



# Early Childhood and Child Care in Summary

March quarter 2017

This publication provides information on children in approved child care services across Australia for the March quarter 2017.

Key findings for the March quarter 2017 include:

- 1,281,260 children attended approved child care, up 3.1 per cent since the March quarter 2016.
- 869,750 families had at least one child in approved child care, an increase of 3.2 per cent since the March quarter 2016.
- 18,318 approved child care services operated in Australia, an increase of 3.7 per cent since the March quarter 2016.
- The total estimated Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate entitlement was \$1,656.8 million, up 0.7 per cent since the March quarter 2016.

## 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 March quarter 2017, 869,750 families used approved child care services for their 1,281,260 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 March quarter 2017, there were 18,318 services providing approved child care services across Australia.

**Table 1: Child care children, families, services and estimated entitlements by state and territory, March quarter 2017**

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	431,740	296,300	6,345	\$257,173	\$310,382	271,390
Vic.	321,330	212,660	4,196	\$259,613	\$226,555	197,830
Qld	286,130	193,750	3,711	\$168,201	\$175,743	180,010
SA	84,790	57,410	1,335	\$36,570	\$43,740	54,000
WA	98,420	69,390	1,752	\$44,778	\$65,907	64,950
Tas.	23,000	15,850	391	\$10,527	\$11,335	14,740
NT	9,750	6,860	201	\$3,418	\$8,732	6,660
ACT	28,800	19,770	387	\$7,038	\$27,039	19,340
<b>Australia</b>	<b>1,281,260</b>	<b>869,750</b>	<b>18,318</b>	<b>\$787,319</b>	<b>\$869,433</b>	<b>806,890</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.

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

## Child Care Usage

### Children

During the March quarter 2017, 1,281,260 children used approved child care in Australia, up by 3.1 per cent since the March quarter 2016. For children aged 0–12 years using approved child care, this represents 31.4 per cent of the 4,011,890 children aged 0–12 years in Australia.

During the March quarter 2017, children attended various services providing approved child care, including Long Day Care (699,510 or 54.6 per cent), Outside School Hours Care (433,480 or 33.8 per cent), Family Day Care and In-Home Care (206,520 or 16.1 per cent), and Occasional Care (5,660 or 0.4 per cent).

**Table 2: Number of children using child care by service type, March quarter 2016 to March quarter 2017**

Service type	Mar. 16	Jun. 16	Sep. 16	Dec. 16	Mar. 17
Long Day Care	677,380	660,370	694,500	706,570	699,510
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	212,820	210,570	211,700	205,920	206,520
Occasional Care	5,960	6,270	6,530	6,530	5,660
Outside School Hours Care	409,370	413,010	417,650	401,380	433,480
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>1,242,470</b>	<b>1,250,270</b>	<b>1,288,480</b>	<b>1,280,770</b>	<b>1,281,260</b>
<i>Per cent of Australian population<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>31.2%</i>	<i>30.9%</i>	<i>31.9%</i>	<i>31.4%</i>	<i>31.4%</i>

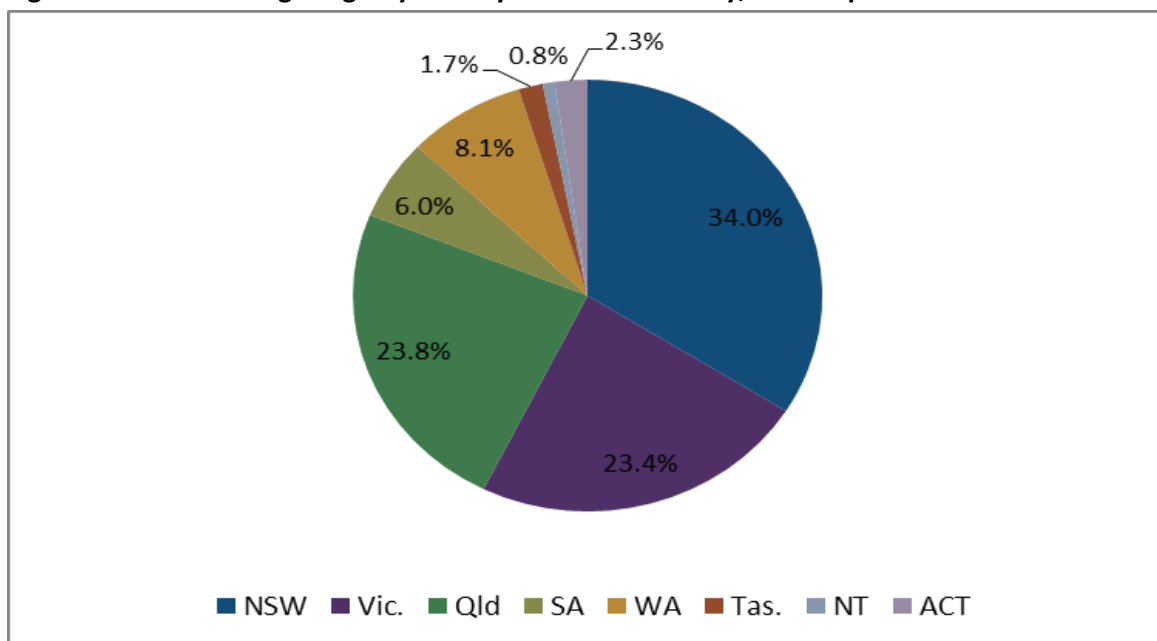
1 As children may use more than one service type in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

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, Dec. 2016.

