ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ARACY would like to thank those who helped in the production of this report card including RAND Australia, UNICEF Australia, The Australian Child Wellbeing Project, the Centre for Social and Early Emotional Development, Deakin University, members of the ARACY Longitudinal Studies Network, Department of Paediatrics, The University of Melbourne, Royal Children’s Hospital Campus, National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre and UNSW.

ARACY also acknowledges the providers of data, including Mission Australia, the Australian Child Wellbeing Project (ACWP), the Australian Council for Education Research (ACER), the Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS), the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS), the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), the Melbourne Institute, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti, and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

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.

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   Stephen Bartos
ARACY Board Chair   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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOP THIRD OECD RANK</th>
<th>MIDDLE THIRD OECD RANK</th>
<th>BOTTOM THIRD OECD RANK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Being loved and safe

- Children and youth in prison: 4/35
- Early female marriage: 1/25
- Parental time with children: 1/21
- Support networks: 8/34

### Having material basics

- Children living in relative poverty: 13/41
- 20-24 yrs not in Employment, Education or Training: 11/38
- Access to career guidance: 3/16
- Youth employment: 4/35
- Computer access for children in low socio-economic households: 10/46
- Housing stress: 9/28
- Duration of paid maternity leave: 12/42

### Being healthy

- Life expectancy at birth: 6/34
- Youth smoking: 1/18
- Youth alcohol abuse: 2/18
- Youth life satisfaction: 10/35

### Learning

- Reading performance (15 yrs): 16/57
- Science performance (15 yrs): 14/57
- Youth participation in public and private educational institutions: 5/34
- Youth participation in tertiary education: 7/36
- Youth participation in apprenticeship programmes: 6/22
- Child-to-staff ratios in pre-primary education services: 1/32
- Compulsory instruction time in primary and lower secondary education: 1/38
- Gender equality in education: 2/17

### Participation

- Youth voter turnout: 3/31
- Youth volunteering: 5/35
- Trust of youth in others: 10/35

### Being loved and safe

- Parental separation/divorce: 18/32
- Neighbourhood safety - youth perceptions: 22/34
- Child homicide: 22/37

### Having material basics

- Poverty severity: 12/33
- Income inequality: 22/35
- Youth unemployed and seeking work: 14/35
- 15-19 yrs not in Employment, Education or Training: 18/33
- Youth job insecurity: 7/15
- Access to internet: 12/31
- Access to computer: 14/34
- Duration of paid paternity leave: 19/42

### Being healthy

- Low birthweight: 23/43
- Infant mortality: 15/30
- Neonatal mortality: 19/36
- Youth suicide: 23/37
- Vaccination Measles: 33/35
- Vaccination Whooping Cough: 31/35
- Child obesity: 28/39

### Learning

- Early childcare enrolment rate (under 3 yrs): 19/37
- Maths performance (year 4): 28/49
- Science performance (year 4): 28/47
- Maths performance (15 yrs): 25/57
- Participation in educational institutions (18 yrs): 17/43
- Use of centre-based out-of-school-hours care: 25/33
- Youth problem-solving skills: 10/19
- Familiarity with environmental issues (15 yrs): 18/37
- Gender gap in educational achievement: 14/39

### Participation

- Youth confidence in national government: 14/34
- Engagement in social networking online: 22/32

The Wellbeing of young Australians • 7
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.

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.

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

20.0%

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

40.1%

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

15.3%

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

69.0%

% 15-19 yrs turning to parents for support

77.7%
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.

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.

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LATEST MEASURE AND TREND

AUS RANKING FOR OECD EQUIVALENT INDICATOR

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

17.9%

2014-15

20.1%

LAST REPORT

THIS REPORT

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

GRADE 6 2014

30.6%

LAST REPORT

THIS REPORT

GRADE 8 2014

29.7%

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

2008 2011 2016

8.6/1,000

LAST REPORT

THIS REPORT

56.6/1,000

LAST REPORT

THIS REPORT

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

2008 2011 2015-16

0.3/1,000

LAST REPORT

THIS REPORT

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

2008 2012 2016

2.7/1,000

LAST REPORT

THIS REPORT

% 0-24 yrs who are carers

2009 2012 2015

3.6%

LAST REPORT

THIS REPORT

N/A

23.6/1,000

LAST REPORT

THIS REPORT

N/A

N/A

N/A

N/A

N/A

N/A
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.

