide rate (deaths per 100,000)

12.7/100,000



39.2/100,000

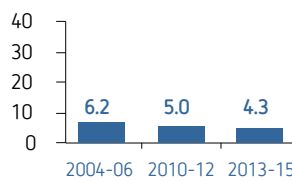


LAST REPORT
21/29

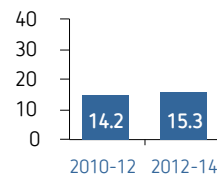
THIS REPORT
23/37

Injury deaths for children aged 0-14 yrs (per 100,000 population)

4.3/100,000



15.3/100,000

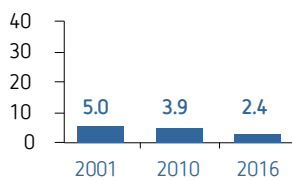


LAST REPORT
17/24

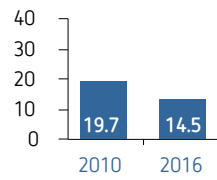
THIS REPORT
N/A

% women who gave birth aged under 20 (as a proportion of all births)

2.4%



14.5%



LAST REPORT
22/34



THIS REPORT
30/41

HEALTHY

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Overall the rates of substance abuse and smoking are falling amongst young Australians aged 12-24.

SUBSTANCE
USE

Rates of youth violence have declined since 2009.

YOUTH
VIOLENCE

SOCIAL AND
EMOTIONAL
WELLBEING

NATIONAL
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

AUS RANKING FOR OECD
EQUIVALENT INDICATOR

% 12-17 yrs who smoke daily

1.5%

N/A

LAST REPORT

THIS REPORT

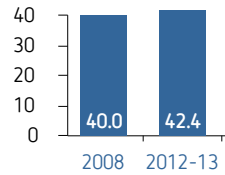
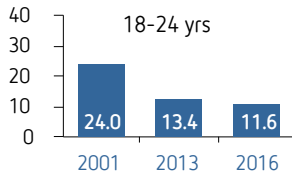
% 18-24 yrs who smoke daily

11.6%

42.4%

4/28

1/18



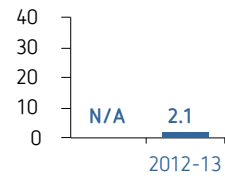
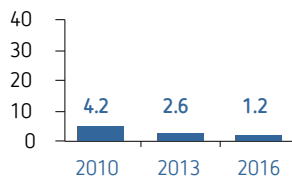
% 12-17 yrs drinking alcohol at risky levels

1.2%

2.1%

LAST REPORT

THIS REPORT



N/A

2/18

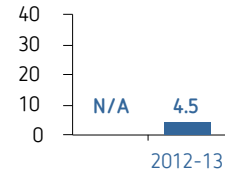
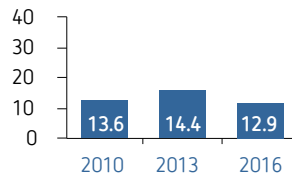
% 12-17 yrs have used illicit drugs in lifetime

12.9%

4.5%

LAST REPORT

THIS REPORT



14/26

N/A

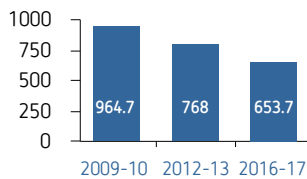
Rates of offence of acts intended to cause injury per 100,000 population for 15-19 years

653.7/100,000

N/A

LAST REPORT

THIS REPORT



N/A

N/A

% children who do not feel positive about their future

GRADE 4 2014 3.3%

N/A

LAST REPORT

THIS REPORT

GRADE 6 2014 3.6%

GRADE 8 2014 4.6%

N/A

10/35

% children who consider themselves to be in good or excellent health

GRADE 4 2014 92.5%

N/A

LAST REPORT

THIS REPORT

GRADE 6 2014 91.7%

GRADE 8 2014 90.6%

N/A

N/A







LEARNING

LEARNING

Early engagement and participation in learning and education is important for the development of children and youth. Learning is a continuous process throughout life. Children and youth learn through a variety of formal and informal experiences within the classroom and more broadly in their home and in the community. Effective learning and educational attainment is fundamental to future opportunities, both financially and socially.

