Australian Early Development Index
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Australian Early Development Index
Community Profile 2012

Greater Shepparton
Victoria

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Prepared by the Centre for Community Child Health
The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne
Parkville Victoria 3052

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Executive summary

The Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) is a measure of how young children are developing in different communities. Like a census, it involves collecting information to help create a snapshot of early childhood development across Australia. The AEDI is a population measure of children's development as they enter school. Based on the scores from a teacher-completed checklist, the AEDI measures five areas, or domains, of early childhood development:

- physical health and wellbeing
- social competence
- emotional maturity
- language and cognitive skills (school-based)
- communication skills and general knowledge.

In 2012, the AEDI was completed nationwide for the second time. AEDI checklists were completed for 289,973 children representing 96.5 per cent of all Australian children enrolled to begin school in 2012. This involved 16,425 teachers from 7,417 government, Catholic and independent schools (95.6 per cent of schools with eligible children).

In the year before entering formal full-time school, 94.8 per cent of Australian children were reported to have had some form of non-parental early childhood education and/or care experiences. Across Australia there is diversity in the languages spoken by children with 305 languages other than English reported as spoken in the home. There are also 14,173 (4.9 per cent) children with reported chronic physical, intellectual and medical needs (special needs status).

Key findings from 2012 AEDI results

- The majority of children are doing well on each of the five AEDI developmental domains.
- Overall in Australia, 22.0 per cent of children are developmentally vulnerable on one or more domain/s.
- Overall in Australia, 10.8 per cent of children are developmentally vulnerable on two or more domains.
- The majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are developmentally on track on each of the five AEDI domains; however Indigenous children are more than twice as likely to be developmentally vulnerable than non-indigenous children.
- There are children in Australia who only speak English but are reported as not proficient in English. These children are more likely to be developmentally vulnerable on all the AEDI domains.
- In 2012, females were less likely to be developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains compared to males. However, males showed a greater change (2.0 percentage points) over their 2009 results when compared with females (1.1 percentage points).

Summary AEDI results for your community

The AEDI was completed in Greater Shepparton for 973 children in their first year of formal full-time school.

To maintain confidentiality, the AEDI results for a Local Community* will not be included if there are insufficient numbers of children.

Table a: Background information

Background information – (Greater Shepparton)	State	Community*
	Number (per cent)	Number (per cent)
Children surveyed	67,931	973
Schools contributing to the results	1,776	39
Teachers contributing to the results	4,027	74
Indigenous children	946 (1.4%)	74 (7.6%)
Children born in a country other than Australia	4,999 (7.4%)	52 (5.3%)
Children with English as a second language	9,140 (13.5%)	122 (12.5%)

Table b: Summary AEDI results by AEDI domain

AEDI domain	per cent of children developmentally vulnerable*		per cent of children developmentally at risk*	per cent of children on track*
	State result	Community result	Community result	Community result
Physical health and wellbeing *(physical readiness for the school day, physical independence, gross and fine motor skills)*	7.8	9.5	13.4	77.1
Social competence *(overall social competence, responsibility and respect, approaches to learning, readiness to explore new things)*	8.1	11.4	16.5	72.1
Emotional maturity *(pro-social and helping behaviour, anxious, fearful and aggressive behaviour, hyperactivity and inattention)*	7.2	8.0	16.0	76.0
Language and cognitive skills (school-based) *(basic literacy, interest in literacy/numeracy and memory, advanced literacy, basic numeracy)*	6.1	9.9	14.0	76.1
Communication skills and general knowledge *(storytelling ability, communication with adults and children)*	8.0	9.0	16.1	74.8

* See relevant definition of terms

Note: Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Overall in Greater Shepparton there are 24.6 per cent of children developmentally vulnerable on one or more domain/s of the AEDI and 11.6 per cent are developmentally vulnerable on two or more domains.

SECTION 1 – AEDI Community results

1 Summary information about children surveyed

Greater Shepparton, in the region of Goulburn, is situated approximately 200 kilometres from the Melbourne Central Business District. The residential population of the area is 60,492, which includes 5,199 children aged 0 to 5 years^. Summary statistics for this section include **all** children who reside in the Community and were involved in the data collection. Results are reported at a Local Community* level.

The AEDI is a population measure of children's development as they start school. It is therefore important to consider the extent to which the AEDI is reflective of the entire population of children starting school in the community. The population of five-year-olds^*# in Greater Shepparton is 943 and the AEDI was completed for 973 children. This represents 103 per cent of the community. Please consider any difference between the number of children for whom the AEDI was completed and the population of five-year-olds when viewing these results.

Some Local Communities have been combined to enable results to be released. Where Local Communities have been combined, their name may have changed. To maintain confidentiality, the AEDI results for a Local Community will not be included if there are insufficient numbers of children.

Data is available for the following Local Communities:
Kialla, Mooroopna, Shepparton central, Shepparton north central, Shepparton north east, Shepparton north west, Shepparton rural north east, Shepparton rural north west, Shepparton rural south, Shepparton south, Shepparton south east, Shepparton surrounds north east, Tatura.

^ Sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics Census 2011.
* See relevant definition of terms
# The population of five-year-olds is a proxy for the total number of children starting school in the community.

1.1 Considering community demographics

Children arrive at school with a range of demographic backgrounds, non-parental early childhood education and/or care experiences, and support needs.[1-5] These factors have a significant impact on child development and it is important to consider community demographic information when interpreting your community's results. Table 1.1 highlights some key considerations that may help when interpreting AEDI Community results.

Table 1.1: Key considerations for AEDI information of children surveyed

Summary information included in the AEDI Community Profile	Key points to consider
Sex	Boys are more likely to be developmentally vulnerable on the AEDI domains compared with girls. Therefore it is important to consider if Local Communities have a substantially uneven number of boys and girls. Small differences are unlikely to be important.
Mean age at time of AEDI Checklist completion	As age is likely to have an impact on children's development, age-based cut-offs* have been used to control for age when analysing the AEDI data.
Indigenous children	Nationally, the majority of Indigenous children are developmentally on track on all the AEDI domains. However Indigenous children are more than twice as likely to be developmentally vulnerable than non-indigenous children. When interpreting AEDI Community results it is important to consider both the **number** and the **percentage** of Indigenous children in each Local Community*.
Children with English as a second language at home or speaking languages additional to, or other than English at home	Nationally, children who are not proficient in English, independent of whether they speak another language or not, are more likely than other children to be developmentally vulnerable, particularly on the language and cognitive skills (school-based) domain. When interpreting AEDI Community results it may be useful to think about the number and percentage of children who are not proficient in English in addition to children who have a language background other than English.[6]
Children reported to be in non-parental early childhood education and/or care and the types of education and care	The national AEDI results show that in the year before entering formal full-time school, the majority of children in Australia were reported to have had some form of non-parental early childhood education and/or care experience. Research shows a high-quality early childhood education experience (e.g. preschool/kindergarten) enhances all-round development in children.[1-4] When considering your local results it may be of interest to reflect on the types of care children experience before beginning school in your community. This would include availability and quality of early childhood education, child care, playgroups and family supports.
Children with special needs status (chronic physical, intellectual and medical needs)	Information about children with special needs is not included in the AEDI results tables because of their already identified substantial developmental needs.
School transitions	Beginning school is one of the key transitions during childhood. Children's long-term success in school derives from their learning experiences before school and the ongoing learning environment in the early school years. A smooth transition between a child's before-school setting and the school environment increases the likelihood of continuous learning.[2,3] It may be useful to consider how well children in Local Communities are settling into the school environment and what may be influencing their transitions to school.

* See relevant definition of terms

1.2 AEDI information about children surveyed

Background information about the children surveyed in Greater Shepparton for the AEDI is provided in Tables 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4. This information is from the background information collected by the school and teachers for the AEDI.

