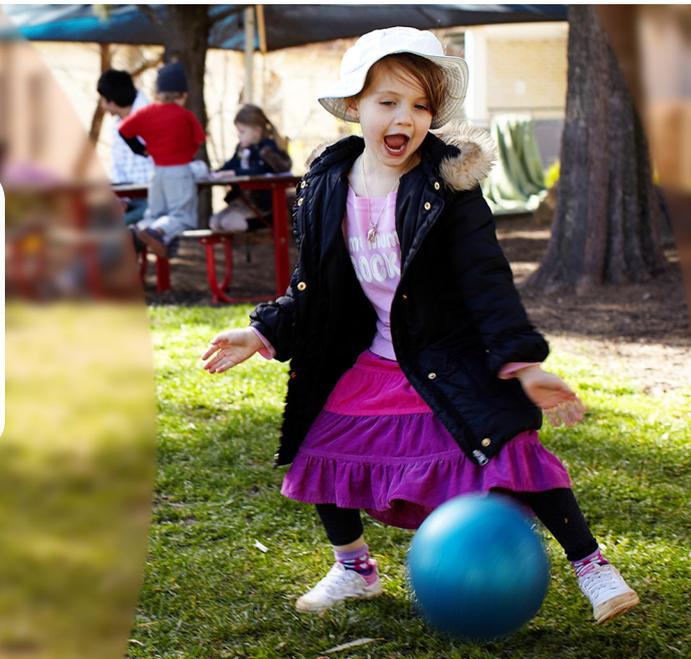


Australian Early Development Census

## Understanding the results



### About the AEDC

The Australian Early Development Census is an Australian Government initiative based on the Canadian Early Development Instrument. As a child enters their first year of full-time school, their teacher uses the Early Development Instrument to take a research snapshot of the child's development. The Early Development Instrument measures five important areas, or domains, of early childhood development:

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

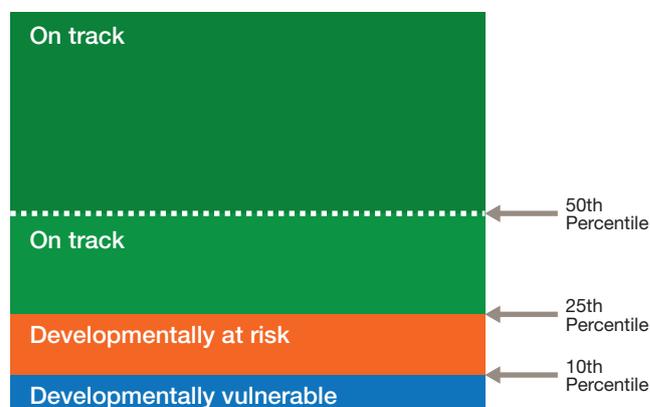
The AEDC provides a national measurement to monitor Australian children's development. The AEDC can assist governments to develop flexible approaches to policy and planning that addresses the evolving needs of children and families in the future. Communities can influence the earliest years of children's lives. The AEDC results give communities a snapshot of children's development as they arrive at school and provide them with an opportunity to consider what works well and what needs improvement to better support children and their families.

### How the results are reported

AEDC results are presented as the number and proportion of children who are, 'on track', 'developmentally at risk' and 'developmentally vulnerable'.

**Figure 1** – How the baseline was established.

For the 2012 data collection, and onwards, comparisons of increased or decreased developmental vulnerability are measured against the score established in 2009.



### About the result benchmarks

For each of the five AEDC domains, children receive a score between 0 and 10, where 10 is the highest score possible.

In 2009, when the first AEDC was undertaken, a series of benchmarks was established. Children falling below the 10th percentile were considered 'developmentally vulnerable', children falling between the 10th and 25th percentile were considered 'developmentally at risk' and all other children were considered to be 'on track'.

The benchmarks set in 2009 provide a reference point for which later AEDC results can be compared. For example:

in the 2012 AEDC only 6.8% of children were considered to be developmentally vulnerable on the Language and Cognitive Development domain, using the benchmarks established in 2009.

### Children developmentally ‘on track’

From the 2012 collection onwards, children in the national AEDC population who score above the 2009 baseline established for ‘on track’ are classified as ‘on track’.

### Children ‘developmentally at risk’

From the 2012 collection onwards, children in the national AEDC population who score below the 2009 baseline established for ‘on track’ but above the 2009 baseline set for ‘developmentally at vulnerable’ are classified as ‘developmentally at risk’.

### Children ‘developmentally vulnerable’

From the 2012 collection onwards, children in the national AEDC population who score below the 2009 baseline established for ‘developmentally vulnerable’ are classified as ‘developmentally vulnerable’. These children demonstrate a much lower than average ability in the developmental competencies measured in the domains.

## What are AEDC communities?

Although information is collected by teachers, results are reported for the communities where children live, not where they go to school. Results are analysed at the

community and local community level.