In the March quarter 2017, the largest proportion of children attending Long Day Care was in New South Wales (34.0 per cent), followed by Queensland (23.8 per cent) and Victoria (23.4 per cent).

**Figure 1: Children using Long Day Care by state and territory, March quarter 2017**



Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

**Table 3: Number of children using child care by service type and state and territory, March quarter 2017**

Service type	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia <sup>1</sup>
Long Day Care	238,080	163,540	166,610	42,250	56,920	11,860	5,580	15,920	699,510
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	76,140	72,290	31,290	7,600	12,940	4,490	430	1,850	206,520
Occasional Care	1,970	2,120	370	110	830	120	0	140	5,660
Outside School Hours Care	136,460	97,800	101,490	38,860	34,320	8,360	4,150	12,380	433,480
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>431,740</b>	<b>321,330</b>	<b>286,130</b>	<b>84,790</b>	<b>98,420</b>	<b>23,000</b>	<b>9,750</b>	<b>28,800</b>	<b>1,281,260</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 (1,008,450 children), around one in five (280,270 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, March quarter 2017**

Service type	Major cities of Australia	Regional <sup>1</sup> and Remote Australia <sup>2</sup>	Total <sup>3</sup>
Long Day Care	530,790	170,850	699,510
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	167,270	40,600	206,520
Occasional Care	3,340	2,320	5,660
Outside School Hours Care	354,490	79,940	433,480
<b>Total<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>1,008,450</b>	<b>280,270</b>	<b>1,281,260</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 March quarter 2017, for all types of child care, the average time that a child spent in approved child care was 25.0 hours per week. This compares with children who used Long Day Care who attended for an average of 28.6 hours per week.

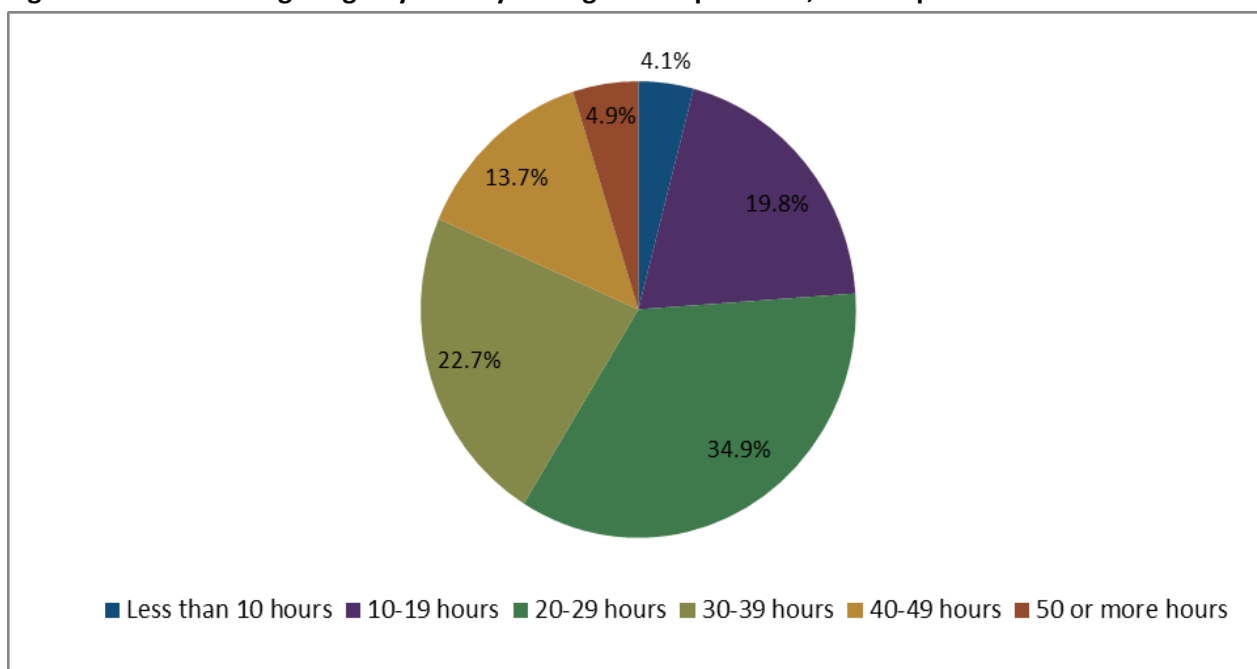
**Table 5: Average weekly hours in child care by service type, March quarter 2016 to March quarter 2017**