AEDI information about children surveyed

Table 1.2: AEDI information about children surveyed in this community

	Number (per cent)
Demographics	
Children surveyed	973
Schools contributing to the community results	39
Teachers contributing to the community results	74
Mean age of children at completion	5 years & 10 months
Sex Male Female	 498 (51.2%) 475 (48.8%)
Indigenous children	74 (7.6%)
Children born in a country other than Australia	52 (5.3%)
Children with English as a second language	122 (12.5%)
Children who speak a language other than English at home (LBOTE*) Proficient in English Not proficient in English	 118 (80.3%) 28 (19.0%)
Non-parental early childhood education and/or care^	
Children reported to have had a non-parental early childhood education and/or care experience in the year before school (day care, preschool, family day care, care from a relative, nanny or other person)	882 (96.3%)
Children who attended preschool, including preschool in a day care centre, in the year before school	859 (93.8%)
Support information	
Children with special needs status#	49 (5.0%)
Children identified by teachers as requiring further assessment (e.g. medical and physical, behaviour management, emotional and cognitive development)	75 (7.7%)
Children who attended a school or community breakfast club	41 (4.2%)
Children who attended an early intervention program	75 (7.7%)

* See relevant definition of terms.
^ Includes only children where teachers knew if they had a non-parental early childhood education and/or care experience or not, in the year before entering formal full-time school.
# Children with additional health and developmental needs are those who have chronic medical, physical or an intellectual disability that requires special assistance. Teachers were asked to base their response on medical diagnosis.

AEDI information about school transitions

Table 1.3: School transitions reported at community level ^

	Often or very true Number (per cent)	Sometimes or somewhat true Number (per cent)	Never or not true Number (per cent)	Don't know Number (per cent)
	Community result	Community result	Community result	Community result
Children making good progress in adapting to the structure and learning environment of the school	743 (76.5%)	194 (20.0%)	30 (3.1%)	4 (0.4%)
Children whose parent(s)/caregiver(s) are actively engaged with the school in supporting their child's learning	693 (71.4%)	205 (21.1%)	61 (6.3%)	12 (1.2%)
Children who are regularly read to/encouraged in their reading at home	737 (75.9%)	159 (16.4%)	59 (6.1%)	16 (1.6%)

^ Teachers only completed these questions for children they had known for more than one month and children from New South Wales are not included.

Table 1.4: School transitions reported at state and national levels^

	Often or very true Number (per cent)		Sometimes or somewhat true Number (per cent)		Never or not true Number (per cent)		Don't know Number (per cent)	
	National result	State/ territory result	National result	State/ territory result	National result	State/ territory result	National result	State/ territory result
Children making good progress in adapting to the structure and learning environment of the school	146,342 (75.3%)	53,416 (78.8%)	41,792 (21.5%)	12,400 (18.3%)	5,470 (2.8%)	1,614 (2.4%)	747 (0.4%)	314 (0.5%)
Children whose parent(s)/caregiver(s) are actively engaged with the school in supporting their child's learning	140,640 (72.4%)	52,491 (77.5%)	39,091 (20.1%)	11,203 (16.5%)	13,000 (6.7%)	3,545 (5.2%)	1,620 (0.8%)	505 (0.7%)
Children who are regularly read to/encouraged in their reading at home	141,937 (73.0%)	53,800 (79.4%)	33,861 (17.4%)	9,838 (14.5%)	11,585 (6.0%)	3,277 (4.8%)	6,968 (3.6%)	829 (1.2%)

^ Teachers only completed these questions for children they had known for more than one month and children from New South Wales are not included.

AEDI information by sex

Nationally boys are more likely to be developmentally vulnerable than girls on the AEDI domains. The number of boys and girls within a Local Community* is unlikely to be even; therefore large differences in results should be interpreted carefully. Table 1.5 shows the percentage of boys and girls in each Local Community.

Table 1.5: Boy/Girl distribution across Local communities

Geography	Total number	Boys (per cent)	Girls (per cent)
Australia	289,973	51.4	48.6
Victoria	67,931	51.4	48.6
Greater Shepparton	973	51.2	48.8
Local Community			
Kialla	105	55.2	44.8
Mooroopna	127	49.6	50.4
Shepparton central	42	47.6	52.4
Shepparton north central	62	54.8	45.2
Shepparton north east	71	59.2	40.8
Shepparton north west #	74	51.4	48.6
Shepparton rural north east	51	37.3	62.7
Shepparton rural north west	46	50.0	50.0
Shepparton rural south	48	47.9	52.1
Shepparton south	115	52.2	47.8
Shepparton south east	98	44.9	55.1
Shepparton surrounds north east	66	51.5	48.5
Tatura	68	58.8	41.2

*See relevant definition of terms
AEDI data collection is 60–80% of the Australian Bureau of Statistics five–year–old population; interpret with caution.

Non-parental early childhood education and/or care experiences

Overall teachers reported 96.3 per cent of children in Greater Shepparton have experienced some form of regular non-parental early childhood education and/or care in the year before entering formal full-time school (such as family day care, preschool or kindergarten, or care by a grandparent).

Table 1.6: Non-parental early childhood education and/or care experiences

Geography	Total number of children	Have been in early education or care	Have not been in early education or care
Australia	262,848	249,273 (94.8%)	13,575 (5.2%)
Victoria	63,733	62,204 (97.6%)	1,529 (2.4%)
Greater Shepparton	916	882 (96.3%)	34 (3.7%)
Local Community			
Kialla	103	101 (98.1%)	2 (1.9%)
Mooroopna	122	117 (95.9%)	5 (4.1%)
Shepparton central	39	36 (92.3%)	3 (7.7%)
Shepparton north central	60	57 (95.0%)	3 (5.0%)
Shepparton north east	68	66 (97.1%)	2 (2.9%)
Shepparton north west #	70	66 (94.3%)	4 (5.7%)
Shepparton rural north east	50	50 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Shepparton rural north west	44	42 (95.5%)	2 (4.5%)
Shepparton rural south	48	48 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Shepparton south	105	102 (97.1%)	3 (2.9%)
Shepparton south east	77	70 (90.9%)	7 (9.1%)
Shepparton surrounds north east	62	61 (98.4%)	1 (1.6%)
Tatura	68	66 (97.1%)	2 (2.9%)

Note: Includes only children where teachers knew if they had a non-parental early childhood education and/or care experience or not, in the year before entering formal full-time school.
AEDI data collection is 60–80% of the Australian Bureau of Statistics five–year–old population; interpret with caution.

Type of non-parental early childhood education and/or care experience

Table 1.7 presents the type of non-parental early childhood education and/or care experiences children in the area had before entering formal full-time school. Please note children may be included in more than one category.

Table 1.7: Type of non-parental early childhood education and/or care

Geography	Total†	Day care centre (per cent)	Preschool†† (per cent)	Family day care (per cent)	Grand-parent (per cent)	Other relative (per cent)	Nanny (per cent)	Other person (per cent)
Australia	262,848	15.2	80.9	3.1	9.8	3.4	1.3	1.7
Victoria	63,733	6.4	93.9	1.9	9.3	2.9	1.2	1.7
Greater Shepparton	916	5.8	93.8	3.4	10.9	3.2	0.5	1.2
Local Community								
Kialla	103	3.9	94.2	5.8	10.7	5.8	1.9	2.9
Mooroopna	122	13.1	90.2	6.6	23.0	4.9	0.0	0.8
Shepparton central	39	5.1	89.7	5.1	2.6	2.6	0.0	0.0
Shepparton north central	60	3.3	90.0	1.7	20.0	5.0	0.0	1.7
Shepparton north east	68	2.9	97.1	4.4	5.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
Shepparton north west #	70	7.1	94.3	2.9	7.1	7.1	0.0	2.9
Shepparton rural north east	50	8.0	100.0	4.0	12.0	2.0	2.0	4.0
Shepparton rural north west	44	11.4	95.5	2.3	20.5	6.8	0.0	2.3
Shepparton rural south	48	8.3	100.0	4.2	18.8	0.0	2.1	2.1
Shepparton south	105	0.0	96.2	1.0	6.7	3.8	1.0	0.0
Shepparton south east	77	5.2	84.4	1.3	3.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
Shepparton surrounds north east	62	3.2	96.8	1.6	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Tatura	68	4.4	95.6	1.5	5.9	0.0	0.0	0.0

Note: The total across categories exceeds 100 per cent as teachers may have nominated more than one form of non-parental early childhood education and/or care type for a child.
† Includes only children where teachers knew if they had a non-parental early childhood education and/or care experience or not, in the year before entering formal full-time school.
†† Includes preschool in a day care centre.
# AEDI data collection is 60–80% of the Australian Bureau of Statistics five–year–old population; interpret with caution.

