



A picture of Australia's children 2009

Report 214 pages

A picture of Australia's children 2009 is the fourth in a series of national statistical reports on children aged 0-14 years. This report provides the latest available information on how Australia's children are faring according to key national indicators of health, development and wellbeing.

Key findings

Many Australian children are faring well, but there is much scope for further gains, particularly among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

The good news

- Large declines in death rates (mostly due to a decline in injury deaths). Declines in asthma hospitalisations and improved survival for leukaemia.
- Favourable trends in some risk and protective factors, such as immunisation coverage, teenage births and smoking rates among older children.
- Most children meet national physical activity guidelines and achieve national minimum standards for reading and numeracy.

Things to work on

- Rising rates of severe disability, diabetes and, among 6 year olds, dental decay.
- Far too many children spend more than the recommended time in front of a video screen (including television and computers), are overweight or obese, are not eating recommended amounts of vegetables, are homeless or at risk of homelessness, or are victims of assault.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

- Are far more likely to be disadvantaged across a broad range of health and socioeconomic indicators – 2-3 times as likely to die, be of low birthweight or have dental caries; 5 times as likely to be born to teenage mothers; 8-9 times as likely to be in the child protection system; and 24 times as likely to be in juvenile justice supervision.

International comparison

- In terms of international comparisons however, Australia doesn't measure up to other OECD countries on infant and under 5 mortality rates, teenage birth rates and jobless families with children. And there are other areas that also need improvement.

(Note: OECD is the Organisation for Economic and Co-operative Development involving 30 countries)

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