Results are presented online as geographic maps along with results tables.

Results are available on the **AEDC website** and consist of the following:

### National Report

*A Snapshot of Early Childhood Development in Australia 2012 – AEDI National Report* provides a unique overview of the development of Australia’s children.

### Community maps

Geographic maps show the proportion of children in the local community who are developmentally vulnerable on the domains.

### Community profile

The community profile contains important information about early childhood development outcomes. The profile provides community-level results and contextual information for the whole community.

### School profile

A school profile provides schools with results for children attending their school who had information collected about them for the data collection. School profiles are not publicly available. A school’s profile is available to only that school, and only if that profile shows results for six or more children.

Figure 2 – Web site data explorer view of AEDC communities

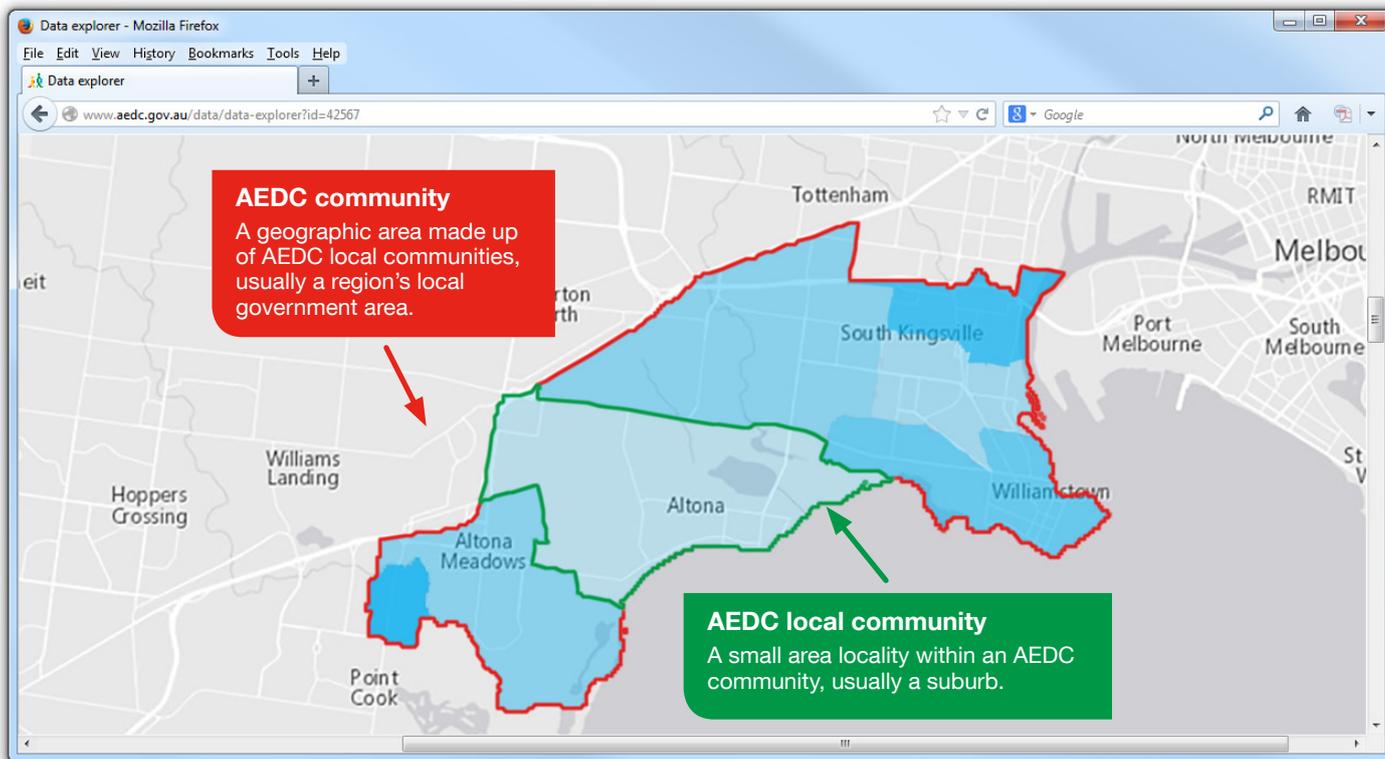
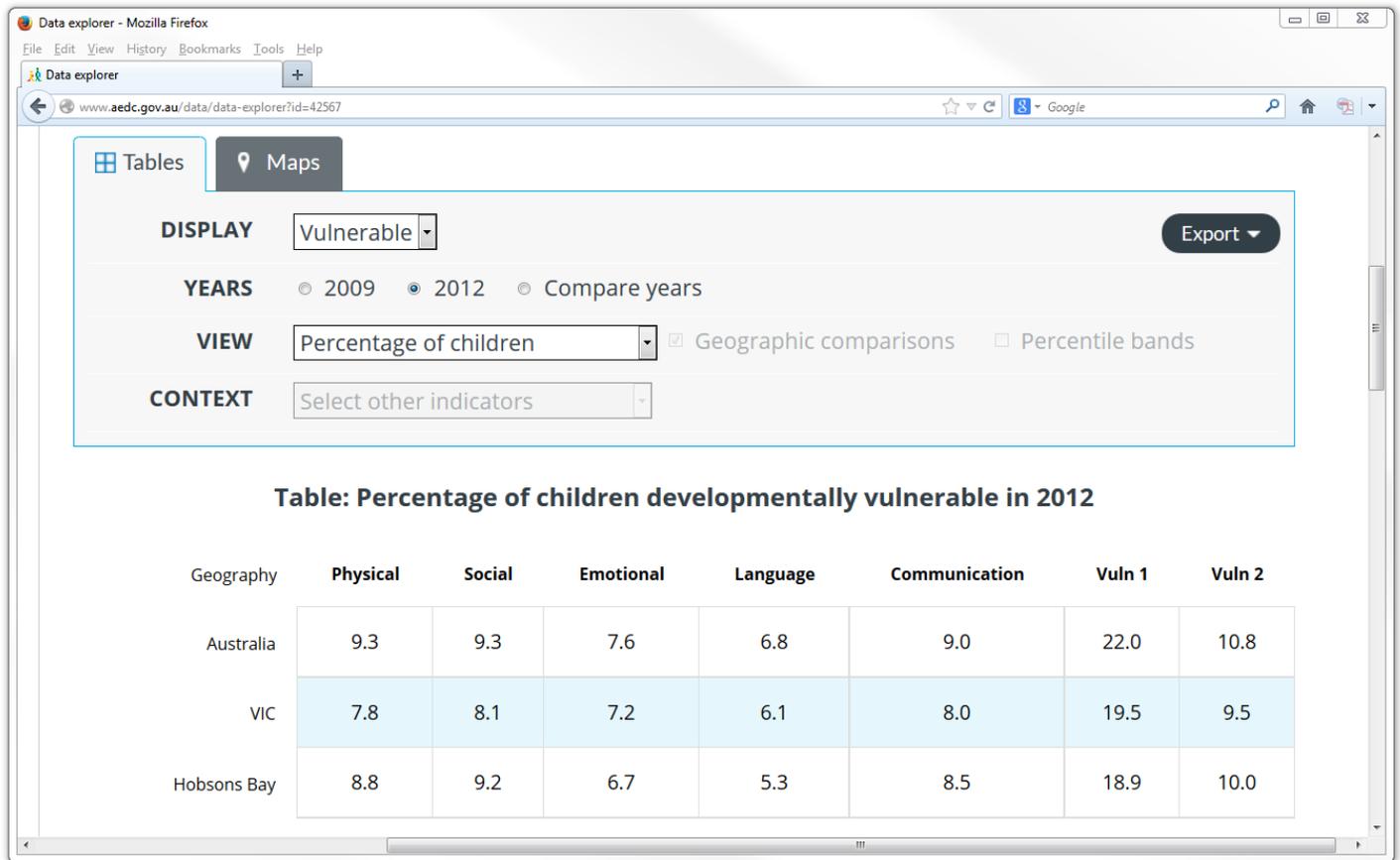