2 AEDI results

2.1 AEDI results: Physical health and wellbeing domain

Results for this domain nationally, by state/territory, AEDI Community and Local Community are reported in Table 2.1. Patterns of vulnerability vary across the physical health and wellbeing domain (e.g. children might be coming to school hungry but still have developmentally-appropriate fine and gross motor skills). As such, sub-domains are reported for the physical health and wellbeing domain (Table 2.2) to enable communities to make better sense of their results.

(Please note the physical health and wellbeing domain is the only AEDI domain that requires this type of sub-domain analysis. More information about the AEDI domains is available on the *Domains* fact sheet at www.aedi.org.au.)

Sub-domains	Children developmentally at risk or vulnerable	Children on track
Physical readiness for school day	Have at least sometimes experienced coming unprepared for school by being dressed inappropriately, coming to school hungry or tired.	Never or almost never experienced being dressed inappropriately for school activities, and do not come to school hungry or tired.
Physical independence	Range from those who have not developed one of the three skills (independence, handedness, co-ordination), to those who have not developed any of these skills.	Are independent regarding their own needs, have an established hand preference and are well coordinated.
Gross and fine motor skills	Range from those who have an average ability to perform skills requiring gross and fine motor competence and good or average overall energy levels, to those who have poor fine and gross motor skills, poor overall energy levels and physical skills.	Have an excellent ability to physically tackle the school day and have excellent or good gross and fine motor skills.

Physical health and wellbeing domain

Table 2.1: AEDI results: Physical health and wellbeing domain

Geography			Developmentally vulnerable	Developmentally at risk	On track	
	Number of children	Median score*	Below the 10th percentile	Between the 10th and 25th percentile	Between the 25th and 50th percentile	Above the 50th percentile
			(per cent)	(per cent)	(per cent)	(per cent)
Australia	273,922	9.6	9.3	13.4	19.5	57.8
Victoria	64,061	10.0	7.8	11.1	18.7	62.5
Greater Shepparton	913	9.6	9.5	13.4	22.0	55.1
Local Community						
Kialla	99	10.0	3.0	10.1	19.2	67.7
Mooroopna	121	7.9	26.4	27.3	23.1	23.1
Shepparton central	42	9.8	4.8	16.7	21.4	57.1
Shepparton north central	57	9.6	3.5	5.3	35.1	56.1
Shepparton north east	68	10.0	0.0	5.9	20.6	73.5
Shepparton north west #	69	10.0	11.6	11.6	15.9	60.9
Shepparton rural north east	49	9.2	8.2	30.6	20.4	40.8
Shepparton rural north west	44	9.6	11.4	6.8	29.5	52.3
Shepparton rural south	47	10.0	2.1	6.4	6.4	85.1
Shepparton south	110	10.0	6.4	8.2	21.8	63.6
Shepparton south east	85	9.6	10.6	11.8	24.7	52.9
Shepparton surrounds north east	58	9.2	19.0	22.4	24.1	34.5
Tatura	64	10.0	4.7	6.3	23.4	65.6

* See relevant definition of terms
Note: The AEDI 'cut-offs' used to determine whether an individual score is 'on track', 'at risk' or 'vulnerable' were established from the 2009 AEDI data and will remain the same for future data collections.
Note: Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding.
AEDI data collection is 60–80% of the Australian Bureau of Statistics five–year–old population; interpret with caution.

Physical health and wellbeing sub-domains

Table 2.2: AEDI results: Physical health and wellbeing *sub-domains**

* NB: The Physical health and wellbeing sub-domains are the only sub-domains for which results are reported

Geography		Physical readiness for the school day	Physical independence	Fine and gross motor skills
	Number of children	Below the 10th percentile (per cent)	Below the 10th percentile (per cent)	Below the 10th percentile (per cent)
Australia	273,922	10.7	7.2	6.6
Victoria	64,061	10.8	6.4	6.2
Greater Shepparton	913	12.2	7.9	7.8
Local Community				
Kialla	99	6.1	5.1	4.0
Mooroopna	121	27.3	14.0	16.5
Shepparton central	42	19.0	4.8	7.1
Shepparton north central	57	7.0	5.3	3.5
Shepparton north east	68	2.9	1.5	1.5
Shepparton north west #	69	2.9	10.1	7.2
Shepparton rural north east	49	4.1	12.2	14.3
Shepparton rural north west	44	13.6	9.1	9.1
Shepparton rural south	47	0.0	0.0	2.1
Shepparton south	110	15.5	7.3	2.7
Shepparton south east	85	14.1	12.9	10.6
Shepparton surrounds north east	58	15.5	8.6	20.7
Tatura	64	15.6	4.7	0.0

Note: The AEDI 'cut-offs' used to determine whether an individual score is 'on track', 'at risk' or 'vulnerable' were established from the 2009 AEDI data and will remain the same for future data collections.
Note: The denominator for this calculation may differ from the denominator for 'physical health and wellbeing' domain as there are varying numbers of children with valid scores for each sub-domain.
AEDI data collection is 60–80% of the Australian Bureau of Statistics five–year–old population; interpret with caution.

2.2 AEDI results: Social competence domain

Results for this domain nationally, by state/territory, AEDI Community and Local Community are reported in Table 2.3.

	Children at risk or developmentally vulnerable	Children on track
Overall social competence	Have average to poor overall social skills, low self-confidence and are rarely able to play with various children and interact cooperatively.	Have excellent or good overall social development, very good ability to get along with other children and play with various children, usually cooperative and self-confident.
Responsibility and respect	Only sometimes or never accept responsibility for actions, show respect for others and for property, demonstrate self-control, and are rarely able to follow rules and take care of materials.	Always or most of the time show respect for others and for property, follow rules and take care of materials, accept responsibility for actions, and show self-control.
Approaches to learning	Only sometimes or never work neatly, independently, are rarely able to solve problems, follow class routines and do not easily adjust to changes in routines.	Always or most of the time work neatly, independently, and solve problems, follow instructions and class routines, easily adjust to changes.
Readiness to explore new things	Only sometimes or never show curiosity about the world, and are rarely eager to explore new books, toys or unfamiliar objects and games.	Are curious about the surrounding world, and are eager to explore new books, toys or unfamiliar objects and games.

Social competence domain

Table 2.3: AEDI results: Social competence domain

Geography	Number of children	Median score*	Developmentally vulnerable: Below the 10th percentile (per cent)	Developmentally at risk: Between the 10th and 25th percentile (per cent)	On track: Between the 25th and 50th percentile (per cent)	On track: Above the 50th percentile (per cent)
Australia	273,534	9.2	9.3	14.3	21.9	54.6
Victoria	63,896	9.4	8.1	13.3	21.5	57.1
Greater Shepparton	921	9.2	11.4	16.5	20.1	52.0
Local Community						
Kialla	99	9.6	6.1	14.1	16.2	63.6
Mooroopna	121	7.7	26.4	24.0	25.6	24.0
Shepparton central	42	9.2	9.5	11.9	26.2	52.4
Shepparton north central	59	9.2	6.8	18.6	23.7	50.8
Shepparton north east	69	9.4	2.9	8.7	33.3	55.1
Shepparton north west #	72	9.1	16.7	19.4	13.9	50.0
Shepparton rural north east	49	9.6	8.2	8.2	14.3	69.4
Shepparton rural north west	44	9.3	2.3	22.7	25.0	50.0
Shepparton rural south	47	9.8	0.0	8.5	10.6	80.9
Shepparton south	110	9.2	11.8	20.9	17.3	50.0
Shepparton south east	87	8.8	16.1	20.7	18.4	44.8
Shepparton surrounds north east	58	9.1	15.5	15.5	24.1	44.8
Tatura	64	9.8	6.3	7.8	12.5	73.4

* See relevant definition of terms
Note: The AEDI 'cut-offs' used to determine whether an individual score is 'on track', 'at risk' or 'vulnerable' were established from the 2009 AEDI data and will remain the same for future data collections.
Note: Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding.
AEDI data collection is 60–80% of the Australian Bureau of Statistics five–year–old population; interpret with caution.

2.3 AEDI results: Emotional maturity domain

Results for this domain nationally, by state/territory, AEDI Community and AEDI Local Community are reported in Table 2.4.

