



## What is the AEDI?

The Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) is a population measure of young children's development. The AEDI gathers information on children in their first year of full-time school and creates a snapshot of early childhood development in communities right across Australia. To collect this information, teachers complete an online questionnaire about children who are in their first year of full-time school.

The AEDI measures five important areas of children's development: physical health and wellbeing; social competence; emotional maturity; language and cognitive skills (school-based<sup>1</sup>); communication skills and general knowledge.

These are important areas of child development and can also predict adult health, education and social outcomes. The AEDI focuses on all children in the community. It is not a test or assessment of individual development.

### The importance of a child's early years

The early years of a child's life are crucial to their healthy development. During the first few years of life there is rapid development, including growth in the size and structure of the brain. Investing resources and energy during these early years will bring life-long benefits to children and the community.

### How does the AEDI help my child and our community?

The AEDI results give communities a snapshot of how children in their local area are developing at the time they start school. The findings from the AEDI help the community understand what's working well and what needs to be improved or developed to better support children and their families.

The results help strengthen links between parents, schools, kindergartens/preschools, playgroups, health centres, libraries and other local organisations that support children and families.

### How can I see AEDI results for my community?

Results from the AEDI are reported according to the local government area where children live. These results provide a snapshot of how groups of children within the community have developed before they begin school.

The initial AEDI results from nationwide data collection in 2009 are available online at [www.aedi.org.au](http://www.aedi.org.au)

### Where can I find out more about the AEDI?

A comprehensive online results guide is available to help you understand your AEDI results, and engage with and plan actions in your community. For more information visit [www.aedi.org.au](http://www.aedi.org.au)

If you would like more information about the AEDI and early childhood education and care, your service will be able to provide you with a copy of the main article from this edition of *Childcare and Children's Health*.

<sup>1</sup> School-based refers to language and cognitive skills necessary for school (with English as the language of instruction).

***This Parent Fact Sheet can be downloaded along with references from [www.econnections.com.au](http://www.econnections.com.au)***

AN INITIATIVE OF

The **Royal Children's Hospital** Melbourne  
Centre for Community Child Health

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EDUCATIONAL GRANT FROM

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