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.

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.
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.

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% families with dependent children in overcrowded housing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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</table>

AUS RANKING FOR OECD EQUIVALENT INDICATOR

<table>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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LAST REPORT | THIS REPORT

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<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
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<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
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<td>N/A</td>
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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.

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.

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.
**% low birthweight live born babies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>3.1/1,000</td>
<td>6.2/1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**% pregnant mothers who smoked during first 20 weeks of pregnancy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**% children fully immunised at age 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>90.5%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>90.5%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**% immunised against measles at age 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>93.5%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>93.5%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**% immunised against whooping cough at age 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>92.7%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>93.2%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.

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.

Key

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data:
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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

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).
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.

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.

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.

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.

**KEY**

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**OECD rankings:**
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- Australia ranks in bottom third of OECD countries
% 18-24 yrs with high or very high psychological distress

15.4%

2007 11.8
2011 11.8
2014-15 15.4

% 15-19 yrs with probable serious mental illness

22.8%

2012 N/A
2016 22.8

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

12.7 / 100,000

2007 10.3
2012 10.5
2016 12.7

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

4.3 / 100,000

2004-06 6.2
2010-12 5.0
2013-15 4.3

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

2.4%

2001 5.0
2010 3.9
2016 2.4

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

32.4%

2008 29.3
2014-15 32.4

% 15-19 yrs with probable serious mental illness

31.6%

2012 28.6
2016 31.6

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

39.2 / 100,000

2007 33.0
2016 39.2

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

15.3 / 100,000

2010-12 14.2
2012-14 15.3

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

14.5%

2010 19.7
2016 14.5

The Wellbeing of young Australians • 29
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.

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

Rates of youth violence have declined since 2009.

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
### % 12-17 yrs who smoke daily

- 2001: 24.0%
- 2013: 13.4%
- 2016: 11.6%

### % 18-24 yrs who smoke daily

- 2008: 40.0%
- 2012-13: 42.4%

### % 12-17 yrs drinking alcohol at risky levels

- 2010: 4.2%
- 2013: 2.6%
- 2016: 1.2%

### % 12-17 yrs have used illicit drugs in lifetime

- 2010: 13.6%
- 2013: 14.4%
- 2016: 12.9%

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

- 2009-10: 964.7
- 2012-13: 768
- 2016-17: 653.7

### % children who do not feel positive about their future

- Grade 4: 3.3%
- Grade 6: 3.6%
- Grade 8: 4.6%

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

- Grade 4: 92.5%
- Grade 6: 91.7%
- Grade 8: 90.6%
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.

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.

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.

KEY

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data:

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

83.3%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>85.0</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**% 0-12 yrs who require additional days of care**

10.0%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

$90

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**% year 4 students above the low benchmark for reading**

81.0%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>76.0</td>
<td>81.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**% year 4 students above the low benchmark for maths**

70.0%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>71.0</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**% year 4 students above the low benchmark for science**

75.0%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>76.0</td>
<td>71.0</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**AUS RANKING FOR OECD EQUIVALENT INDICATOR**

79.8%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>79.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Last report**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Last Report</th>
<th>This Report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% 4-5 yrs (who do not attend primary school) usually attending preschool</td>
<td>30/34</td>
<td>35/40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% 0-12 yrs who require additional days of care</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median usual weekly cost of childcare for families with children 0-12 yrs ($)</td>
<td>14/27</td>
<td>20/30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% year 4 students above the low benchmark for reading</td>
<td>19/24</td>
<td>28/50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% year 4 students above the low benchmark for maths</td>
<td>12/25</td>
<td>28/49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% year 4 students above the low benchmark for science</td>
<td>18/25</td>
<td>28/47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.