	Children at risk or developmentally vulnerable	Children on track
Pro-social and helping behaviour	Never or almost never show most of the helping behaviours including helping someone hurt, sick or upset, offering to help spontaneously, and inviting others to join in.	Often show helping behaviours including helping someone hurt, sick or upset, offering to help spontaneously, and inviting bystanders to join in.
Anxious and fearful behaviour	Often show most of the anxious behaviours; are worried, unhappy, nervous, sad or excessively shy, indecisive; and are upset when left at school.	Rarely or never show anxious behaviours, are happy and able to enjoy school, and are comfortable being left at school.
Aggressive behaviour	Often show most of the aggressive behaviours; they get into physical fights, kick or bite others, take other people's things, are disobedient or have temper tantrums.	Rarely or never show aggressive behaviours and do not use aggression as a means of solving a conflict, do not have temper tantrums, and are not mean to others.
Hyperactivity and inattention	Often show most of the hyperactive behaviours; they could be restless, distractible, impulsive; they fidget and have difficulty settling to activities.	Never show hyperactive behaviours and are able to concentrate, settle to chosen activities, wait their turn, and most of the time think before doing something.

Emotional maturity domain

Table 2.4: AEDI results: Emotional maturity domain

Geography	Number of children	Median score*	Developmentally vulnerable: Below the 10th percentile (per cent)	Developmentally at risk: Between the 10th and 25th percentile (per cent)	On track: Between the 25th and 50th percentile (per cent)	On track: Above the 50th percentile (per cent)
Australia	272,682	8.7	7.6	14.2	24.2	53.9
Victoria	63,775	8.8	7.2	13.5	23.3	56.1
Greater Shepparton	911	8.8	8.0	16.0	23.8	52.1
Local Community						
Kialla	99	8.8	5.1	16.2	24.2	54.5
Mooroopna	119	7.7	19.3	25.2	28.6	26.9
Shepparton central	41	8.8	9.8	9.8	22.0	58.5
Shepparton north central	57	8.8	7.0	15.8	21.1	56.1
Shepparton north east	70	9.3	4.3	12.9	18.6	64.3
Shepparton north west #	72	8.7	6.9	13.9	29.2	50.0
Shepparton rural north east	49	9.4	4.1	4.1	18.4	73.5
Shepparton rural north west	44	8.5	9.1	13.6	34.1	43.2
Shepparton rural south	47	9.8	0.0	4.3	14.9	80.9
Shepparton south	109	8.8	11.9	14.7	17.4	56.0
Shepparton south east	82	8.2	6.1	28.0	29.3	36.6
Shepparton surrounds north east	58	8.7	3.4	25.9	20.7	50.0
Tatura	64	8.9	4.7	6.3	28.1	60.9

* See relevant definition of terms
Note: The AEDI 'cut-offs' used to determine whether an individual score is 'on track', 'at risk' or 'vulnerable' were established from the 2009 AEDI data and will remain the same for future data collections.
Note: Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding.
AEDI data collection is 60–80% of the Australian Bureau of Statistics five–year–old population; interpret with caution.

2.4 AEDI results: Language and cognitive skills (school-based) domain

Results for this domain nationally, by state/territory, AEDI Community and Local Community are reported in Table 2.5.

This domain mainly reflects teachers' scores for children's language and cognitive skills based on those necessary for school (with English as the language of instruction) and does not necessarily reflect children's proficiency in their home language^. Also see Section 4.6 for more information on interpreting results for children from diverse language backgrounds.

^ Children who have a language background other than English may be proficient in their home languages.

	Children at risk or developmentally vulnerable	Children on track
Basic literacy	Do not have most of the basic literacy skills; have problems with identifying letters or attaching sounds to them, rhyming, may not know the writing directions and how to write their own name.	Have all the basic literacy skills including how to handle a book, are able to identify some letters and attach sounds to some letters, show awareness of rhyming words, know the writing directions, and are able to write their own name.
Interest in literacy/numeracy and memory	May not show interest in books and reading, or maths and number games, or both, and may have difficulty remembering things.	Show interest in books and reading, maths and numbers, and have no difficulty with remembering things.
Advanced literacy	Have only up to one of the advanced literacy skills; cannot read or write simple words or sentences, and rarely write voluntarily.	Have at least half of the advanced literacy skills such as reading simple words or sentences, and writing simple words or sentences.
Basic numeracy	Have marked difficulty with numbers, cannot count, compare or recognise numbers, may not be able to name all the shapes and may have difficulty with time concepts.	Have all the basic numeracy skills and can count to 20, recognise shapes and numbers, compare numbers, sort and classify, use one-to-one correspondence, and understand simple time concepts.

Language and cognitive skills (schools based) domain

Table 2.5: AEDI results: Language and cognitive skills (schools based) domain

Geography			Developmentally vulnerable	Developmentally at risk	On track	
	Number of children	Median score*	Below the 10th percentile	Between the 10th and 25th percentile	Between the 25th and 50th percentile	Above the 50th percentile
			(per cent)	(per cent)	(per cent)	(per cent)
Australia	273,896	9.6	6.8	10.6	21.7	60.9
Victoria	64,195	9.6	6.1	9.9	19.4	64.6
Greater Shepparton	920	9.2	9.9	14.0	22.7	53.4
Local Community						
Kialla	99	9.6	3.0	8.1	28.3	60.6
Mooroopna	121	7.7	22.3	28.1	24.8	24.8
Shepparton central	42	9.6	11.9	9.5	19.0	59.5
Shepparton north central	59	9.2	13.6	8.5	30.5	47.5
Shepparton north east	70	9.6	2.9	7.1	18.6	71.4
Shepparton north west #	72	9.2	11.1	15.3	23.6	50.0
Shepparton rural north east	49	9.2	4.1	10.2	24.5	61.2
Shepparton rural north west	44	9.6	2.3	25.0	20.5	52.3
Shepparton rural south	47	10.0	0.0	4.3	8.5	87.2
Shepparton south	109	9.2	11.0	14.7	24.8	49.5
Shepparton south east	86	9.2	15.1	17.4	20.9	46.5
Shepparton surrounds north east	58	9.4	12.1	10.3	20.7	56.9
Tatura	64	9.6	4.7	10.9	20.3	64.1

* See relevant definition of terms
Note: The AEDI 'cut-offs' used to determine whether an individual score is 'on track', 'at risk' or 'vulnerable' were established from the 2009 AEDI data and will remain the same for future data collections.
Note: Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding.
AEDI data collection is 60–80% of the Australian Bureau of Statistics five–year–old population; interpret with caution.

2.5 AEDI results: Communication skills and general knowledge domain

Results for this domain nationally, by state/territory, AEDI Community and Local Community are reported in Table 2.6.

This domain is based on teachers' observations of broad developmental competencies and skills as measured in the school context^

	Children at risk or developmentally vulnerable	Children on track
Communication skills and general knowledge	Range from being average to very poor in effective communication, may have difficulty in participating in games involving the use of language, may be difficult to understand and/or have difficulty in understanding others and may show little general knowledge.	Have excellent or very good communication skills and can communicate easily and effectively, can participate in story-telling or imaginative play, articulate clearly, and show adequate general knowledge.

^ Children from language backgrounds other than English may be proficient in their home languages.

Communication skills and general knowledge domain

Table 2.6: AEDI results: Communication skills and general knowledge domain

Geography			Developmentally vulnerable	Developmentally at risk	On track	
	Number of children	Median score*	Below the 10th percentile	Between the 10th and 25th percentile	Between the 25th and 50th percentile	Above the 50th percentile
			(per cent)	(per cent)	(per cent)	(per cent)
Australia	273,855	9.4	9.0	16.3	18.7	56.0
Victoria	64,038	9.4	8.0	14.6	16.7	60.7
Greater Shepparton	918	9.4	9.0	16.1	20.8	54.0
Local Community						
Kialla	99	9.4	3.0	10.1	23.2	63.6
Mooroopna	121	6.9	14.9	31.4	25.6	28.1
Shepparton central	42	9.4	4.8	11.9	28.6	54.8
Shepparton north central	59	8.8	8.5	18.6	25.4	47.5
Shepparton north east	69	10.0	5.8	10.1	24.6	59.4
Shepparton north west #	69	9.4	13.0	13.0	14.5	59.4
Shepparton rural north east	49	10.0	6.1	22.4	14.3	57.1
Shepparton rural north west	44	10.0	6.8	11.4	18.2	63.6
Shepparton rural south	47	10.0	4.3	12.8	8.5	74.5
Shepparton south	110	9.4	10.9	9.1	18.2	61.8
Shepparton south east	87	8.1	16.1	20.7	21.8	41.4
Shepparton surrounds north east	58	8.8	8.6	17.2	25.9	48.3
Tatura	64	10.0	4.7	12.5	15.6	67.2

* See relevant definition of terms
Note: The AEDI 'cut-offs' used to determine whether an individual score is 'on track', 'at risk' or 'vulnerable' were established from the 2009 AEDI data and will remain the same for future data collections.
Note: Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding.
AEDI data collection is 60–80% of the Australian Bureau of Statistics five–year–old population; interpret with caution.

