



# Early Childhood and Child Care in Summary

## December quarter 2015

This publication provides information on children in approved child care services across Australia for the December quarter 2015.

Key findings for the December quarter 2015 include:

- 1,247,820 children attended approved child care, up 5.3 per cent since the December quarter 2014.
- 848,200 families had at least one child in approved child care, an increase of 4.5 per cent since the December quarter 2014.
- 16,899 approved child care services operated in Australia, an increase of 4.4 per cent since the December quarter 2014.
- The total estimated Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate entitlement was \$1,700.7 million, up 10.3 per cent since the December quarter 2014.

## Introduction

This report presents information on the numbers of children and families using approved child care, the costs of care and the numbers and types of child care services in Australia. It includes data from the Child Care Management System (CCMS), MyChild website, Department of Human Services and the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

During the December quarter 2015, 848,200 families used approved child care services for their 1,247,820 children.

- In terms of affordability, 92.8 per cent of these families are estimated to have received Child Care Rebate (CCR), with up to 50 per cent of their out-of-pocket costs covered by the Australian Government.
- In terms of availability, in the December quarter 2015, there were 16,899 services providing approved child care services across Australia.

**Table 1: Child care children, families, services and estimated entitlements by state and territory, December quarter 2015**

State and territory	Number of children using approved child care <sup>1</sup>	Number of families using approved child care <sup>1</sup>	Number of approved child care services	Estimated Child Care Benefit (CCB) entitlement <sup>1</sup> ('000)	Estimated Child Care Rebate (CCR) entitlement <sup>1</sup> ('000)	Estimated number of families receiving CCR <sup>1</sup>
NSW	414,610	285,840	5,726	\$279,742	\$311,469	261,870
Vic.	306,530	203,190	3,725	\$253,172	\$223,707	189,470
Qld	287,380	194,280	3,544	\$188,394	\$171,817	180,070
SA	87,010	58,250	1,322	\$43,102	\$43,146	54,640
WA	95,930	67,730	1,646	\$47,496	\$68,172	63,410
Tas.	22,840	15,790	376	\$10,739	\$10,800	14,660
NT	9,430	6,690	193	\$3,544	\$8,628	6,510
ACT	27,640	18,930	367	\$9,287	\$27,446	18,450
<b>Australia</b>	<b>1,247,820</b>	<b>848,200</b>	<b>16,899</b>	<b>\$835,476*</b>	<b>\$865,186*</b>	<b>786,790</b>

<sup>1</sup> As families and children may use services in more than one state or territory and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

\*Note: while estimated CCR exceeds estimated CCB for the first time, actual CCB would still exceed actual CCR (see technical notes for further details).

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

## Child Care Usage

### Children

During the December quarter 2015, 1,247,820 children used approved child care in Australia, up by 5.3 per cent since the December quarter 2014. For children aged 0–12 years using approved child care, this represents 31.3 per cent of the 3,910,990 children aged 0–12 years in Australia.

During the December quarter 2015, children attended various services providing approved child care, including Long Day Care (685,760 or 55.0 per cent), Outside School Hours Care (368,650 or 29.5 per cent), Family Day Care and In-Home Care (224,910 or 18.0 per cent), and Occasional Care (7,100 or 0.6 per cent).

**Table 2: Number of children using child care by service type, December quarter 2014 to December quarter 2015**

Service type	Dec. 14	Mar. 15	Jun. 15	Sep. 15	Dec. 15
Long Day Care	664,890	660,760	643,810	676,050	685,760
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	208,380	220,420	220,850	227,990	224,910
Occasional Care	7,630	6,670	7,010	7,380	7,100
Outside School Hours Care	339,260	382,580	391,150	398,730	368,650
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>1,184,750</b>	<b>1,211,200</b>	<b>1,224,170</b>	<b>1,269,190</b>	<b>1,247,820</b>
<i>Per cent of Australian population<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>30.2%</i>	<i>30.8%</i>	<i>30.7%</i>	<i>31.8%</i>	<i>31.3%</i>

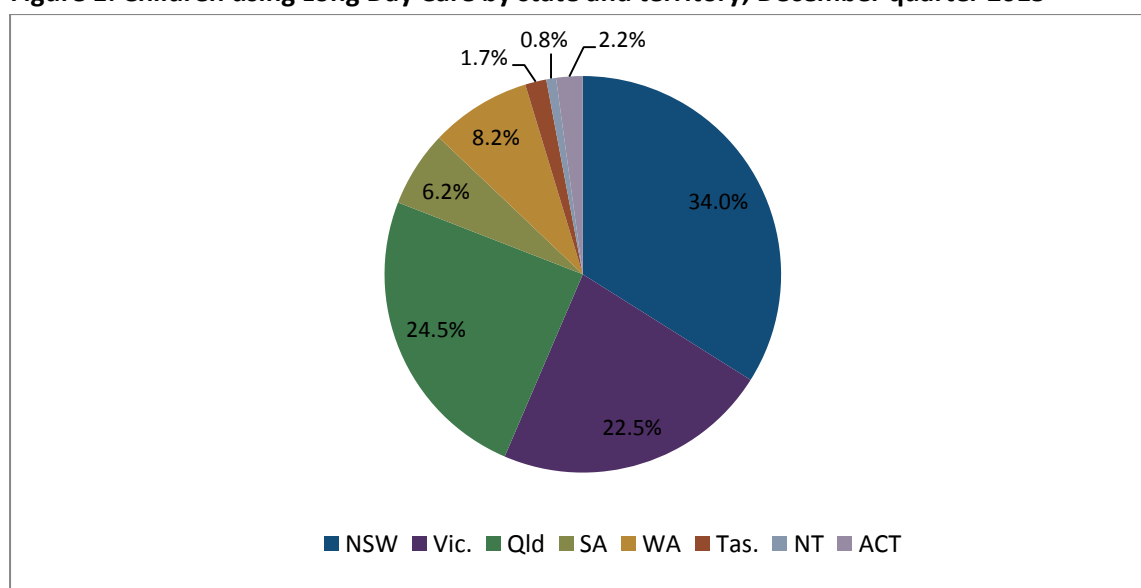
1 As children may use more than one service type in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

2 Number of children aged 0–12 years using approved child care as a proportion of all Australian children aged 0–12 years.