Service type	Mar. 16	Jun. 16	Sep. 16	Dec. 16	Mar. 17
Long Day Care	28.3	28.1	28.7	28.5	28.6
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	31.8	30.9	31.3	30.5	30.9
Occasional Care	12.2	11.8	12.3	12.0	12.4
Outside School Hours Care	12.1	10.7	11.7	10.9	12.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>25.3</b>	<b>24.4</b>	<b>25.3</b>	<b>24.9</b>	<b>25.0</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 March quarter 2017.

**Figure 2: Children using Long Day Care by average hours per week, March quarter 2017**



Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

## Families

During the March quarter 2017, there were 869,750 families using some form of approved child care for their children, an increase of 3.2 per cent since the March quarter 2016. The number of families using Family Day Care and In-Home Care has decreased by 2.6 per cent since the March quarter 2016.

**Table 6: Number of families using child care by service type, March quarter 2016 to March quarter 2017**

Service type	Mar. 16	Jun. 16	Sep. 16	Dec. 16	Mar. 17
Long Day Care	546,880	543,360	565,900	573,280	564,880
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	120,770	119,860	120,680	117,740	117,650
Occasional Care	5,000	5,300	5,440	5,420	4,770
Outside School Hours Care	288,310	293,370	296,970	286,430	305,380
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>843,000</b>	<b>852,160</b>	<b>873,790</b>	<b>871,150</b>	<b>869,750</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 March quarter 2017, 296,300 families (34.1 per cent) had children attending approved child care in New South Wales, followed by 212,660 families (24.5 per cent) in Victoria and 193,750 families (22.3 per cent) in Queensland.

Across Australia, nearly two-thirds (564,880 or 64.9 per cent) of all families had children in Long Day Care and around one-third of families had children in Outside School Hours Care (305,380 or 35.1 per cent).

**Table 7: Number of families using child care by service type and state and territory, March quarter 2017**

Service type	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia <sup>1</sup>
Long Day Care	195,000	133,200	129,840	34,470	46,350	9,530	4,650	12,950	564,880
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	45,170	36,060	19,420	4,720	7,910	3,120	310	1,200	117,650
Occasional Care	1,660	1,800	320	90	690	100	0	120	4,770
Outside School Hours Care	97,000	69,800	70,490	26,860	23,920	5,850	2,980	8,750	305,380
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>296,300</b>	<b>212,660</b>	<b>193,750</b>	<b>57,410</b>	<b>69,390</b>	<b>15,850</b>	<b>6,860</b>	<b>19,770</b>	<b>869,750</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 March quarter 2017, 32,670 Indigenous children (2.5 per cent of all children) used approved child care in Australia. The number of Indigenous children using approved child care has increased by 8.3 per cent since the March quarter 2016.