2.6 AEDI results: Developmentally vulnerable on one or more, and two or more domain/s

The following table shows the number of children developmentally vulnerable on one or more and two or more domains, nationally, by state/territory and in each AEDI Community and Local Community. These children are considered to be at particularly high risk developmentally.

Table 2.7: AEDI results: Developmentally vulnerable on one or more and two or more domain/s

Geography	One or more domain/s		Two or more domains	
	Number of children	Developmentally vulnerable (per cent)	Number of children	Developmentally vulnerable (per cent)
Australia	272,282	22.0	273,275	10.8
Victoria	63,584	19.5	63,889	9.5
Greater Shepparton	909	24.6	916	11.6
Local Community				
Kialla	99	11.1	99	5.1
Mooroopna	121	52.9	121	27.3
Shepparton central	41	22.0	42	9.5
Shepparton north central	57	22.8	58	8.6
Shepparton north east	68	11.8	69	2.9
Shepparton north west #	70	30.0	70	18.6
Shepparton rural north east	49	20.4	49	8.2
Shepparton rural north west	44	18.2	44	6.8
Shepparton rural south	47	4.3	47	2.1
Shepparton south	109	23.9	109	11.9
Shepparton south east	82	32.9	86	12.8
Shepparton surrounds north east	58	25.9	58	13.8
Tatura	64	15.6	64	6.3

Note: The denominator for the calculation for 'developmentally vulnerable on one or more domain/s' may differ from the denominator for 'developmentally vulnerable on two or more domain/s' as there are varying numbers of children with valid scores for each summary indicator.

AEDI data collection is 60–80% of the Australian Bureau of Statistics five–year–old population; interpret with caution.

SECTION 2 – Understanding the Community Profile

About the AEDI Community Profile

The AEDI Community Profile provides community-level AEDI results and contextual information about the community. It should be read alongside the online mapped results available at maps.aedi.org.au

The AEDI Community Profile provides:

- Background information about the AEDI.
- Information to support communities to understand the AEDI results.
- Summary information about the children surveyed including
  - key considerations for interpreting AEDI results
  - demographics and characteristics of children surveyed (including sex distribution, non-parental early childhood education and/or care experiences and types).
- Community results for each of the five developmental domains showing
  - number and proportion of children 'on track'
  - number and proportion of children developmentally 'at risk'
  - number and proportion of children developmentally 'vulnerable'.
- Definition of terms.

Resources for understanding, interpreting and using AEDI results

The following resources have been developed to help communities understand and interpret their AEDI results:

- *Understanding the AEDI Results* fact sheet
- *AEDI Domains* fact sheet
- *AEDI and Language Diversity* fact sheet
- AEDI frequently asked questions
- AEDI *Using the AEDI* website
  - understanding your AEDI results
  - engaging your community
  - planning actions in your community
- AEDI community stories.

Resources and online mapped results are available at www.aedi.org.au

3 Understanding the AEDI

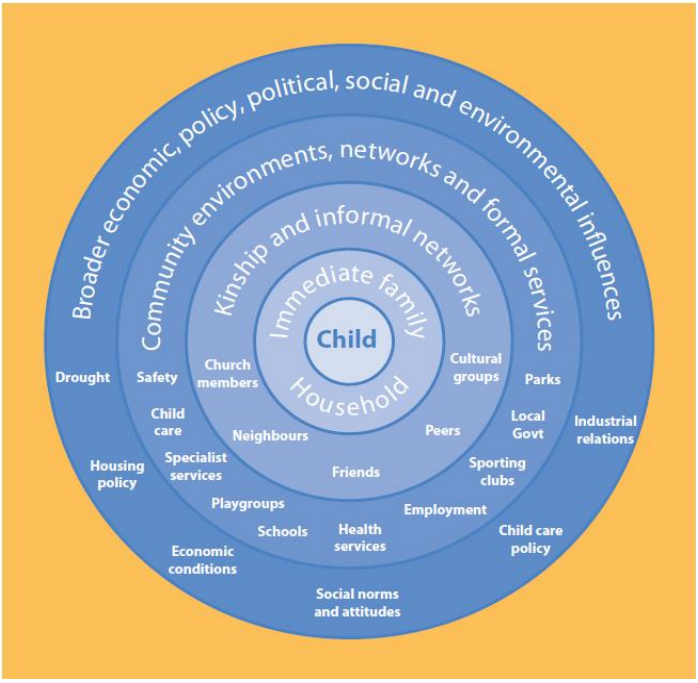
The AEDI Community Profile provides communities with AEDI results for children in their local area. The results help communities understand how local children have developed by the time they start formal full-time school. This enables communities to better understand what is working well and what needs to be improved or developed to better support children and their families.

3.1 The importance of early childhood development

It is well known that what happens to children in their early years has consequences throughout the course of their lives.[7,8] The quality of a child's earliest environments and the availability of appropriate experiences at the right stages of development are crucial in shaping developmental outcomes.[1,2,4,9,10]

By understanding children's development as they start school, communities can begin to examine the ecological or environmental factors that may be influencing child development outcomes in their community. The ecological model of child development (Figure 3.1) demonstrates these layers of influence on children's development.[11]

Figure 3.1: Ecological model of child development



As Figure 3.1 illustrates, parents and family remain significant influences throughout childhood but other environmental influences, such as peers and the school environment, also play a role. The larger social structure, economic, political and cultural environments also have an impact on the resources available to families and children.[4,11,12]

The character of the communities in which children live, including the economic climate and accessibility of appropriate services, has significant influence on children's development.[4,11,12]

3.2 Protective and risk factors for children

There are opportunities to influence children's development within each environmental layer. These are demonstrated in Table 3.1 as 'protective' and 'risk' factors.[5,13] Single risk factors on their own are not usually sufficient to explain adverse developmental outcomes. Outcomes are often determined by more than one risk or protective factor.[14,15] Risk factors are cumulative; therefore their impact on children and families depends on the child's age and length of exposure. The younger the child, the more vulnerable they are to environmental risks and the longer a child is exposed to risk factors the greater the likelihood of less favorable outcomes later in life.

Table 3.1: Examples of risk and protective factors for children

Child characteristics	Parents and parenting style	Family factors and life events	Community factors
PROTECTIVE FACTORS			
• Good social skills • Easy temperament • At least average intelligence • Attachment to family • Independence • Good problem solving skills	• Competent, stable care • Breastfeeding • Positive attention from parents • Supportive relationships with other adults • Religious faith	• Family harmony • Positive relationships with extended family • Small family size • Spacing of siblings by more than 2 years	• Positive social networks (e.g. peers, teachers, neighbours) • Access to positive opportunities (e.g. education) • Participation in community activities (e.g. faith, sport, cultural)
RISK FACTORS			
• Low birth weight • Birth injury • Disability • Low intelligence • Chronic illness • Delayed development • Difficult temperament • Poor attachment • Poor social skills • Disruptive behaviour • Impulsivity	• Single parent • Young maternal age • Depression or other mental illness • Drug, alcohol and substance abuse • Harsh or inconsistent discipline • Lack of stimulation of child • Lack of warmth and affection • Rejection of child • Abuse or neglect	• Family instability, conflict, or violence • Marital disharmony • Divorce • Disorganised • Large family size/rapid successive pregnancies • Absence of father/mother • Very low level of parental education	• Socioeconomic disadvantage • Poor housing conditions

3.3 About the AEDI

The AEDI is a measure of how young children are developing in different communities. Like a census, it involves collecting information to help create a snapshot of early childhood development in communities across Australia.

The AEDI is a population measure of children's development as they enter school. Information for the AEDI is collected through a teacher-completed checklist measuring five areas of early childhood development, closely linked to predictors of adult health, education and social outcomes:[16]

- physical health and wellbeing
- social competence
- emotional maturity
- language and cognitive skills (school-based)
- communication skills and general knowledge.