KEY

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data:

-  Data directly comparable with overall population
-  Data not directly comparable with overall population

OECD rankings:

-  Australia ranks in top third of OECD countries
-  Australia ranks in middle third of OECD countries
-  Australia ranks in bottom third of OECD countries

Australia trails the OECD in pre-school attendance, ranked 35 of 40 nations in 2014.

The percentage of 4-5 years olds who usually attend preschool has fallen from 85 per cent in 2011 to 83.3 per cent in 2014.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children continue to suffer educational disadvantage from year 4 onwards as evidenced in every reading, writing and science performance indicator under TIMMS, PIRLS and PISA.

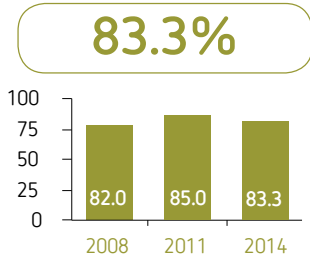
PERFORMANCE IN READING, MATHS & SCIENCE (YEAR 4)

NATIONAL
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

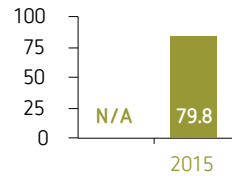
ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

AUS RANKING FOR OECD
EQUIVALENT INDICATOR

% 4-5 yrs (who do not attend primary school) usually attending preschool



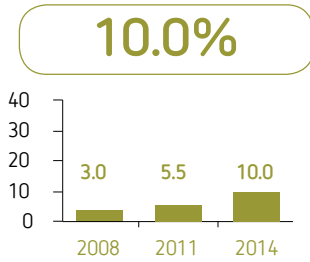
79.8%



LAST REPORT
30/34

THIS REPORT
35/40

% 0-12 yrs who require additional days of care

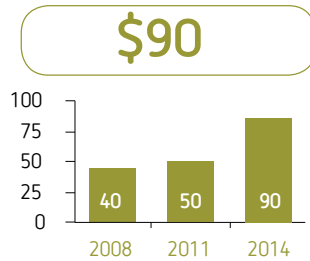


N/A

LAST REPORT
N/A

THIS REPORT
N/A

Median usual weekly cost of childcare for families with children 0-12 yrs (\$)

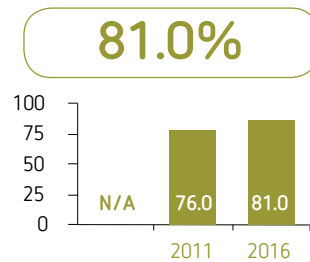


N/A

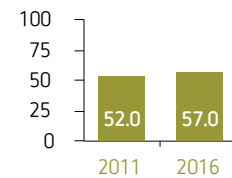
LAST REPORT
14/27

THIS REPORT
20/30

% year 4 students above the low benchmark for reading



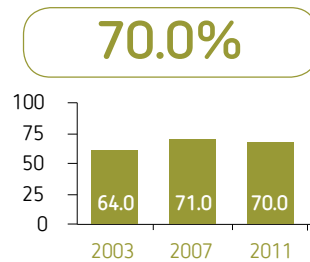
57.0%



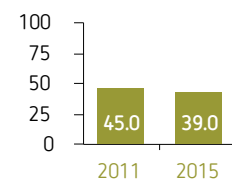
LAST REPORT
19/24

THIS REPORT
28/50

% year 4 students above the low benchmark for maths



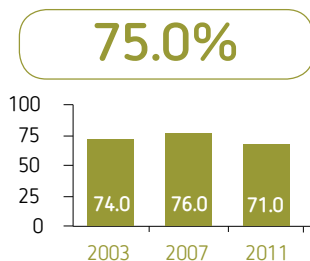
39.0%



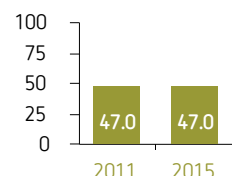
LAST REPORT
12/25

THIS REPORT
28/49

% year 4 students above the low benchmark for science



47.0%



LAST REPORT
18/25

THIS REPORT
28/47

LEARNING

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OECD rankings:



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Australia ranks in middle third of OECD countries



Australia ranks in bottom third of OECD countries

Helping parents be part of their kids' education is a cost-effective way to improve outcomes. Research shows it can equate to two to three years of extra education. One measure, reading to or telling a story to a child aged 2 or less has remained stable, rising from 80.0 per cent in 2008 to 80.08 per cent in 2014. Amongst Indigenous communities the increase is higher, rising from 67.2 per cent in 2008 to 70.3 per cent in 2014-15 for children aged 4-14 years.

Between 2011 and 2017 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Year 12 retention rates improved faster than the average, increasing by 28 per cent (from 48.7 per cent to 62.4 per cent).

Generally, Year 12 retention rates improved by 7 per cent over the same period (from 79.3 per cent to 84.8 per cent).

PERFORMANCE IN
READING, MATHS
& SCIENCE
(15 YR OLDS PISA)

PARENT
ENGAGEMENT

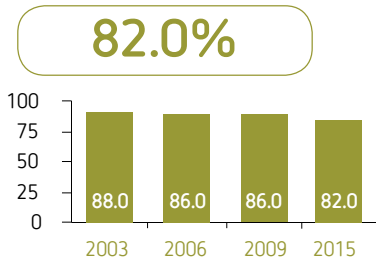
YOUTH
PARTICIPATION IN
EDUCATION

NATIONAL
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

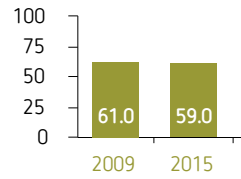
ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

