

### Our Children Our Communities Our Future

### ABOUT THE AEDC. The AEDC is Australia's national progress measure of children's early development

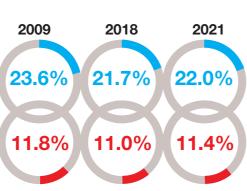


**1,467,091** children have been included over five data collections (2009, 2012, 2015, 2018, 2021)

**305,015** children were included in the 2021 data collection

That's **95.5%** of children who started school in 2021

Early childhood



To thrive in their

development,

children need

absence of mental

health difficulties

together with

presence of mental

health competences

www.

of children were developmentally vulnerable in at least one area of their development in 2021

of children were developmentally vulnerable in two or more areas of their development in 2021

There has been a significant increase in vulnerability since 2018 but a significant decrease n vulnerability overall since 2009

#### On Track on 5 domains

(OT5), over five data collections, improvement of 4.1% nationally with the gap closing for some children but widening for others:

A child's development

when they enter

school has a strong

relationship with

both academic and

behavioural outcomes

in school

www.

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For children in remote/ very remote areas, improvement of 7.1%

For the most disadvantaged children, decline of 1.1%



### WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?



Maternal smoking. low birth weight, pre-term birth and neonatal morbidities are risk factors for poorer child development at www. school entry



A child's experience of ill physical health before school has important consequences for their development www.

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Children with even a single notification to child protection have double the risk of developmental vulnerability www.



Modifiable

www.



Developmental vulnerability at school entry is associated with onset of later mental health disorders throughout childhood and adolescence www.

# **RELEVANT FACTS**

children notified to child protection before age 10



22 per cent of children live in households with housing stress

**92.3%** of children attended a preschool program



1 in 7 children living in socio-economically disadvantaged communities attend playgroup

compared with

1 in 4 children living in advantaged communities



## WHAT ARE THE KEY GAPS?

More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children grow up in communities facing adversity. This is reflected in persistent inequalities in child development.

#### WHAT IS NEEDED:

Increase Indigenous led research in early childhood and fund research to explore local solutions informed by community.

In 2021, 16.3% of children started school with undiagnosed health and development needs up from 10.7% in 2009. Research has shown this is associated with poorer school outcomes.

#### WHAT IS NEEDED:

Investigate increasing trends to better inform screening and early intervention prior to school www.



Early childhood education and care. including playgroups, parents, and families, contributes to healthy development, but we need better evidence to shape policy and investment.

#### WHAT IS NEEDED:

quality and pedagogy for promoting child development.

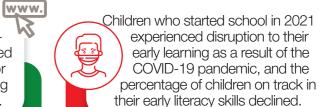


communities living with socioeconomic adversity are reflected in developmental inequities for their children, with no narrowing of this gap over the past decade.

#### WHAT IS NEEDED:

Polices need to be shaped to reduce inequalities while providing the right mix of universal and targeted services to support all families. www.

POLICY-



#### WHAT IS NEEDED:

Support local communities to address impacts of traumatic events on children and families.