As a population measure, the AEDI reports on early childhood development across the whole community. Moving the focus of effort from the individual child to all children in the community can make a greater difference in supporting efforts to optimise early childhood development.

Communities need information about how local children are currently developing to determine what types of changes could benefit their children.

Information from the AEDI will enable communities and governments to pinpoint the types of services, resources and support young children and their families need to give children the best possible start in life. The results can be used by communities, schools and policy makers in conjunction with other resources (such as state/territory and national statistics) to plan and evaluate efforts to optimise early childhood development.

3.4 National implementation of the AEDI

Following the first national implementation of the AEDI in 2009, the Australian Government has invested $51.2 million to 2015–16 to implement the AEDI nationally every three years. By undertaking the AEDI data collection on an ongoing basis every three years, this equates to approximately $28 million for each cycle. This follows a successful pilot of the AEDI in 60 communities around Australia from 2004 to 2008.

In 2012 the AEDI was completed across Australia for the second time. AEDI Checklists were completed for 289,973 children, which represents 96.5 per cent of all children enrolled to begin school in 2012. This involved 16,425 teachers from 7,417 government, Catholic and independent schools (95.6 per cent of schools with eligible children).

The Australian Government and state and territory governments are working in partnership with The Royal Children's Hospital Centre for Community Child Health in Melbourne, the Murdoch Childrens Research Institute, and the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, Perth to deliver the AEDI. The Social Research Centre, Melbourne, is managing the AEDI data.

3.5 What are AEDI communities?

Although AEDI information is collected by teachers, results are reported where children live, not where they go to school. AEDI results are analysed at the Community and Local Community level.

AEDI Community

An AEDI Community is a geographic area made up of AEDI Local Communities. In most cases across Australia, an AEDI Community is the same as a local government area.

AEDI Local community

An AEDI Local Community is a small area locality within an AEDI Community. In most cases across Australia an AEDI Local Community is the same as a suburb.

To enable small areas to receive AEDI results, local communities with fewer than 15 children have been combined with other small areas that are both geographically close and socioeconomically similar.

Local communities have been combined following consultations with and advice from state/territory and community representatives. Factors including socioeconomics, service provision and geography were considered when identifying appropriate areas for combining. For more information on combined local communities visit www.aedi.org.au.

3.6 Why is the AEDI important for communities?

Communities can influence the earliest years of children's lives.[1-3,17] The AEDI results give communities a snapshot of children's development as they arrive at school. The results can support communities to understand the degree and concentration of developmental vulnerability within their community.

The AEDI provides communities with an opportunity to reflect on what these influences may have been for children before arriving at school.

Reflection on these influences can provide communities the opportunity to consider what is working well and what needs to be improved or developed in their community to better support children and their families. By providing a common ground on which people can work together, the AEDI results can help build and strengthen communities to give children the best start in life.

Communities can use their AEDI results in a place-based approach to engage and collaborate with local early years service providers.[17] Together they can explore how to support family environments known to be so crucial for children's development and high-quality early learning and care environments to enable children to arrive at school ready to engage.[1-4]

The AEDI enables communities to examine changes and shifts in early childhood development outcomes from 2009. When children are doing better over time, more children will be on track and fewer children will be at risk or vulnerable.

This can be demonstrated as a shift in the 'population curve' for children in the community. The objectives in shifting the population curve are to decrease the proportion and number of children developmentally vulnerable on each AEDI domain, increase the median (middle) score and increase the proportion and number of children who are performing well. It is also important to narrow the gap or inequalities in child development outcomes. This is illustrated in Figure 3.2 and Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.2: AEDI population curve

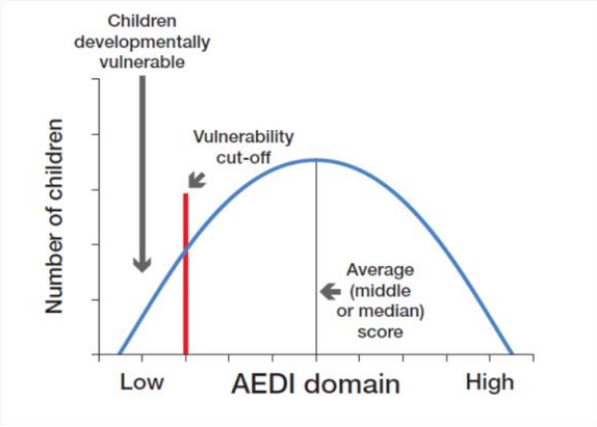
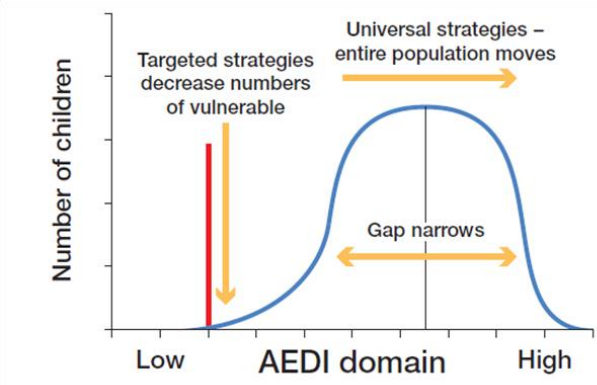


Figure 3.3: Shifting the AEDI population curve



For more information about early childhood development visit www.aedi.org.au

4 About the AEDI results

4.1 The AEDI domains

The AEDI reports on five domains of children's development. The five developmental domains of the AEDI are good predictors of adult health, education and social outcomes.[16] The domains are outlined in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: AEDI domains and sub-domains

Physical health and wellbeing	Social competence	Emotional maturity	Language and cognitive skills (school-based)	Communication skills and general knowledge
• Physical readiness for the day • Physical independence • Gross and fine motor skills	• Overall social competence • Responsibility and respect • Approaches to learning • Readiness to explore new things	• Pro-social and helping behaviour • Anxious and fearful behaviour • Aggressive behaviour • Hyperactivity and inattention	• Basic literacy • Interest in literacy, numeracy and memory • Advanced literacy • Basic numeracy	• Communication skills and general knowledge

4.2 How are the AEDI results reported?

AEDI data collection

Teachers complete the AEDI Checklist made up of 96 questions for each child in their class. Each of the five AEDI domains (physical health and wellbeing, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills, and communication skills and general knowledge) has a corresponding set of questions from the AEDI Checklist. AEDI data is collected for individual children and reported at a group level (national, state/territory or community).

AEDI score

Responses from the AEDI questions are added together to determine an AEDI domain score. For each individual child five AEDI domain scores are calculated.

To determine whether an individual domain score is on track, at risk or vulnerable, national AEDI 'cut-offs'* were established during the first national AEDI data collection in 2009.

To create the national AEDI cut-offs in 2009, all the children's AEDI domain scores were ranked from the lowest to highest score.

Scores ranked in the lowest 10 per cent were classified as developmentally vulnerable. Scores ranked between 10 per cent and 25 per cent were classified as developmentally at risk. Scores ranked in the highest 75 per cent were classified as developmentally on track. These national AEDI cut-offs will apply to future AEDI data collections providing a baseline to track children's developmental outcomes across Australia over time.

*See relevant definition of terms

How are the AEDI results reported?

AEDI results are presented as the number and proportion of children who are:

- on track
- developmentally at risk
- developmentally vulnerable.

The median (middle) score* for each domain is also presented at a national and state level.