**Table 8: Number of Indigenous children using child care by service type, March quarter 2016 to March quarter 2017**

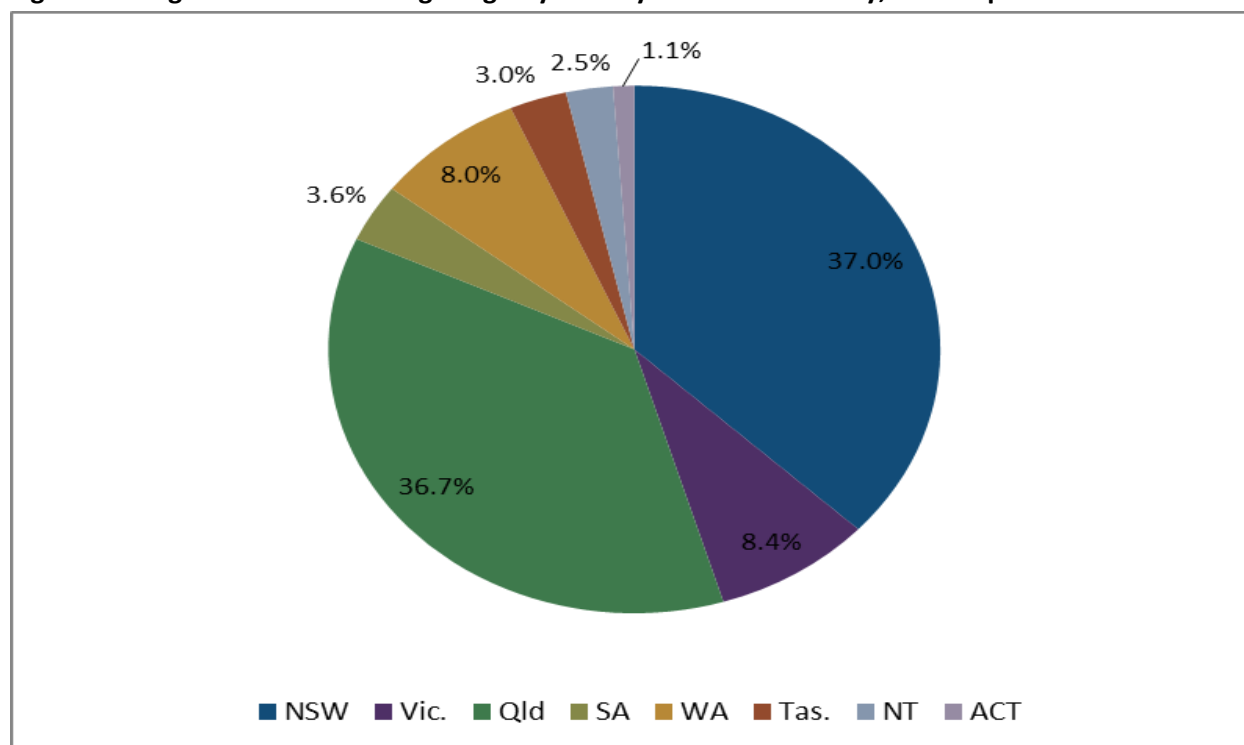
Service type	Mar. 16	Jun. 16	Sep. 16	Dec. 16	Mar. 17
Long Day Care	19,150	19,050	20,280	20,620	20,790
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	4,640	4,610	4,660	4,580	4,640
Occasional Care	170	200	240	240	210
Outside School Hours Care	7,500	7,570	7,920	7,700	8,430
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>30,180</b>	<b>30,470</b>	<b>32,080</b>	<b>32,120</b>	<b>32,670</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.

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

The largest proportion of Indigenous children attending Long Day Care was in New South Wales with 37.0 per cent, followed by Queensland with 36.7 per cent.

**Figure 3: Indigenous children using Long Day Care by state and territory, March quarter 2017**



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 (14.8 per cent of Indigenous children aged 0–12 years, and 31.4 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, March quarter 2017**

Service type	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia <sup>1</sup>
Long Day Care	7,700	1,740	7,620	740	1,660	630	520	230	20,790
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	2,010	550	1,300	140	220	350	40	30	4,640
Occasional Care	120	40	20	<10	20	10	0	10	210
Outside School Hours Care	2,760	760	2,770	570	610	400	420	160	8,430
<b>Total Indigenous children using approved child care<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>12,060</b>	<b>2,980</b>	<b>11,270</b>	<b>1,400</b>	<b>2,390</b>	<b>1,290</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>32,670</b>
<i>Per cent of Indigenous population<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>17.5%</i>	<i>18.4%</i>	<i>16.9%</i>	<i>11.6%</i>	<i>8.7%</i>	<i>16.1%</i>	<i>4.8%</i>	<i>22.2%</i>	<i>14.8%</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 (15,950 children or 48.8 per cent).

**Table 10: Number of Indigenous children using child care by service type and region, March quarter 2017**

Service type	Major cities of Australia	Regional <sup>1</sup> and Remote Australia <sup>2</sup>	Total <sup>3</sup>
Long Day Care	10,160	10,740	20,790
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	2,540	2,110	4,640
Occasional Care	90	120	210
Outside School Hours Care	4,860	3,580	8,430
<b>Total<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>16,980</b>	<b>15,950</b>	<b>32,670</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 March quarter 2017, 22,260 Indigenous families used approved child care, an increase of 7.6 per cent since the March quarter 2016.

**Table 11: Number of Indigenous families using child care by service type, March quarter 2016 to March quarter 2017**

Service type	Mar. 16	Jun. 16	Sep. 16	Dec. 16	Mar. 17
Long Day Care	14,850	15,030	15,820	16,010	16,050
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	2,820	2,810	2,820	2,740	2,780
Occasional Care	140	170	190	190	170
Outside School Hours Care	5,040	5,170	5,380	5,260	5,690
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>20,690</b>	<b>21,140</b>	<b>22,050</b>	<b>22,040</b>	<b>22,260</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.

More than one third (8,420 or 37.8 per cent) of Indigenous families had children in approved child care located in New South Wales; another third (7,560 or 34.0 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, March quarter 2017**

Service type	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia <sup>1</sup>
Long Day Care	6,090	1,330	5,710	580	1,250	500	430	200	16,050
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	1,260	270	730	80	140	250	30	20	2,780
Occasional Care	100	30	10	<10	20	10	0	<10	170
Outside School Hours Care	1,890	520	1,840	390	390	270	290	120	5,690
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>8,420</b>	<b>1,940</b>	<b>7,560</b>	<b>930</b>	<b>1,630</b>	<b>890</b>	<b>660</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>22,260</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 March quarter 2017, 18,318 approved child care services operated in Australia, an increase of 3.7 per cent (662 services) since the March quarter 2016. There were 10,209 Outside School Hours Care services which accounted for 55.7 per cent of all services and 7,145 Long Day Care services which accounted for 39.0 per cent of all services.