Figure 3 – Web site data explorer view of results tables



## Results maps

The maps are coloured in five shades of green, representing the range of developmental vulnerability. The green shading shows how a community is doing relative to the rest of Australia. Areas shaded in lighter greens have lower proportions of developmentally vulnerable children and areas shaded in darker greens have higher proportions of developmentally vulnerable children.

## Results tables

The results tables show the local communities' results and are displayed as:

- the proportion and number of children developmentally vulnerable on the AEDC domains
- the total number of children included from each local community.

It is important to consider both the proportion of children developmentally vulnerable and the number of children this represents. 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.

## How are community and national results best compared?

The AEDC is a relative measure; the results show how children in the local community are doing relative to, or compared with, other children included, both in their community and across Australia.

For information about comparing results over two time points, refer to the fact sheet **Emerging trends from the AEDC** and the **Data Explorer tool**.

## Where can you get more information?

A comprehensive User Guide has been developed to help communities understand the results. The results and guide, as well as a number of other resources are available at [www.aedc.gov.au](http://www.aedc.gov.au).

Since 2002, the Australian Government has worked in partnership with eminent child health research institutes, Centre for Community Child Health, Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne, and the Telethon Kids Institute, Perth to deliver the Australian Early Development Index programme to communities nationwide. On 1 July 2014, the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) programme became known as the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC), and was launched through a new website [www.aedc.gov.au](http://www.aedc.gov.au). The Australian Government continues to work with its partners, and with state and territory governments to implement the AEDC.

This product is based on the materials developed by the Centre for Community Child Health, Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne, and the Australian Government Department of Education has been granted permission to adapt for its use.