AUS RANKING FOR OECD
EQUIVALENT INDICATOR

% 15 yrs at level 2 and above for reading



59.0%



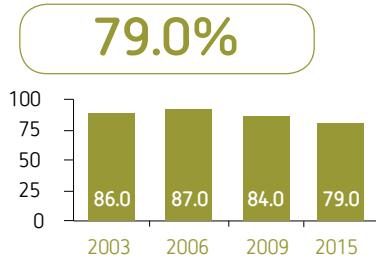
LAST REPORT

14/52

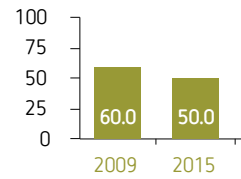
THIS REPORT

16/57

% 15 yrs at level 2 and above for maths



50.0%



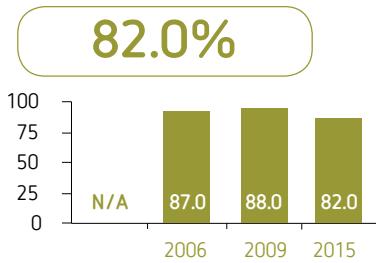
LAST REPORT

19/65

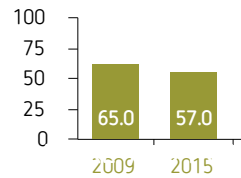
THIS REPORT

25/57

% 15 yrs at level 2 and above for science



57.0%



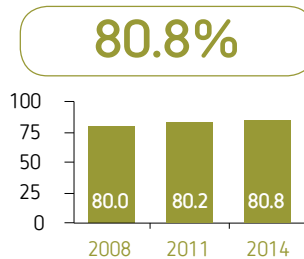
LAST REPORT

16/55

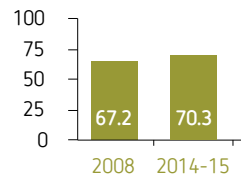
THIS REPORT

14/57

% parents read from book or told story to child 0-2yrs in past week



70.3%



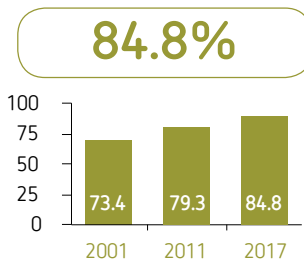
LAST REPORT

N/A

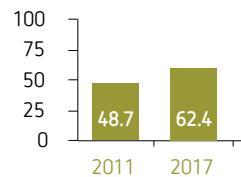
THIS REPORT

N/A

Apparent retention rate Year 7/8 to Year 12 (%)



62.4%



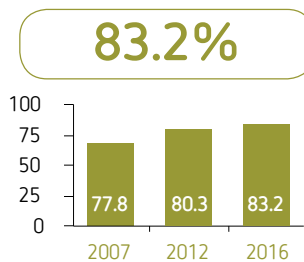
LAST REPORT

N/A

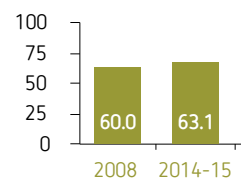
THIS REPORT

N/A

% 15-19 yrs enrolled in study for a qualification



63.1%



LAST REPORT

16/33

THIS REPORT

5/34

LEARNING

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SCHOOL
SATISFACTION

In 2014 55 per cent of year 8 girls and 47.1 per cent of boys reported feeling some, or a lot of pressure from schoolwork. Australia is ranked 24 of 26 nations in this indicator.

SCHOOL
PRESSURE

KEY

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-  Data not directly comparable with overall population

OECD rankings:

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-  Australia ranks in middle third of OECD countries
-  Australia ranks in bottom third of OECD countries

NATIONAL
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

AUS RANKING FOR OECD
EQUIVALENT INDICATOR

% children reporting that school is a place where they feel happy

GRADE 4
2014 **88.6%**

GRADE 6
2014 **89.7%**

GRADE 8
2014 **79.2%**

N/A

LAST
REPORT

N/A

THIS
REPORT

26/34

% children feeling some or a lot of pressure from homework

GRADE 6
GIRLS 2014 **34.2%**

GRADE 6
BOYS 2014 **33.3%**

GRADE 8
GIRLS 2014 **55.0%**

GRADE 8
BOYS 2014 **47.1%**

N/A

LAST
REPORT

N/A

THIS
REPORT

24/26







PARTICIPATING

PARTICIPATING

Participating includes involvement with peers and the community, being able to have a voice and say on matters, and, increasingly, access to technology for social connections. In practice, participating means children and youth are listened to, are supported in expressing their views, their views are taken into account and they are involved in decision-making processes that affect them. It is noted there is a general lack of data on children's participation, with available data mainly focused on the 18-25 age range. Much more work is needed to identify indicators and data sources that adequately reflect this dimension.

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Australia is a world leader in young people voting, with 85.4 per cent of those aged 18-24 years enrolled as at June 2017. (note this figure was recorded before the rolls closed on 24 August for the Same Sex Marriage postal survey).

HAVING A VOICE

VOTING
ENROLMENT

ENGAGEMENT
THROUGH
TECHNOLOGY

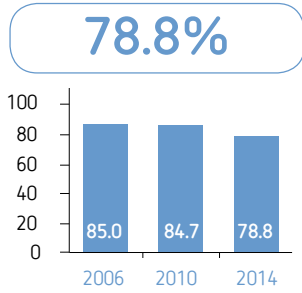
VOLUNTEERING

NATIONAL
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

AUS RANKING FOR OECD
EQUIVALENT INDICATOR

% 18-24 yrs feel able to have a say among family and friends on important issues all or most of the time