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).
### National Wellbeing Indicators

#### % 15 yrs at level 2 and above for reading
- **2003**: 88.0%
- **2006**: 86.0%
- **2009**: 86.0%
- **2015**: 82.0%

#### % 15 yrs at level 2 and above for maths
- **2003**: 86.0%
- **2006**: 87.0%
- **2009**: 84.0%
- **2015**: 79.0%

#### % 15 yrs at level 2 and above for science
- **2006**: N/A
- **2009**: 97.0%
- **2015**: 82.0%

#### % parents read from book or told story to child 0-2yrs in past week
- **2008**: 80.0%
- **2011**: 80.2%
- **2014**: 80.8%

#### Apparent retention rate Year 7/8 to Year 12 (%)
- **2001**: 73.4%
- **2011**: 84.8%
- **2017**: 84.8%

#### % 15-19 yrs enrolled in study for a qualification
- **2007**: 77.8%
- **2012**: 80.3%
- **2016**: 83.2%

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Wellbeing Indicators

#### % 15 yrs at level 2 and above for reading
- **2009**: 61.0%
- **2015**: 59.0%

#### % 15 yrs at level 2 and above for maths
- **2009**: 60.0%
- **2015**: 50.0%

#### % 15 yrs at level 2 and above for science
- **2009**: 65.0%
- **2015**: 57.0%

### AUS Ranking for OECD Equivalent Indicator

#### % 15 yrs at level 2 and above for reading
- **2003**: 86.0%
- **2006**: 82.0%
- **2009**: 88.0%
- **2015**: 82.0%

#### % 15 yrs at level 2 and above for maths
- **2003**: 59.0%
- **2006**: 79.0%
- **2009**: 50.0%
- **2015**: 60.0%

#### % 15 yrs at level 2 and above for science
- **2003**: 57.0%
- **2006**: N/A
- **2009**: 65.0%
- **2015**: 60.0%

#### % parents read from book or told story to child 0-2yrs in past week
- **2008**: 67.2%
- **2014**: 70.3%

#### Apparent retention rate Year 7/8 to Year 12 (%)
- **2011**: 48.7%
- **2017**: 62.4%

#### % 15-19 yrs enrolled in study for a qualification
- **2007**: 60.0%
- **2012**: 63.1%
- **2016**: 63.2%
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.

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.

**KEY**

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- 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
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### National

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Latest Measure</th>
<th>Trend</th>
<th>OECD Equivalent Indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4 2014</td>
<td>88.6%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A 26/34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6 2014</td>
<td>89.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8 2014</td>
<td>79.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Latest Measure</th>
<th>Trend</th>
<th>OECD Equivalent Indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A 24/26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>55.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

% children feeling some or a lot of pressure from homework
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.

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

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

% 18-24 yrs enrolled to vote

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

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

The Wellbeing of young Australians • 43
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.

**KEY**

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- Purple: Data directly comparable with overall population
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- Yellow: Australia ranks in middle third of OECD countries
- Red: 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.
% 15-24 yrs who have participated in sport or recreational physical activity in past year

82.1%  

LAST REPORT 5/20  THIS REPORT N/A

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

93.9%  

LAST REPORT N/A  THIS REPORT N/A

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

48.2%  

LAST REPORT 5/20  THIS REPORT N/A

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

27.8%  

LAST REPORT N/A  THIS REPORT N/A

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

5.4%  

LAST REPORT N/A  THIS REPORT 22/31
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.

**KEY**

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### National Latest Measure and Trend

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% 15-19 yrs who report discrimination as a personal concern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% 16-27 yrs who identify as LGBTQI who have experienced abuse because of their sexuality and/or gender identity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Latest Measure and Trend

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% 16-27 yrs who identify as LGBTQI feeling ‘pretty good’ or ‘great’ about identifying as LGBTQI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Australian Ranking for OECD Equivalent Indicator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% 15-19 yrs who report discrimination as a personal concern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Last Report: N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% 16-27 yrs who identify as LGBTQI who have experienced abuse because of their sexuality and/or gender identity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Last Report: N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% 16-27 yrs who identify as LGBTQI feeling ‘pretty good’ or ‘great’ about identifying as LGBTQI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Last Report: N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% 15-24 yrs who speak at least some words of an Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% 5-24 yrs speaking a language other than English at home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% 15-24 yrs speaking a language other than English at home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 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.