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data, ABS Cat. No. 3101.0 Australian Demographic Statistics, Sep. 2015.

In the December quarter 2015, the largest proportion of children attending Long Day Care was in New South Wales (34.0 per cent), followed by Queensland (24.5 per cent) and Victoria (22.5 per cent).

**Figure 1: Children using Long Day Care by state and territory, December quarter 2015**



Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

**Table 3: Number of children using child care by service type and state and territory, December quarter 2015**

Service type	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia <sup>1</sup>
Long Day Care	233,050	154,520	167,890	42,530	56,440	11,870	5,470	14,840	<b>685,760</b>
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	81,470	74,870	37,890	10,660	13,590	4,780	500	3,180	<b>224,910</b>
Occasional Care	2,440	2,750	590	130	880	150	0	160	<b>7,100</b>
Outside School Hours Care	109,490	81,890	88,990	36,840	30,260	7,610	3,660	10,090	<b>368,650</b>
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>414,610</b>	<b>306,530</b>	<b>287,380</b>	<b>87,010</b>	<b>95,930</b>	<b>22,840</b>	<b>9,430</b>	<b>27,640</b>	<b>1,247,820</b>

1 As children may use more than one service type in more than one state or territory in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

While most children who used approved child care, used services located in major cities (979,880 children), around one in four (272,960 or 21.9 per cent) children used services located in regional and remote areas.

**Table 4: Number of children using child care by service type and region, December quarter 2015**

Service type	Major cities of Australia	Regional <sup>1</sup> and Remote Australia <sup>2</sup>	Total <sup>3</sup>
Long Day Care	516,430	170,780	<b>685,760</b>
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	183,990	41,770	<b>224,910</b>
Occasional Care	4,200	2,890	<b>7,100</b>
Outside School Hours Care	301,850	67,340	<b>368,650</b>
<b>Total<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>979,880</b>	<b>272,960</b>	<b>1,247,820</b>

1 Includes Inner and Outer Regional

2 Includes Remote and Very Remote

3 As children may use more than one service type in more than one region in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

During the December quarter 2015, for all types of child care, the average time that a child spent in approved child care was 24.9 hours per week. This compares with children who used Long Day Care who attended for an average of 28.1 hours per week.

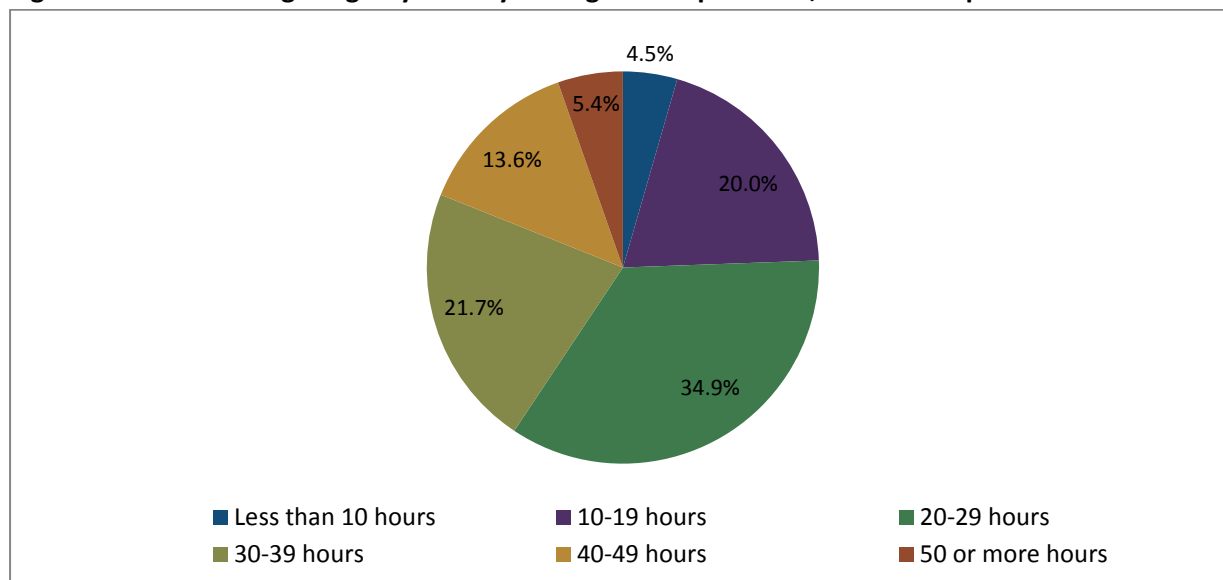
**Table 5: Average weekly hours in child care by service type, December quarter 2014 to December quarter 2015**

Service type	Dec. 14	Mar. 15	Jun. 15	Sep. 15	Dec. 15
Long Day Care	27.7	28.1	27.9	28.4	28.1
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	32.2	32.8	32.4	32.9	31.2
Occasional Care	11.5	12.0	11.8	12.1	11.8
Outside School Hours Care	10.1	11.9	11.1	11.7	10.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>25.4</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>25.7</b>	<b>24.9</b>

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

For children using Long Day Care, 34.9 per cent used 20-29 hours per week in the December quarter 2015.