N/A

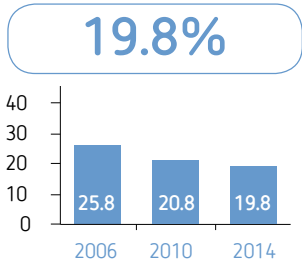
LAST REPORT

N/A

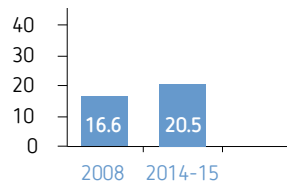
THIS REPORT

N/A

% 15-24 yrs feel able to have a say within community on important issues all or most of the time



20.5%



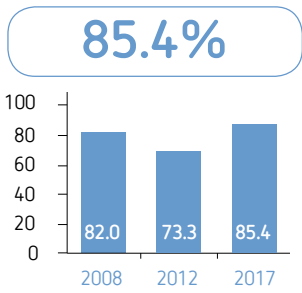
LAST REPORT

N/A

THIS REPORT

N/A

% 18-24 yrs enrolled to vote



N/A

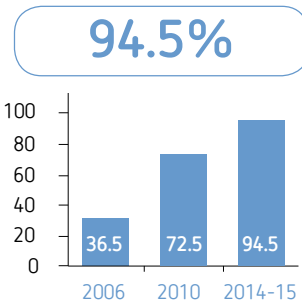
LAST REPORT

N/A

THIS REPORT

3/31

% 18-24 yrs spent time in Internet social activity in past 3 months



N/A

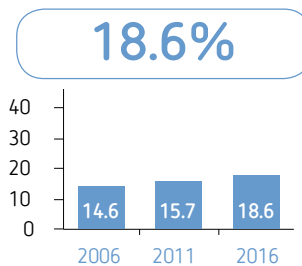
LAST REPORT

N/A

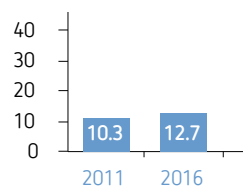
THIS REPORT

22/32

% 15-24 yrs who spent time doing unpaid voluntary work in the previous 12 months



12.7%



LAST REPORT

N/A

THIS REPORT

5/35

PARTICIPATING

Participating includes involvement with peers and the community, being able to have a voice and say on matters, and, increasingly, access to technology for social connections. In practice, participating means children and youth are listened to, are supported in expressing their views, their views are taken into account and they are involved in decision-making processes that affect them. It is noted there is a general lack of data on children's participation, with available data mainly focused on the 18-25 age range. Much more work is needed to identify indicators and data sources that adequately reflect this dimension.

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Australia ranks in top third of OECD countries



Australia ranks in middle third of OECD countries



Australia ranks in bottom third of OECD countries

In 2014 only 5.4 per cent of Australians aged 18-24 reported participating in civic and political groups in the past year, down from 11.1 per cent in 2006.

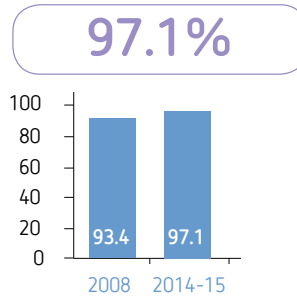
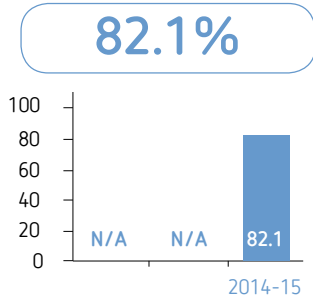
COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

NATIONAL
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

AUS RANKING FOR OECD
EQUIVALENT INDICATOR

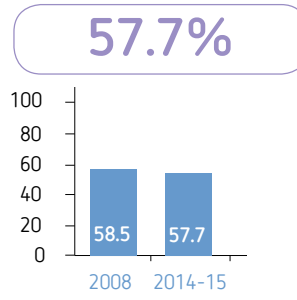
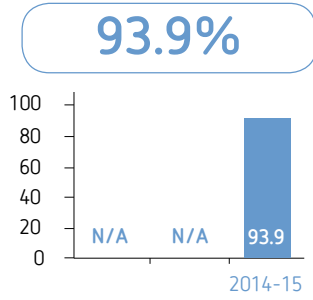
% 15-24 yrs who have participated in sport or recreational physical activity in past year