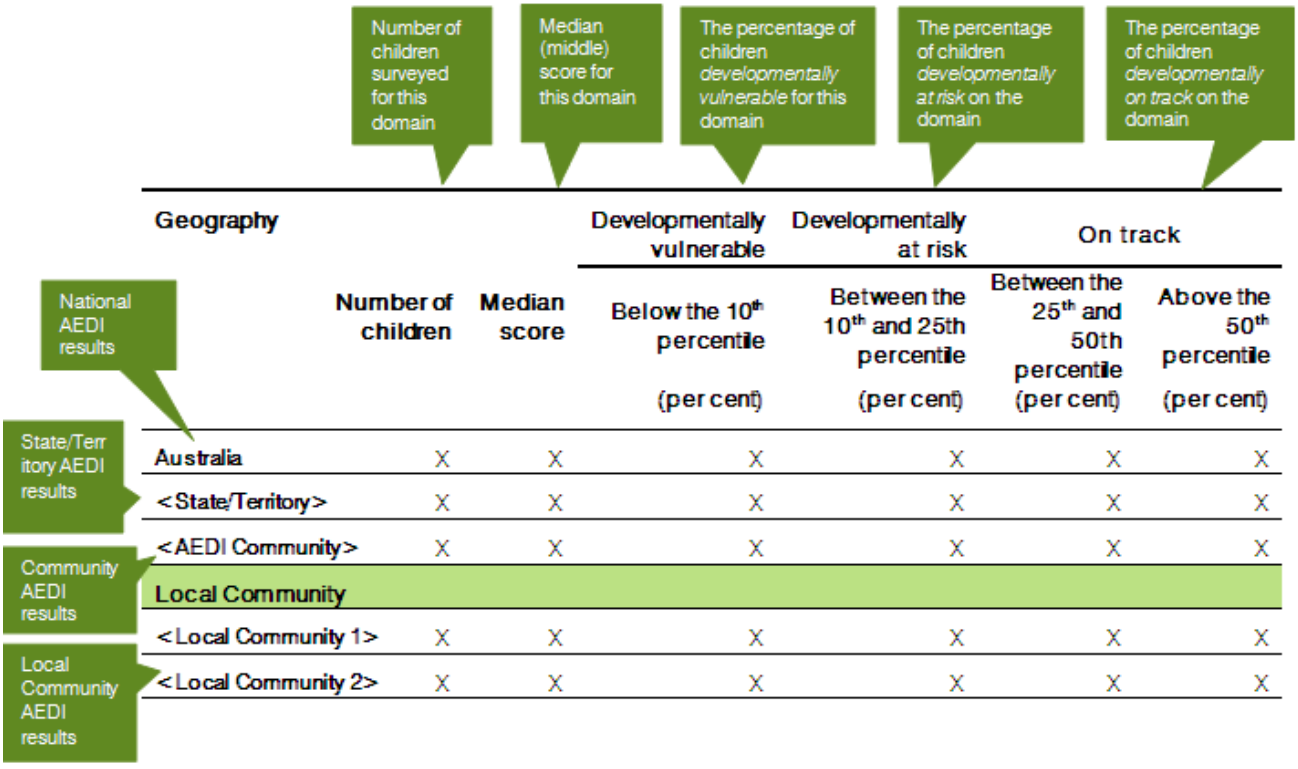
Information about children with special needs is not included in the following tables because of their already identified substantial developmental needs. However, teachers complete background information on children with special needs in order to ensure communities take into account services, resources and programs that are likely to benefit all young children.

here are a number of resources available to assist in understanding the 2009 and 2012 results including the *Using the AEDI* website, fact sheets, frequently asked questions and a comparative results tool available at www.aedi.org.au.

*See relevant definition of terms

Figure 4.1 shows how the AEDI results are displayed in the Community Profile.

Figure 4.1: AEDI results example



Geography	Number of children	Median score	Developmentally vulnerable: Below the 10th percentile (per cent)	Developmentally at risk: Between the 10th and 25th percentile (per cent)	On track: Between the 25th and 50th percentile (per cent)	On track: Above the 50th percentile (per cent)
Australia	X	X	X	X	X	X
<State/Territory>	X	X	X	X	X	X
<AEDI Community>	X	X	X	X	X	X
Local Community						
<Local Community 1>	X	X	X	X	X	X
<Local Community 2>	X	X	X	X	X	X

Note: The AEDI 'cut-offs' used to determine whether an individual score is 'on track', 'at risk' or 'vulnerable' were established from the 2009 AEDI data and will remain the same for future data collections.

4.3 How are the AEDI results released?

AEDI results are reported at a national, state, AEDI Community and AEDI Local Community level and can be accessed in the following locations:

Community Results Table

The AEDI community results table provides a one-page summary of the AEDI results within a Local Community; publicly available at www.aedi.org.au.

Community Profile

The AEDI Community Profile presents the AEDI results for children within a Local Community; publicly available at www.aedi.org.au.

School Profile

The AEDI School Profile presents the AEDI results for children within a school. They are available to their respective schools; however the principal can share the school results with community stakeholders.

Online maps

Geographic maps show the proportions of children in the Local Community who are developmentally vulnerable on the AEDI domains. The mapped results are available at maps.aedi.org.au.

National Report

A Snapshot of Early Childhood Development in Australia - National Report 2012 provides a unique overview of the development of Australia's children. The report is publicly available at www.aedi.org.au.

Further information to assist in understanding the AEDI results is provided in the AEDI fact sheets, the AEDI community stories available at www.aedi.org.au and the *Using the AEDI* website; available at userguide.aedi.org.au.

4.4 Key considerations for interpreting the 2012 AEDI results

Community AEDI results for 2012 are best understood when looked at in comparison with how well other children are developing in 2012 nationally or by state/territory.

The AEDI is a relative measure; the results show how local children are doing relative to, or compared with, other children surveyed both in their community and across Australia at one point in time, i.e. 2012. For example, a community that has a lower proportion of developmental vulnerability than the national results is doing better than the rest of Australia.

When interpreting the 2012 AEDI results consider:

- AEDI results do not identify individual children.
- On which domains children are 'on track' and 'developmentally vulnerable'.
- How the community AEDI results compare to the state and national results for 2012.

- Proportion (per cent) of children *and* the number (n) of children. A higher proportion does not necessarily mean a large number of children. Similarly, a low proportion in a large community may still equate to a large number of children.
- Whether the results were expected. Do the AEDI results confirm other data or reports from local families/early years service providers?

Further information is provided in the *Using the AEDI* website available at userguide.aedi.org.au.

4.5 Reviewing other sources of data alongside the AEDI

Communities can also look at other sources of information alongside their AEDI community results such as:

- Australian Bureau of Statistics sociodemographic information
- access and referral to local services data
- municipal data
- data or a description of migrant settlement, including testimonials (e.g. experiences about intergenerational loss of language and culture)
- health outcomes
- education data (e.g. enrolment and attendance data, NAPLAN data, WALNA data)
- school and community multicultural data and information
- public transport routes
- public housing data
- transience and mobility data.

4.6 Understanding the AEDI results for linguistically diverse communities

The AEDI is conducted in the predominantly English-speaking environment of Australian schools and so measures the skills as they are expressed in the English language; it does not measure the skills children might demonstrate in another language. For this reason communities with a lot of children who have a language background other than English (LBOTE) should take care when interpreting their AEDI results.

In 2011 the Centre for Community Child Health conducted research—the AEDI Language Diversity Study[6]—to explore how the AEDI operates for LBOTE children.

When examining the AEDI results, communities with a high proportion of LBOTE children can consider:

- LBOTE children will be on a journey towards proficiency in English as they start school.
- LBOTE children will also be on a journey towards proficiency in their home language as they start school.

- Proficiency in English is a better determinant of AEDI outcomes than whether a child speaks another language at home.
- This is because LBOTE children not yet proficient in English are more likely to perform poorly on at least one domain, most often communication skills and general knowledge.

Further information to assist in understanding the results is provided in the *Language Diversity and the AEDI* fact sheet available at www.aedi.org.au.

> *'The AEDI was the catalyst for forming the partnership for addressing the early years which included health and educators from both the Catholic, independent and public systems, kindergarten and child care services, the broader community and businesses.'*
>
> *Member of an early years working group*

4.7 How can the AEDI results be used?

The AEDI is a population measure of early childhood development. Therefore there are a number of ways communities can use their AEDI results.

Stories of how communities across Australia have used the AEDI results can be viewed at www.aedi.org.au.

The AEDI can help communities:

- Raise awareness about the importance of the early years within the community.
- Be aware of children's development as they start school by
  - reflecting on the protective and risk factors for children in the community that may affect whether children start school developmentally 'on track'
  - planning for the needs of children starting school in the future
  - planning for optimal school transitions.
- Better understand the degree and concentration of developmental vulnerability and the needs of children in their community.
- Provide a common language on children's development in the early years.
- Strengthen/develop parental engagement strategies.
- Create and strengthen networks between early years professionals to explore new ways of working together to ensure children get the best start (e.g. collaborative practices, coordination and integration of services, shared resources, consistent key messaging for families).
- Provide data to plan for and action early years initiatives in the community.
- Provide evidence to re-focus community services and systems towards children.
- Provide evidence to support grant and funding applications.
- Prompt organisations to continually review the impact of existing initiatives to ensure they continue to be responsive to the needs of local children and families.
- Provide a model to demonstrate how 'mapping' can be useful in planning, for example mapping the locations of local services, programs and public transport.