**Figure 2: Children using Long Day Care by average hours per week, December quarter 2015**



Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

## Families

During the December quarter 2015, there were 848,200 families using some form of approved child care for their children, an increase of 4.5 per cent since the December quarter 2014. The number of families using Family Day Care and In-Home Care has increased by 7.0 per cent since the December quarter 2014.

**Table 6: Number of families using child care by service type, December quarter 2014 to December quarter 2015**

Service type	Dec. 14	Mar. 15	Jun. 15	Sep. 15	Dec. 15
Long Day Care	539,630	532,950	528,710	550,640	556,450
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	117,790	123,400	123,910	127,990	126,080
Occasional Care	6,310	5,600	5,900	6,160	5,940
Outside School Hours Care	243,200	269,930	277,910	283,920	263,650
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>811,310</b>	<b>821,880</b>	<b>833,120</b>	<b>859,380</b>	<b>848,200</b>

<sup>1</sup> As families may use more than one service type in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

In the December quarter 2015, 285,840 families (33.7 per cent) had children attending approved child care in New South Wales, followed by 203,190 families (24.0 per cent) in Victoria and 194,280 families (22.9 per cent) in Queensland.

Across Australia, nearly two-thirds (556,450 or 65.6 per cent) of all families had children in Long Day Care and around one-third of families had children in Outside School Hours Care (263,650 or 31.1 per cent).

**Table 7: Number of families using child care by service type and state and territory, December quarter 2015**

Service type	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia <sup>1</sup>
Long Day Care	191,880	126,850	131,220	34,800	46,090	9,580	4,570	12,190	<b>556,450</b>
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	47,420	37,490	22,630	6,050	8,080	3,330	350	1,780	<b>126,080</b>
Occasional Care	2,060	2,300	490	100	730	120	0	140	<b>5,940</b>
Outside School Hours Care	79,160	59,400	62,930	25,430	21,390	5,380	2,700	7,390	<b>263,650</b>
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>285,840</b>	<b>203,190</b>	<b>194,280</b>	<b>58,250</b>	<b>67,730</b>	<b>15,790</b>	<b>6,690</b>	<b>18,930</b>	<b>848,200</b>

<sup>1</sup> As families may use more than one service type in more than one state or territory in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

### Indigenous children and families

During the December quarter 2015, 29,710 Indigenous children (2.4 per cent of all children) used approved child care in Australia. The number of Indigenous children using approved child care has increased by 12.4 per cent since the December quarter 2014.

**Table 8: Number of Indigenous children using child care by service type, December quarter 2014 to December quarter 2015**

Service type	Dec. 14	Mar. 15	Jun. 15	Sep. 15	Dec. 15
Long Day Care	16,950	18,340	18,110	19,120	19,130
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	4,030	4,600	4,570	4,590	4,620
Occasional Care	190	190	190	210	190
Outside School Hours Care	6,020	6,900	7,020	7,220	6,620
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>26,420</b>	<b>28,800</b>	<b>29,000</b>	<b>30,210</b>	<b>29,710</b>

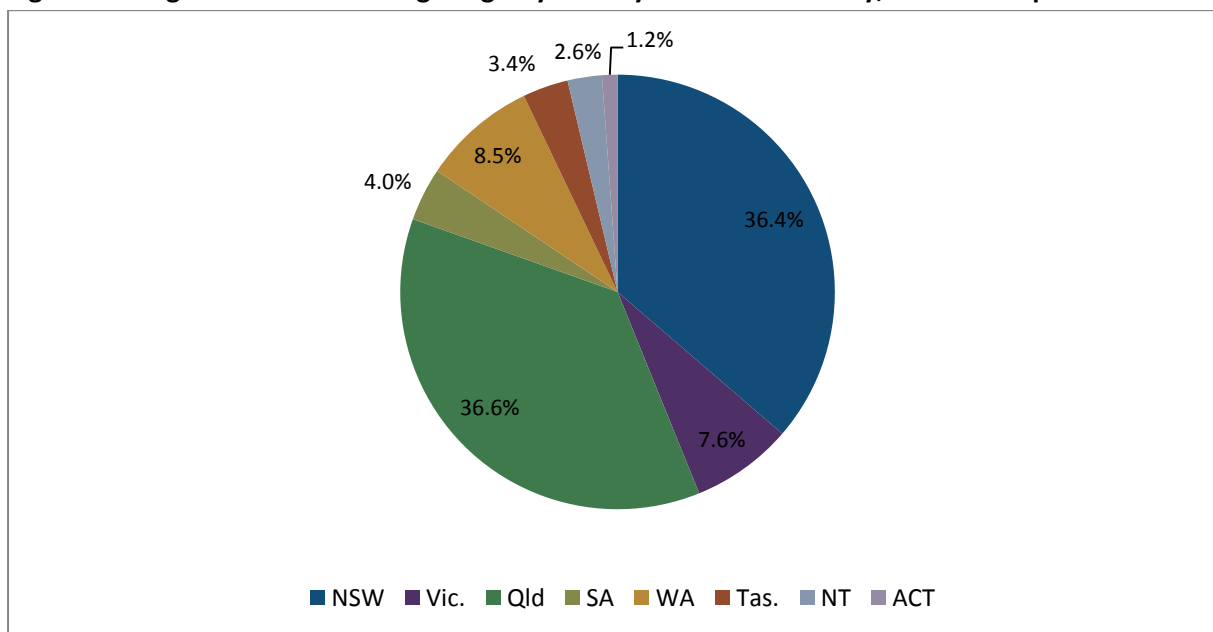
<sup>1</sup> As children may use more than one service type in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