LAST REPORT
5/20

THIS REPORT
N/A

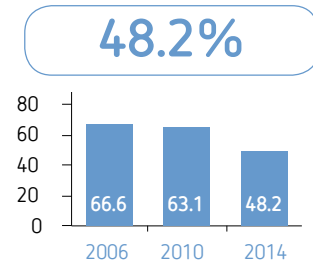
% 15-24 yrs involved in at least one organised cultural activity in past year



LAST REPORT
N/A

THIS REPORT
N/A

% 18-24 yrs participated in social groups in past year

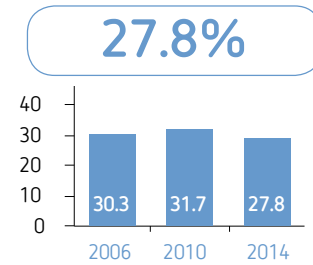


N/A

LAST REPORT
5/20

THIS REPORT
N/A

% 18-24 yrs participated in community support groups in past year

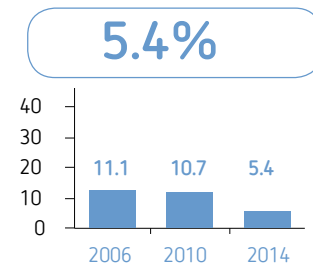


N/A

LAST REPORT
N/A

THIS REPORT
N/A

% 18-24 yrs participated in civic and political groups in past year



N/A

LAST REPORT
N/A

THIS REPORT
22/31





**POSITIVE SENSE
OF IDENTITY AND
CULTURE**

POSITIVE SENSE OF IDENTITY AND CULTURE

Having a positive sense of identity and culture, including a sense of spiritual wellbeing, is central to the wellbeing of children and youth. It has important and special meaning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. As with Participating, there is a relative shortage of indicators and data sources.

In 2017, 11.1 per cent of Australians aged 15-19 reported that discrimination is a personal concern, an increase from 10.8 per cent in 2013.

This figure was 19.8 per cent amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

In 2014, 72.3 per cent of those aged 16 to 27 who identify as LGBTQI said they had experienced abuse because of their sexuality and/or gender identity.



DISCRIMINATION

GENDER AND
SEXUALITY

LANGUAGE

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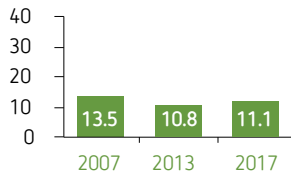
NATIONAL
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

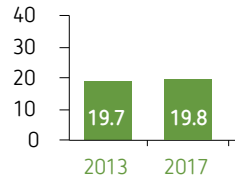
AUS RANKING FOR OECD
EQUIVALENT INDICATOR

% 15-19 yrs who report discrimination as being a personal concern

11.1%



19.8%



LAST REPORT

N/A

THIS REPORT

N/A

% 16-27 yrs who identify as LGBTQI who have experienced abuse because of their sexuality and/or gender identity

72.3%

N/A

LAST REPORT

N/A

THIS REPORT

N/A

% 16-27 yrs who identify as LGBTQI feeling 'pretty good' or 'great' about identifying as LGBTQI

75.6%

N/A

LAST REPORT

N/A

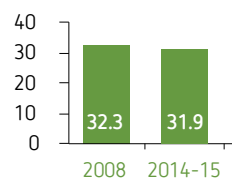
THIS REPORT

N/A

% 15-24 yrs who speak at least some words of an Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language

N/A

31.9%



LAST REPORT

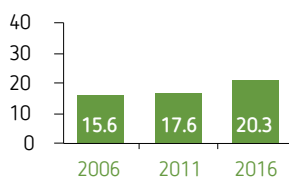
N/A

THIS REPORT

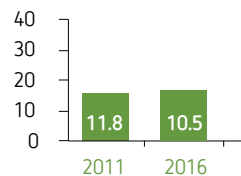
N/A

% 5-24 yrs speaking a language other than English at home

20.3%



10.5%



LAST REPORT

N/A

THIS REPORT



N/A

POSITIVE SENSE OF IDENTITY AND CULTURE

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In 2016 a fifth (21.1 per cent) of young Australians were born overseas. This is an increase from 12.2 per cent in 2006.