The AEDI data and maps can reveal:

- The degree and geographic concentration of developmental vulnerability across a community, state and the nation.
- The influence of socioeconomic factors on child development.
- Where ongoing support and collaboration is required to build the capacity of the community and its families and children.

The AEDI can influence planning and policy as it:

- Provides a national baseline measurement to monitor Australian children's development in the future.
- Will continue to provide a more comprehensive understanding of early childhood development in Australia with each successive AEDI data collection.
- Provides evidence to support policy, planning and action for health, education and community support; both universal and targeted.
- Assist governments in developing flexible approaches to policy and planning to address the evolving needs of children and families in the future.
- Contribute to the evaluation of national early childhood initiatives along with other data such as sociodemographic data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

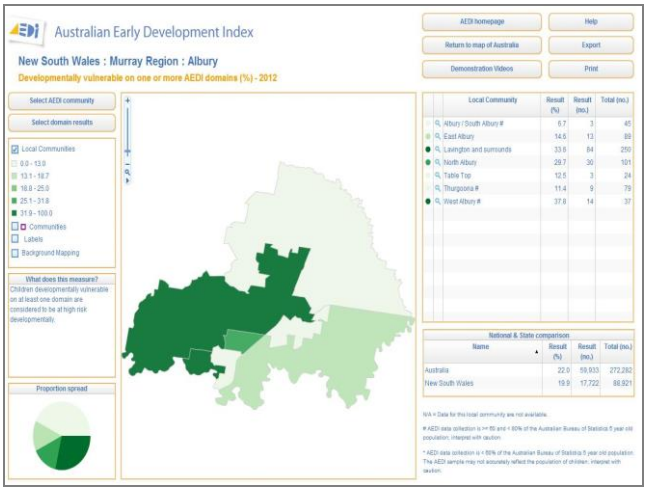
The AEDI cannot:

- Score individual children as on track, developmentally at risk or developmentally vulnerable.
- Be used to identify individual children, or children with specific learning disabilities or areas of developmental delay.
- Recommend specific teaching approaches for individual children.
- Reflect the performance of the school or the quality of teaching.

4.8 Ideas for next steps

Some suggestions for next steps after receiving the AEDI Community Profile:

1. Review the community AEDI results in the Community Profile.
2. View the AEDI Community Profile results alongside the AEDI maps available at maps.aedi.org.au.



3. View the *Using the AEDI* website at userguide.aedi.org.au.

4. Explore the context of the AEDI results. Examine factors that may be influencing the AEDI results such as characteristics of local children, community demographic and broader social, political and economic factors.
5. Consider how the AEDI results can be used. Consider examples from other communities by reviewing the AEDI community stories available at www.aedi.org.au.
6. Visit the AEDI website at www.aedi.org.au or contact your state/territory coordinator. Contact details are available on the website.

Notes

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Definition of terms

Additional needs	Whether the child required special assistance because of chronic medical, physical, or intellectually disabling conditions (e.g. Autism, Cerebral palsy, Down syndrome), based on a medical diagnosis.
Australian Early Development Index (AEDI)	A population measure of young children's development based on a teacher-completed checklist (the AEDI Checklist) across five developmental domains (AEDI domains).
AEDI Checklist	A teacher-completed checklist that consists of 96 questions measuring the five developmental domains.
AEDI Community	A geographic area made up of AEDI Local Communities, usually a region's local government area.
AEDI cut-offs	National AEDI cut-offs were established during the first national data collection in 2009 to determine whether an individual domain score was classified as on track, developmentally at risk or developmentally vulnerable. These cut-offs will remain the same for future AEDI collections. To create the national AEDI cut-offs in 2009, all the children's AEDI domain scores were ranked from the lowest to highest score. Scores ranked in the lowest 10 per cent were classified as developmentally vulnerable. Scores ranked between 10 per cent and 25 per cent were classified as developmentally at risk. Scores ranked in the highest 75 per cent were classified as developmentally on track.
AEDI domains	The AEDI measures five areas, or domains, of early childhood development that are linked to predictors of good health, education and social outcomes: • Physical health and wellbeing • Social competence • Emotional maturity • Language and cognitive skills (school-based) • Communication skills and general knowledge. For the physical health and wellbeing domain only, patterns of vulnerability vary across the domain. As such, sub-domains have been created for more detailed analysis of physical health and wellbeing domain results. The *AEDI Domains* fact sheet is available at www.aedi.org.au.

AEDI Local Community	An AEDI Local Community is a small area locality within an AEDI Community. In most cases across Australia an AEDI Local Community is the same as a suburb. To enable small areas to receive AEDI results, local communities with fewer than 15 children have been combined with other small areas that are both geographically close and socioeconomically similar. Local communities have been combined following consultations with and advice from state/territory and community representatives. Factors including socioeconomics, service provision and geography were considered when identifying appropriate areas for combining. For more information on combined local communities visit www.aedi.org.au.
AEDI score	An AEDI score will be calculated for each domain on completion of every AEDI Checklist. The AEDI scores range from 0 to 10 (0 is the lowest score; 10 is the highest score). The AEDI maps, Community Profiles and School Profiles report the median (middle) AEDI score for each developmental domain and the proportion of children 'on track', developmentally 'at risk' and developmentally 'vulnerable'.
Control for age variability at school entry	The ages of children in their first year of formal full-time school vary. As age is likely to have an impact on children's development, the AEDI results have controlled for age.
Developmentally 'at risk'	The cut-off for an AEDI score to represent at risk uses the baseline cut-offs from the 2009 AEDI data collection. In 2009 children who scored between the 10th and the 25th percentile of the national population were classified as at risk.
Developmentally 'on track'	The cut-off for an AEDI score to represent on track uses the baseline cut-offs from the 2009 AEDI data collection. In 2009 children who scored above the 25th percentile (in the top 75 per cent) of the national population were classified as on track. If more children are doing better nationally in 2012 than in 2009, then more than 75 per cent of children will be on track in 2012.
Developmentally 'vulnerable'	The cut-off for an AEDI score to represent vulnerable uses the baseline cut-offs from the 2009 AEDI data collection. In 2009 children who scored below the 10th percentile (in the lowest 10 per cent) of the national population were classified as vulnerable. If more children are doing better nationally in 2012 than in 2009, then fewer than 10 per cent of children will be vulnerable in 2012.
Developmentally vulnerable on one or more domain/s	The percentage of children in the community who have at least one or more AEDI domain score/s below the 10th percentile.

Developmentally vulnerable on two or more domains	The percentage of children in the community who have at least two or more AEDI domain scores below the 10th percentile.
EDI	The Canadian Early Development Instrument, on which the AEDI is based.
English as a second language (ESL)	Children are considered to have ESL status where English is not their first language and they need additional instruction in English; or, where English is not their first language, they have conversational English, but are not yet proficient in English.
Language Background Other Than English (LBOTE)	For the AEDI, children are considered LBOTE if they speak a language other than English at home or have English as a Second Language (ESL) status.
Median score	To calculate the median score, all individual AEDI scores are ranked from highest to lowest. The median score is the middle value.
Percentile	The AEDI School Profile reports on the number of children scoring in the following percentile ranges: • 0 to 10th percentile (developmentally vulnerable) • 10th to 25th percentile (developmentally at risk) • 25th to 50th percentile and above the 50th percentile (developmentally on track).
Population of five-year-olds	This is an estimation of the population of five-year-olds across Australia. It is calculated using the Australian Bureau of Statistics Census 2011 data and estimated proportions of three, four and five-year-olds starting school in 2012. This estimation is a proxy for the total number of children starting school in the community, to determine the extent to which the AEDI is reflective of the entire population of children starting school in the community in 2012.
Proficient in English	Proficient in English refers to what is expected of the average monolingual English speaker in a similar phase of development. For the AEDI, children are considered proficient in English if teachers answered 'average' or 'good/very good' to the AEDI Checklist question: 'How would you rate this child's ability to use language effectively in English?' This question refers to the child's effective use of appropriate words and expressions at appropriate times and the child's contribution to conversations. Effective use can be defined as using language that is sufficient to convey the desired message. Only basic grammatical concepts need to be adhered to, so long as the meaning is clear. Teachers were specifically asked to consider English language skills.