NOTE: In the Mar. quarter 2015 there was a change in methodology to more closely reflect the indigenous representation of children and families in child care

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

The largest proportion of Indigenous children attending Long Day Care was in Queensland (36.6 per cent) and New South Wales (36.4 per cent).

**Figure 3: Indigenous children using Long Day Care by state and territory, December quarter 2015**



Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

Compared with all children, a smaller proportion of Indigenous children aged 0–12 years attended approved child care, in each state and territory (13.6 per cent of Indigenous children aged 0–12 years, and 31.3 per cent all children aged 0–12 years, nationally).

**Table 9: Number of Indigenous children using child care by service type and state and territory, December quarter 2015**

Service type	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia <sup>1</sup>
Long Day Care	6,960	1,450	7,010	760	1,630	650	490	220	<b>19,130</b>
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	1,840	530	1,490	140	220	360	30	50	<b>4,620</b>
Occasional Care	110	30	20	<10	20	10	0	10	<b>190</b>
Outside School Hours Care	1,860	570	2,260	510	590	350	380	100	<b>6,620</b>
<b>Total Indigenous children using approved child care<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>10,490</b>	<b>2,540</b>	<b>10,540</b>	<b>1,360</b>	<b>2,350</b>	<b>1,270</b>	<b>880</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>29,710</b>
<i>Per cent of Indigenous population<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>15.4%</i>	<i>16.0%</i>	<i>16.0%</i>	<i>11.4%</i>	<i>8.6%</i>	<i>16.2%</i>	<i>4.5%</i>	<i>19.9%</i>	<i>13.6%</i>

1 As children may use more than one service type and use services in more than one state or territory in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

2 Number of Indigenous children aged 0–12 years using approved child care as a proportion of all Indigenous children aged 0–12 years.

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data and ABS Cat. No. 3238.0 Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 2001 to 2026 (30 April 2014)

Almost half of all Indigenous children who attended child care did so in regional or remote Australia (14,560 children or 49.0 per cent).

**Table 10: Number of Indigenous children using child care by service type and region, December quarter 2015**

Service type	Major cities of Australia	Regional <sup>1</sup> and Remote Australia <sup>2</sup>	Total <sup>3</sup>
Long Day Care	9,220	9,980	<b>19,130</b>
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	2,610	2,030	<b>4,620</b>
Occasional Care	80	110	<b>190</b>
Outside School Hours Care	3,780	2,850	<b>6,620</b>
<b>Total<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>15,330</b>	<b>14,560</b>	<b>29,710</b>

1 Includes Inner and Outer Regional

2 Includes Remote and Very Remote

3 As children may use more than one service type in more than one region in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.



During the December quarter 2015, 20,410 Indigenous families used approved child care, an increase of 12.2 per cent since the December quarter 2014.

**Table 11: Number of Indigenous families using child care by service type, December quarter 2014 to December quarter 2015**

Service type	Dec. 14	Mar. 15	Jun. 15	Sep. 15	Dec. 15
Long Day Care	13,180	14,290	14,280	14,890	14,830
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	2,440	2,790	2,790	2,800	2,790
Occasional Care	150	160	160	170	160
Outside School Hours Care	4,120	4,680	4,810	4,960	4,560
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>18,190</b>	<b>19,850</b>	<b>20,120</b>	<b>20,770</b>	<b>20,410</b>

<sup>1</sup> As families may use more than one service type in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

NOTE: In the Mar. quarter 2015 there was a change in methodology to more closely reflect the indigenous representation of children and families in child care

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

More than one third (7,490 or 36.7 per cent) of Indigenous families had children in approved child care located in New South Wales; another third (7,050 or 34.5 per cent) had children in approved child care located in Queensland.

**Table 12: Number of Indigenous families using child care by service type and state and territory, December quarter 2015**

Service type	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia <sup>1</sup>
Long Day Care	5,560	1,160	5,240	600	1,220	490	410	180	<b>14,830</b>
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	1,180	270	840	80	130	240	30	30	<b>2,790</b>
Occasional Care	90	30	10	<10	20	10	0	<10	<b>160</b>
Outside School Hours Care	1,290	410	1,560	340	370	250	270	80	<b>4,560</b>
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>7,490</b>	<b>1,720</b>	<b>7,050</b>	<b>930</b>	<b>1,570</b>	<b>840</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>20,410</b>

<sup>1</sup> As families may use more than one service type and use services in more than one state or territory in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

## Availability

### Services

During the December quarter 2015, 16,899 approved child care services operated in Australia, an increase of 4.4 per cent (715 services) since the December quarter 2014. There were 9,120 Outside School Hours Care services which accounted for 54.0 per cent of all services and 6,804 Long Day Care services which accounted for 40.3 per cent of all services.