In 2017, 31.1 per cent of young people aged 15-19 reported body image as a personal concern. Amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people this figure was 30.7 per cent.

INDIGENOUS IDENTIFICATION

ACCEPTANCE OF OTHER CULTURES

COUNTRY OF BIRTH

RELIGION

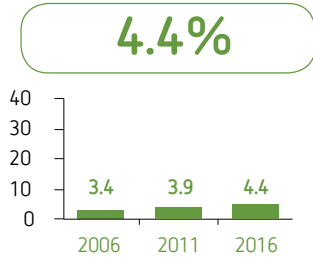
BODY IMAGE

NATIONAL
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

AUS RANKING FOR OECD
EQUIVALENT INDICATOR

% 15-24 yrs identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander



N/A

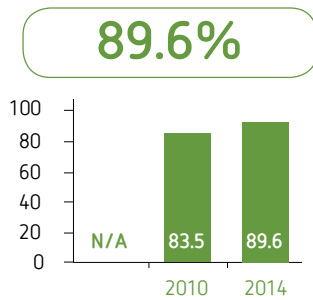
LAST REPORT

N/A

THIS REPORT

N/A

% 15-24 yrs who report being tolerant of society being comprised of different cultures



N/A

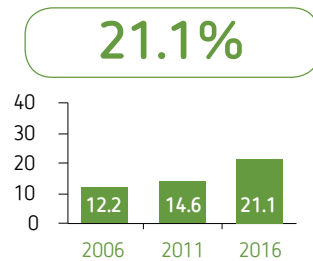
LAST REPORT

N/A

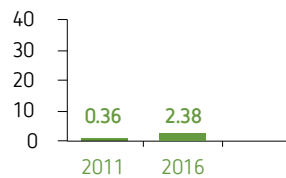
THIS REPORT

N/A

% 5-24 yrs born overseas



2.38%



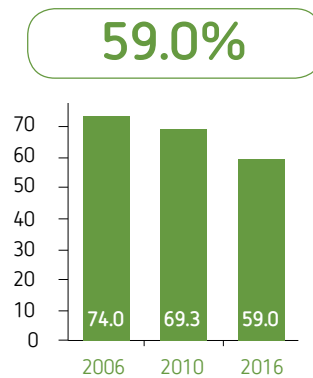
LAST REPORT

N/A

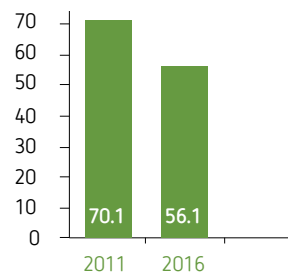
THIS REPORT

N/A

% 15-24 yrs identifying with a religious affiliation



56.1%



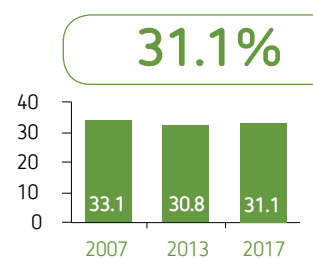
LAST REPORT

N/A

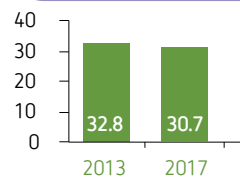
THIS REPORT

N/A

% 15-19 yrs reporting that body image is an issue of personal concern



30.7%



LAST REPORT

N/A

THIS REPORT

N/A

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