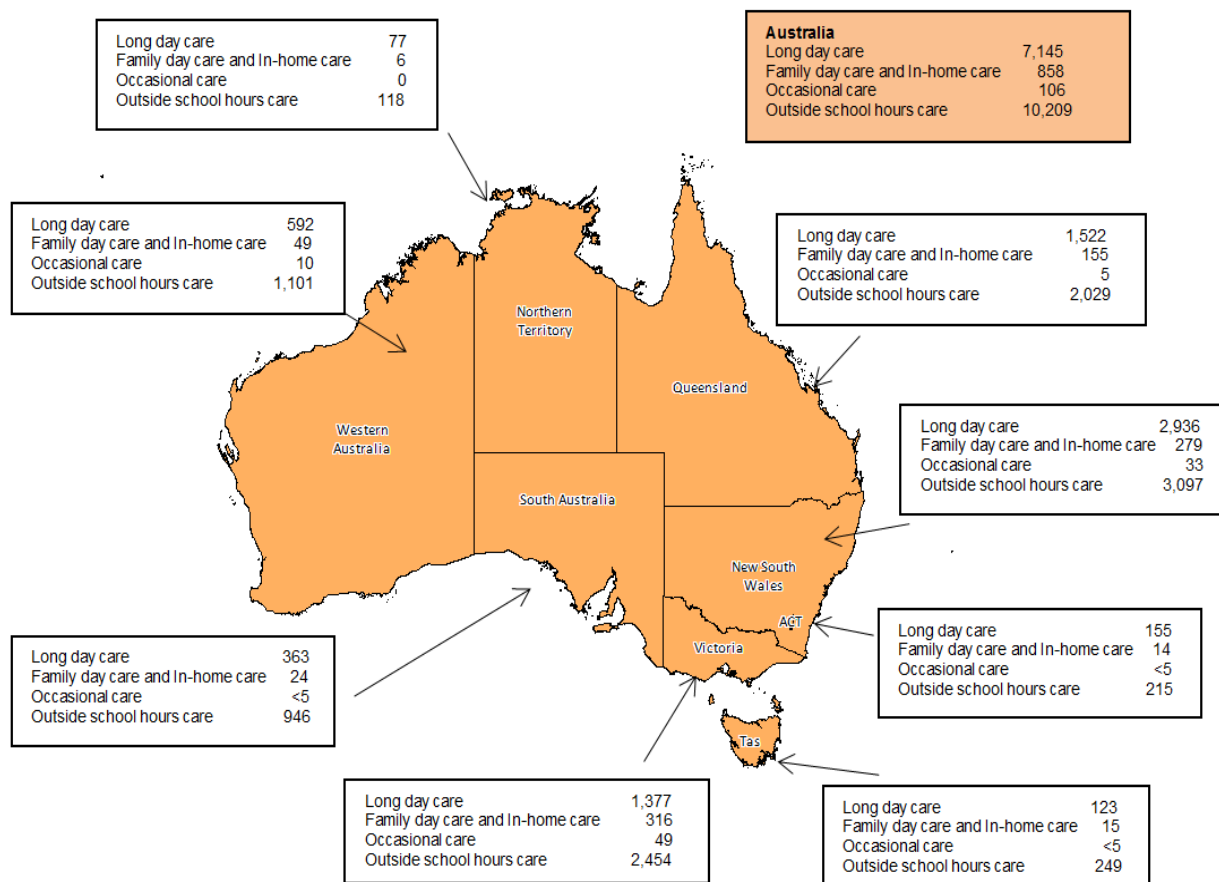
**Table 13: Number of child care services by service type, March quarter 2016 to March quarter 2017**

Service type	Mar. 16	Jun. 16	Sep. 16	Dec. 16	Mar. 17
Long Day Care	6,862	6,932	7,027	7,051	7,145
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	858	887	914	881	858
Occasional Care	111	110	110	110	106
Outside School Hours Care	9,825	10,065	10,136	9,873	10,209
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,656</b>	<b>17,994</b>	<b>18,187</b>	<b>17,915</b>	<b>18,318</b>

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

In the March quarter 2017, around one third of services were located in New South Wales (34.6 per cent), with 22.9 per cent in Victoria and 20.3 per cent in Queensland.

**Figure 4: Number of approved services by service type and state and territory, March quarter 2017**



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 March quarter 2017 was \$8.85, an increase of 3.9 per cent since the March quarter 2016. Fees varied across service types from a high of \$10.25 per hour for Occasional Care services to a low of \$7.05 per hour for Outside School Hours Care services.