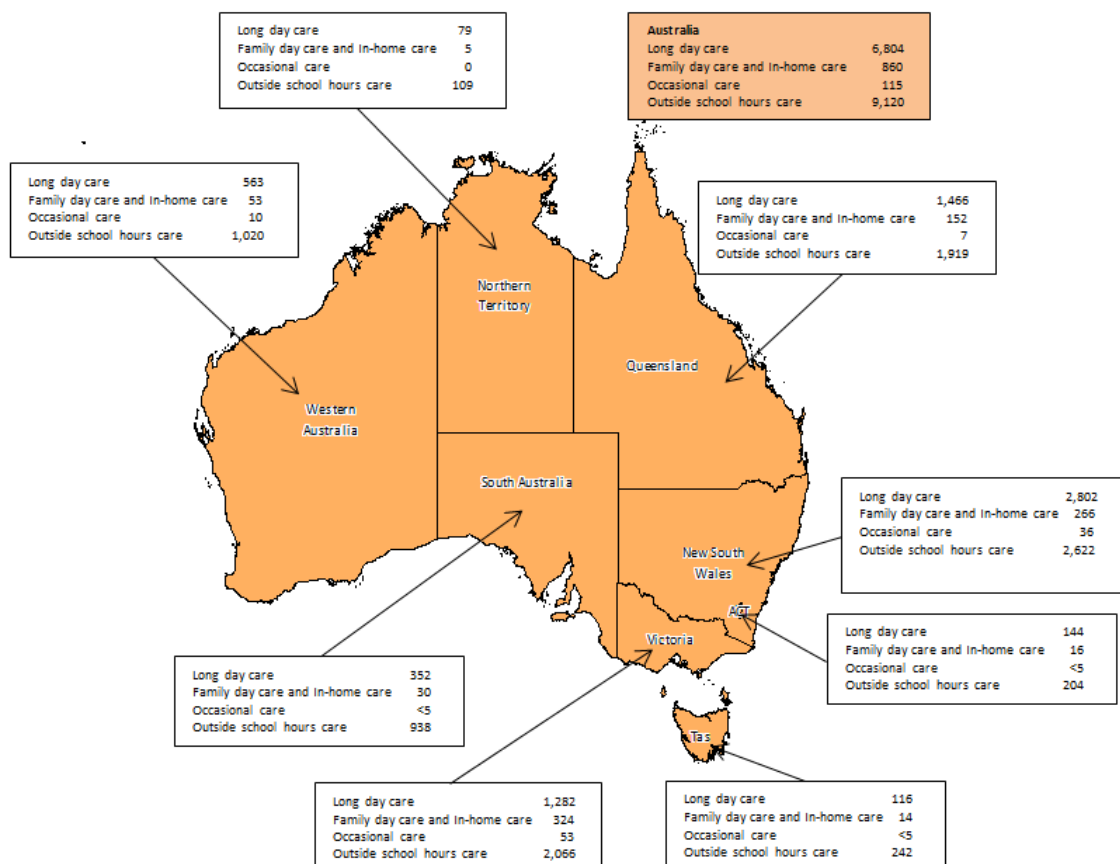
**Table 13: Number of child care services by service type, December quarter 2014 to December quarter 2015**

Service type	Dec. 14	Mar. 15	Jun. 15	Sep. 15	Dec. 15
Long Day Care	6,623	6,656	6,723	6,755	6,804
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	840	838	843	851	860
Occasional Care	116	116	116	115	115
Outside School Hours Care	8,605	9,356	9,520	10,080	9,120
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,184</b>	<b>16,966</b>	<b>17,202</b>	<b>17,801</b>	<b>16,899</b>

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

In the December quarter 2015, around one third of services were located in New South Wales (33.9 per cent), with 22.0 per cent in Victoria and 21.0 per cent in Queensland.

**Figure 4: Number of approved services by service type and state and territory, December quarter 2015**



Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

## Affordability

### Costs of care before Australian Government fee assistance

The average hourly child care fee for all service types in the December quarter 2015 was \$8.35, an increase of 6.0 per cent since the December quarter 2014. Fees varied across service types from a high of \$9.65 per hour for Occasional Care services to a low of \$6.80 per hour for Outside School Hours Care services.

**Table 14: Average hourly fee by service type, December quarter 2014 to December quarter 2015**

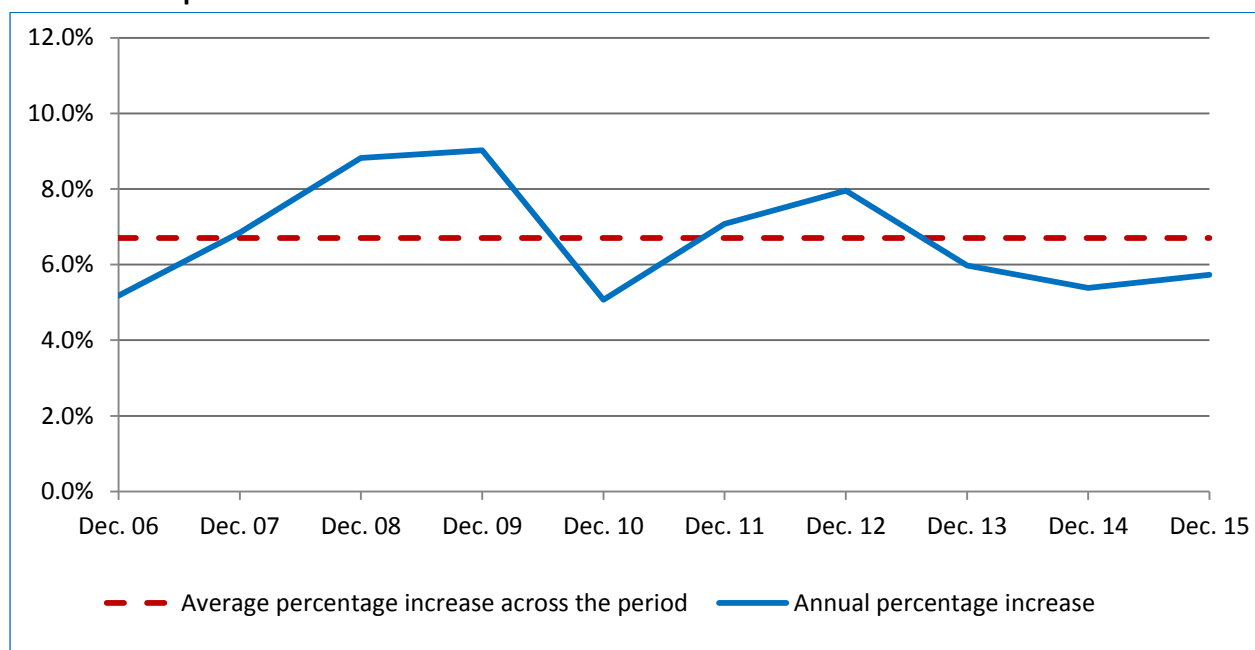
Service type	Dec. 14	Mar. 15	Jun. 15	Sep. 15	Dec. 15
Long Day Care	\$8.05	\$8.30	\$8.35	\$8.50	\$8.50
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	\$7.90	\$7.85	\$7.85	\$8.25	\$8.55
Occasional Care	\$9.40	\$9.50	\$9.50	\$9.70	\$9.65
Outside School Hours Care	\$6.55	\$6.45	\$6.60	\$6.60	\$6.80
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>\$7.85</b>	<b>\$8.00</b>	<b>\$8.05</b>	<b>\$8.25</b>	<b>\$8.35</b>

<sup>1</sup> Hourly fee for each service type is calculated by dividing the sum of all fee amounts by the sum of all hours for each service type.

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

The average hourly fee for Long Day Care increased by 5.7 per cent from the December quarter 2014 to the December quarter 2015. This increase compares with the average annual percentage increase of 6.7 per cent for the period from the December quarter 2006 to the December quarter 2015.

**Figure 5: Average and annual percentage change to Long Day Care hourly fees, December quarter 2006 to December quarter 2015**



Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

The Australian Government subsidises the cost of child care for eligible families through the Child Care Benefit and the Child Care Rebate to help parents with the cost of approved child care. During the December quarter 2015, the total estimated expenditure on Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate was \$1,700.7 million. The majority (\$1,120.7 million or 65.9 per cent) of this was paid in relation to families using Long Day Care services.

**Table 15: Total estimated Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate entitlements by service type, December quarter 2015**

Service type	Child Care Benefit ('000)	Child Care Rebate ('000)	Total ('000)
Long Day Care	\$453,231	\$667,438	<b>\$1,120,669</b>
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	\$335,225	\$116,666	<b>\$451,891</b>
Occasional Care	\$1,557	\$2,320	<b>\$3,877</b>
Outside School Hours Care	\$45,463	\$78,761	<b>\$124,224</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$835,476</b>	<b>\$865,186</b>	<b>\$1,700,662</b>

Note: while estimated CCR exceeds estimated CCB for the first time, actual CCB would still exceed actual CCR (see technical notes for further details).

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data – based on estimated entitlements.

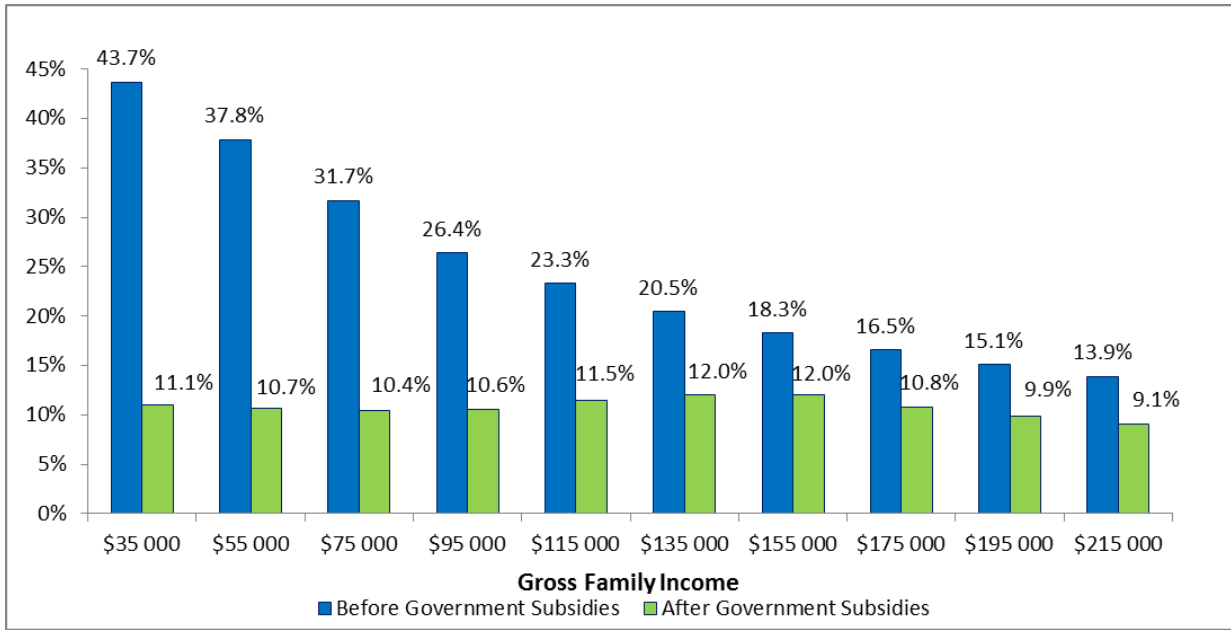
### Costs of care after Australian Government fee assistance

The child care out-of-pocket costs for families are determined by a combination of the fees services charge, the type of child care used, the amount of care used by families for their children and the amount of Australian Government subsidies that families are entitled to.