**Table 14: Average hourly fee by service type, March quarter 2016 to March quarter 2017**

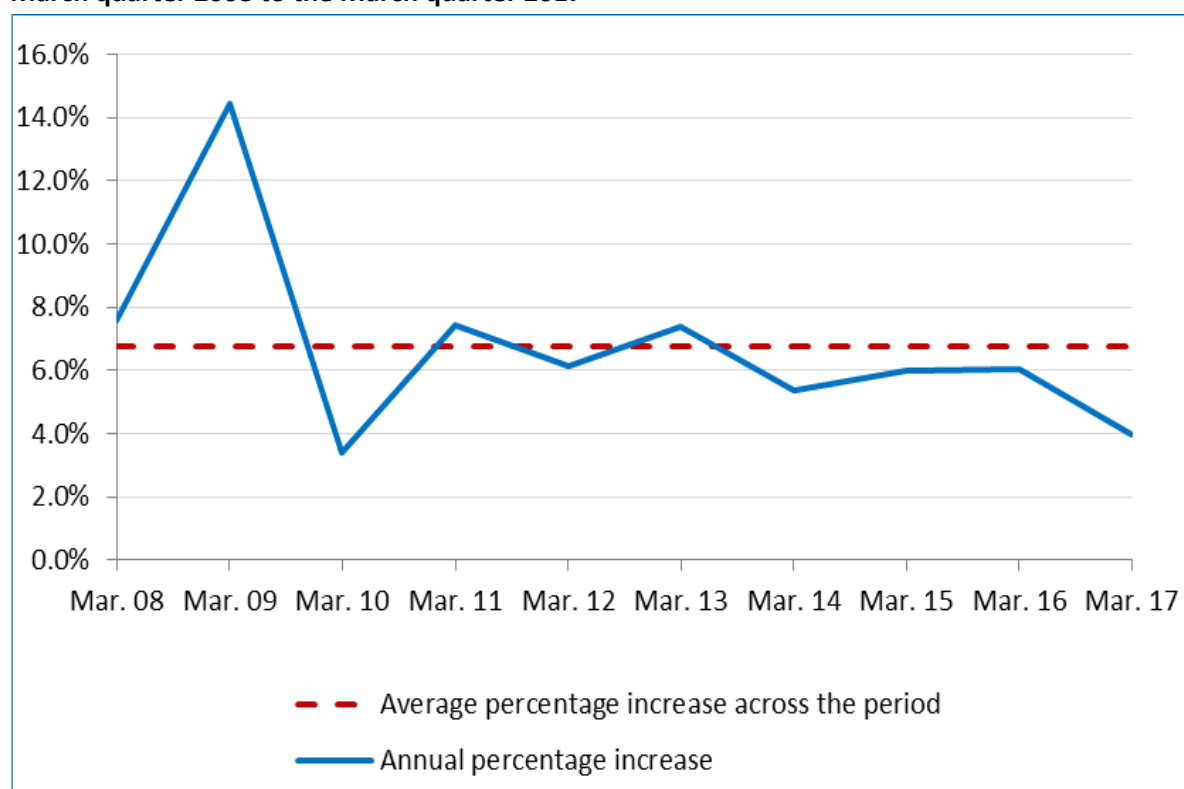
Service type	Mar. 16	Jun. 16	Sep. 16	Dec. 16	Mar. 17
Long Day Care	\$8.80	\$8.90	\$9.00	\$8.95	\$9.15
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	\$8.65	\$8.80	\$8.90	\$8.95	\$8.95
Occasional Care	\$9.80	\$9.90	\$10.05	\$10.05	\$10.25
Outside School Hours Care	\$6.70	\$7.05	\$6.95	\$7.00	\$7.05
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>\$8.50</b>	<b>\$8.65</b>	<b>\$8.75</b>	<b>\$8.75</b>	<b>\$8.85</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 4.0 per cent from the March quarter 2016 to the March quarter 2017. This increase compares with the average annual percentage increase of 6.8 per cent for the period from the March quarter 2008 to the March quarter 2017.

**Figure 5: Average and annual percentage change to Long Day Care hourly fees, March quarter 2008 to the March quarter 2017**



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 March quarter 2017, the total estimated expenditure on Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate was \$1,656.8 million. The majority (\$1,073.5 million or 64.8 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, March quarter 2017**

Service type	Child Care Benefit ('000)	Child Care Rebate ('000)	Total ('000)
Long Day Care	\$413,914	\$659,575	\$1,073,489
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	\$313,101	\$106,560	\$419,662
Occasional Care	\$1,106	\$1,756	\$2,862
Outside School Hours Care	\$59,198	\$101,541	\$160,740
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$787,319</b>	<b>\$869,433</b>	<b>\$1,656,752</b>