Before Australian Government child care subsidies were taken into account, out-of-pocket costs for families varied from 43.7 per cent of weekly disposable income for families earning a gross income of \$35,000 per year, to 13.9 per cent for families earning a gross income of \$215,000 per year.

After Australian Government child care subsidies, out-of-pocket costs were significantly reduced, varying from 11.1 per cent for families earning a gross income of \$35,000 per year, to 9.1 per cent for families earning a gross income of \$215,000 per year.

**Figure 6: Out-of-pocket costs<sup>1</sup> for one child in Long Day Care before and after Australian Government subsidies, March quarter 2015**



1 Out-of-pocket costs (before and after Australian Government subsidies) are shown for families with one child using Long Day Care for 50 hours of care per week.

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

## Vacancies

Table 16 details the national trend in child care vacancies from the December quarter 2013 to the December quarter 2015 by service type.

**Table 16: Child care vacancies by service type, December quarter 2013 to December quarter 2015<sup>1</sup>**

Service type	Dec-13	Mar-14	Jun-14*	Sep-14	Dec-14	Mar-15	Jun-15	Sep. 15	Dec. 15
<b>Long Day Care</b>									
Total number of services	6,471	6,443	6,606	6,601	6,623	6,656	6,723	6,755	6,804
Per cent services reporting	90%	93%	90%	91%	90%	91%	91%	91%	91%
Proportion with vacancies	86%	90%	88%	87%	87%	91%	90%	89%	88%
Average vacancies	66,410	92,340	83,740	75,230	70,160	98,510	94,000	86,700	77,440
<b>Family Day Care</b>									
Total number of services	605	642	714	761	772	771	778	786	792
Per cent services reporting	46%	40%	38%	36%	36%	34%	34%	32%	32%
Proportion with vacancies	85%	85%	87%	87%	85%	91%	89%	87%	90%
Average vacancies	7,500	8,610	8,690	8,070	8,400	8,120	8,510	8,410	7,520
<b>Occasional Care</b>									
Total number of services	119	119	117	115	116	116	116	115	115
Per cent services reporting	66%	61%	59%	60%	68%	65%	59%	63%	64%
Proportion with vacancies	53%	55%	54%	51%	47%	55%	51%	55%	54%
Average vacancies	300	330	320	280	310	450	460	390	420
<b>Before and After School Hours Care</b>									
Total number of services	6,306	6,514	6,633	6,589	6,628	6,841	6,911	7,348	6,981
Per cent services reporting	66%	65%	63%	63%	62%	55%	58%	51%	60%
Proportion with vacancies	89%	89%	90%	91%	91%	90%	91%	90%	92%
Average vacancies	100,410	101,880	103,570	107,900	109,790	92,350	102,770	100,080	119,040
<b>Vacation Care</b>									
Total number of services	2,467	2,403	2544	2,583	1,977	2,515	2,609	2,732	2,139
Per cent services reporting	56%	60%	58%	59%	75%	58%	55%	55%	57%
Proportion with vacancies	71%	73%	69%	73%	71%	73%	72%	73%	64%
Average vacancies	26,200	29,130	28,280	33,370	32,280	32,020	30,510	34,000	34,100

<sup>1</sup> Data relating to the small number of reporting services with all places not meeting the relevant vacancies definition have not been included in this report.

\* June quarter 2014 vacancy data has been updated to reflect a reference week that better represents long term vacancy patterns.

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

## Technical Notes

### General counting rules

All analysis broken down by state in this report corresponds to the *state of the service* rather than the state where the child/family lives.

Use of child care services is counted for each individual child using approved child care services. An instance of child care usage is defined as at least one child care attendance per child care service for the quarter irrespective of duration or frequency. For example, a single hour at an Occasional Care centre or 40 hours per week throughout the quarter at a Long Day Care centre, are both counted as an instance of child care usage.

Children and families are recorded for each of the service types that they use during the quarter. Children and families using more than one service type during the quarter or financial year are counted only once within each applicable service type category and only once within the 'Total' category for the relevant time period. Note that as children and families may use more than one service type in any particular timeframe the sum of the component parts may not equal the 'Total' category.

Changes in service type numbers need to be understood in the context of counting rules. Prior to the implementation of the Child Care Management System (CCMS) all services with an 'active' status were included regardless of attendance. This resulted in a small number of services being included in the data that did not actually have any children in attendance. Under CCMS a service is counted as 'active' only if it had at least one child attending at some time during the quarter, thus aligning the counting rules for children, families and services.