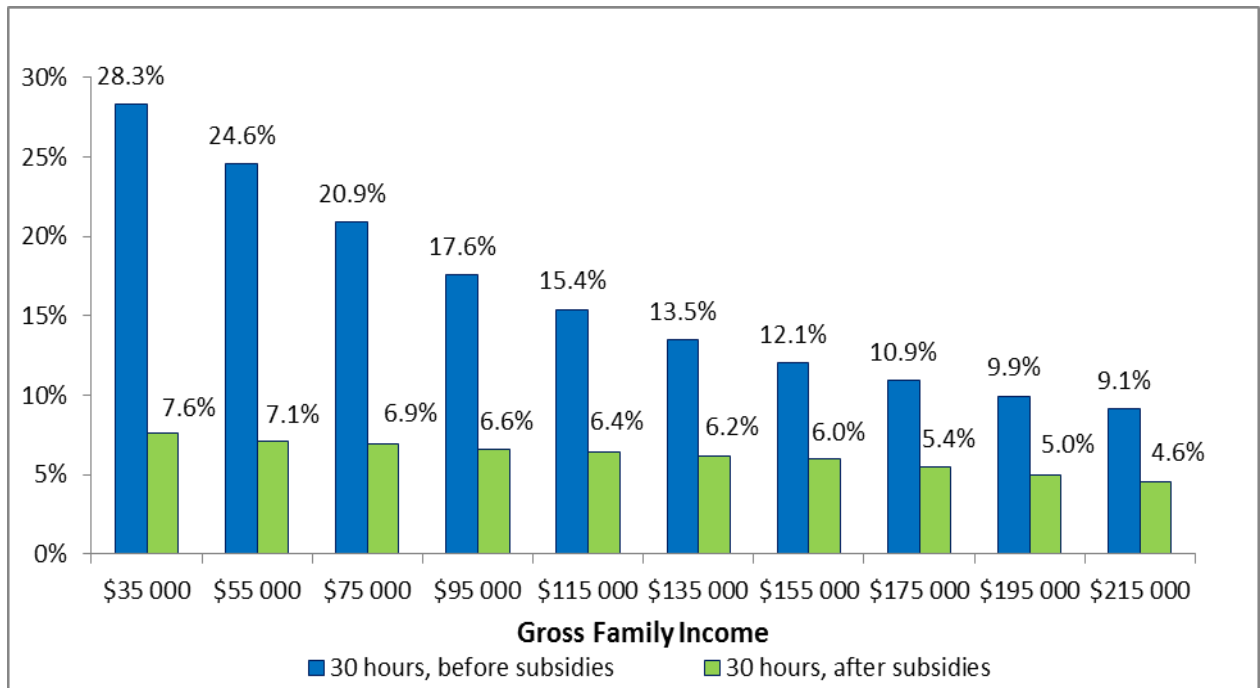
Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data – based on estimated entitlements.

### 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 28.3 per cent of weekly disposable income 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. After Australian Government child care subsidies, out-of-pocket costs were significantly reduced, varying from 7.6 per cent for families earning a gross income of \$35,000 per year to 4.6 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 2017**



<sup>1</sup> Out-of-pocket costs (before and after Australian Government subsidies) are shown for families with one child aged less than 5 years old using Long Day care for 30 hours of care per week. This takes into account the CCR cap (of \$7,500).

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

## Additional Assistance

### JET Child Care Fee Assistance

In the March quarter 2017 there were 7,350 families assisted with Jobs, Education and Training Child Care Fee Assistance (JETCCFA). This represented 0.8 per cent of the total number of families who used approved child care services.

**Table 16: JET Child Care Fee Assistance usage, March quarter 2016 to March quarter 2017**

	Mar. 16	Jun. 16	Sep. 16	Dec. 16	Mar. 17
Number of children assisted	12,060	12,380	12,470	11,530	10,610
Number of families using JETCCFA	8,400	8,640	8,600	7,880	7,350
Average hours per week per child	26.4	26.4	26.6	26.4	26.6
Estimated JETCCFA entitlement (\$'000)	\$6,866	\$8,945	\$9,313	\$7,729	\$6,436

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

### Special Child Care Benefit

In the March quarter 2017, 9,780 families were assisted with Special Child Care Benefit. This represented 1.1 per cent of the total number of families who used approved child care services.

**Table 17: Special Child Care Benefit usage, March quarter 2016 to March quarter 2017**

	Mar. 16	Jun. 16	Sep. 16	Dec. 16	Mar. 17
Number of children assisted	14,030	14,790	16,520	15,630	14,730
Number of families using SCCB	9,040	9,900	10,870	10,270	9,780
Average hours per week per child	34.4	33.8	34.2	34.2	34.4
Estimated SCCB entitlement (\$'000)	\$40,619	\$43,575	\$55,771	\$45,269	\$42,407

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

### Grandparent Child Care Benefit

In the March quarter 2017, 4,590 families were assisted with Grandparent Child Care Benefit. This represented 0.5 per cent of the total number of families who used approved child care services.