### CCB and CCR estimation

The Child Care Benefit (CCB) and Child Care Rebate (CCR) estimation method used in this report:

- Under-estimates CCB as only CCB payments made during the quarter are reported and not the CCB amounts customers were actually entitled to but did not receive (for example because of families over-estimating income or receiving annual or lump sum CCB payments to avoid debts).
- Over-estimates CCR due to under-estimation of CCB.
- Doesn't take into account reconciliation which will adjust the customers' CCB and CCR actual entitlements based on their actual rather than estimated incomes. There is a considerable time lag for the reconciliation process to be complete, this can take a number of years.

### Data sources

Data included in this report comes from the following sources:

- The majority of data is extracted from the Child Care Data and Reporting System (CCDARS). CCDARS is a Department of Education and Training based data storage system for data collected from approved child care services via the Child Care Management System.
- Supplementary data is sourced from the MyChild website and the Department of Human Services.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data is included in this report for comparison purposes.

**Revisions:** Due to changes in the administrative system, data may be revised to ensure the most accurate, up-to-date figures are published.

### Vacancy information

All approved services are required to regularly report their anticipated vacancies according to a standard definition, to the Department of Education and Training. For most services, a vacancy is defined as a permanent full day vacancy that the service is willing to fill.

The information contained in this report (Table 16) relates to specific reference weeks. As is standard practice, a reference week is used to represent the quarter and reduce errors due to potential inconsistencies in reporting. For the December

quarter 2015, vacancies for Long Day Care, Before and After School Hours Care, Occasional Care and Family Day Care and are reported for the week 16 November to 22 November 2015. Vacancies for Vacation Care are reported for the week 14 December to 20 December 2015 for New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Northern Territory and 5 October to 11 October 2015 for Australian Capital Territory, Victoria, Western Australia and Tasmania. Vacation Care results for New South Wales are calculated using a 2 day reference week as this was the only week with school holidays during the quarter.

As the June quarter 2014 vacancy data has been revised, the reference week used to calculate the vacancies for Long Day Care, Family Day Care, Occasional Care and Before and After School Hours Care are reported for the week 26 May to 1 June 2014. Vacancies for Vacation Care are reported for the week 14 April to 20 April 2014 for New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory, 7 April to 13 April 2014 for Victoria, Queensland and the Northern Territory, 28 April to 4 May 2014 for Tasmania. Vacation Care results are calculated using a 4 day reference week for New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory due to a public holiday coinciding with school holidays.



## Definitions

**Approved care:** Care provided by Long Day Care, Family Day Care and In-Home Care, Outside School Hours Care and Occasional Care services approved by the Australian Government to receive Child Care Benefit on behalf of families.

**Average number of vacancies:** As services report vacancies for each day of the week, the number of vacancies for each service is averaged out across the weekdays, that is, it is the sum of vacancies on each weekday divided by five. The total number of vacancies in an area is the sum of the average vacancies per service.

**Child Care Benefit (CCB):** A payment made by the Australian Government to families to assist with the cost of child care.

**Child Care Management System (CCMS):** This is the electronic system used for the administration of CCB. Under CCMS, approved child care services submit attendance information to the Department of Education and Training over the internet. Data in this report are primarily sourced from the CCMS.

**Child Care Rebate (CCR):** A payment made by the Australian Government to assist eligible working families with the out-of-pocket cost of child care. CCR is calculated based on the gap between the fees charged by the child care service and the CCB paid in respect of fee relief. Families who satisfy the work/training/study test requirements may be entitled to receive CCR for 50 per cent of all out-of-pocket costs up to an annual limit.

**Family Day Care:** Family Day Care educators provide flexible care and developmental activities in their own homes for other people's children on behalf of an approved Family Day Care service.

**In-Home Care:** In-Home Care educators provide flexible care and developmental activities in the child's own home on behalf of an approved In-Home Care service.

**Long Day Care:** This is a centre-based form of child care service. Long Day Care services provide quality all day or part-time care for children of working families and the general community.

**Occasional Care:** This is a care type mainly for non-school aged children. These services cater mainly for the needs of families who require short-term care for their children.

**Outside School Hours Care:** Services provide care for school aged children before and/or after school during the school term. Some services also provide care on 'pupil free' days. Vacation Care is also included in this category. Vacation Care services provide care for school children during the school holidays. Vacancies are reported separately for Before and/or After School Hours Care and Vacation Care.

**Reference week:** For Long Day Care, Family Day Care, Before and/or After School Hours Care and Occasional Care services, the reference week for vacancy information is selected as one of the last available weeks that is not affected by school or other holiday periods and a week that provided a consistent (with other weeks in the quarter) level of services that had reported across the quarter. The reference week includes weekdays only as most services do not operate on weekends. The reference week for Vacation Care is based on each state and territory's school holiday periods.

**Region:** Regions of Australia are classified according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS), July 2011. This classification divides each state and territory into several regions on the basis of their relative access to services.

**Reporting services:** The services that reported their vacancy information for the reference week. This includes a small number of services that reported vacancy information and indicated they were not operational for the week.

**Service:** Child care services are approved by the Australian Government to receive CCB on behalf of families. Most Long Day Care, Family Day Care, Before and After School Hours Care, Vacation Care services and some In-Home Care and Occasional Care services are approved child care services. The total number of services refers to the number of services that were active during the September quarter 2015, that is, they had at least one record of child care attendance in the quarter.

**Vacancy:** Anticipated availability that child care services are willing to fill for each week they are operational. This is an ongoing full day vacancy for Long Day Care and Family Day Care, full day vacancy for Vacation Care and Occasional Care services and an ongoing full session vacancy for Before and/or After School Hours Care.

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