**Table 18: Grandparent Child Care Benefit usage, March quarter 2016 to March quarter 2017**

	Mar. 16	Jun. 16	Sep. 16	Dec. 16	Mar. 17
Number of children assisted	7,320	7,500	8,220	8,560	8,800
Number of families using GCCB	4,110	4,170	4,470	4,540	4,590
Average hours per week per child	37.1	36.2	37.7	36.8	37.8
Estimated GCCB entitlement (\$'000)	\$39,401	\$43,748	\$53,492	\$55,409	\$55,220

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

## Vacancies

Table 19 details the national trend in child care vacancies from the March quarter 2015 to the March quarter 2017 by service type.

**Table 19: Child care vacancies by service type, March quarter 2015 to March quarter 2017**

Service type	Mar-15	Jun-15	Sep. 15	Dec. 15	Mar. 16	Jun. 16	Sep-16	Dec-16	Mar-17
<b>Long Day Care</b>									
Total number of services	6,656	6,723	6,755	6,804	6,862	6,932	7,027	7,051	7,145
Per cent services reporting	91%	91%	91%	91%	92%	92%	92%	91%	90%
Proportion with vacancies	91%	90%	89%	88%	91%	91%	89%	89%	93%
Average vacancies	98,510	94,000	86,700	77,440	110,510	106,650	91,980	87,610	122,570
<b>Family Day Care</b>									
Total number of services	771	778	786	792	794	823	849	819	794
Per cent services reporting	34%	34%	32%	32%	30%	44%	42%	40%	37%
Proportion with vacancies	91%	89%	87%	90%	89%	87%	90%	91%	92%
Average vacancies	8,120	8,510	8,410	7,520	7,180	9,270	11,640	9,990	8,940
<b>Occasional Care</b>									
Total number of services	116	116	115	115	111	110	110	110	106
Per cent services reporting	65%	59%	63%	64%	59%	68%	71%	68%	72%
Proportion with vacancies	55%	51%	55%	54%	60%	56%	56%	56%	53%
Average vacancies	450	460	390	420	510	460	470	430	600
<b>Before and After School Hours Care</b>									
Total number of services	6,841	6,911	7,348	6,981	7,177	7,331	7,324	7,306	7,502
Per cent services reporting	55%	58%	51%	60%	58%	60%	80%	80%	79%
Proportion with vacancies	90%	91%	90%	92%	91%	92%	93%	94%	94%
Average vacancies	92,350	102,770	100,080	119,040	105,750	117,550	187,600	194,800	188,400
<b>Vacation Care</b>									
Total number of services	2,515	2,609	2,732	2,139	2,648	2,734	2,812	2,907	2,707
Per cent services reporting	58%	55%	55%	57%	55%	55%	60%	60%	58%
Proportion with vacancies	73%	72%	73%	64%	75%	70%	75%	68%	77%
Average vacancies	32,020	30,510	34,000	34,100	33,410	30,510	42,920	43,930	39,360

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 19) 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 March quarter 2017, vacancies for Long Day Care, Before and After School Hours Care, Occasional Care and Family Day Care are reported for the week 6 March to 12 March 2017. Vacancies for Vacation Care are reported for the week 16 January to 22 January 2017.

## 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.

**Grandparent Child Care Benefit (GCCB):** Grandparents with the primary care of grandchildren and who receive an income support payment may be eligible for the Grandparent Child Care Benefit (GCCB). The GCCB covers the full cost of approved child care for up to 50 hours for each child per week. In certain circumstances Grandparents may be able to get GCCB for more than 50 hours per week.

**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.

**Jobs, Education and Training Child Care Fee Assistance (JETCCFA):** This is a form of government assistance that provides extra help with the cost of approved child care for eligible parents undertaking activities such as job search, work, study, or rehabilitation as part of an Employment Pathway Plan with the Department of Human Services or an employment service provider, to help them to enter or re-enter the workforce.

**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 December quarter 2015, that is, they had at least one record of child care attendance in the quarter.

**Special Child Care Benefit (SCCB):** Additional child care assistance provided for children considered to be at risk of serious abuse or neglect, or exceptional cases where a family's income does not truly reflect their capacity to pay the usual charged fee. Special Child Care Benefit is reported as 'child at risk' and 'financial hardship'.

**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.

ISBN

978-1-76051-158-6



With the exception of the Commonwealth Coat of Arms, the Department's logo, any material protected by a trade mark and where otherwise noted all material presented in this document is provided under a [Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Australia](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/au/) (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/au/>) licence.

The details of the relevant licence conditions are available on the Creative Commons website (accessible using the links provided) as is the full legal code for the [CC BY 3.0 AU licence](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/au/legalcode) (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/au/legalcode>).

The document must be attributed as the Early Childhood and Child Care in Summary.