



Australian Government

Department of Education and Training

Early Childhood and Child Care in Summary

September quarter 2015

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

Key findings for the September quarter 2015 include:

- 1,269,190 children attended approved child care, up 5.7 per cent since the September quarter 2014.
- 859,380 families had at least one child in approved child care, an increase of 4.8 per cent since the September quarter 2014.
- 17,801 approved child care services operated in Australia, an increase of 6.5 per cent since the September quarter 2014.
- The total estimated Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate entitlement was \$1,848.5 million, up 13.4 per cent since the September 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 September quarter 2015, 859,380 families used approved child care services for their 1,269,190 children.

- In terms of affordability, 92.5 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 September quarter 2015, there were 17,801 services providing approved child care services across Australia.

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

State and territory	Number of children using approved child care ¹	Number of families using approved child care ¹	Number of approved child care services	Estimated Child Care Benefit (CCB) entitlement ¹ ('000)	Estimated Child Care Rebate (CCR) entitlement ¹ ('000)	Estimated number of families receiving CCR ¹
NSW	423,870	290,880	5,945	\$310,320	\$331,407	265,930
Vic.	314,580	207,370	4,228	\$284,100	\$237,222	192,930
Qld	289,210	195,340	3,561	\$206,330	\$179,748	180,580
SA	88,440	58,970	1,322	\$50,679	\$46,771	55,200
WA	96,500	68,130	1,798	\$52,818	\$71,709	63,670
Tas.	23,180	15,950	376	\$11,608	\$11,434	14,730
NT	9,650	6,830	190	\$4,014	\$9,205	6,640
ACT	28,170	19,300	381	\$11,544	\$29,641	18,790
Australia	1,269,190	859,380	17,801	\$931,412	\$917,137	795,340

¹ 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 September quarter 2015, 1,269,190 children used approved child care in Australia, up by 5.7 per cent since the September quarter 2014. For children aged 0–12 years using approved child care, this represents 31.8 per cent of the 3,911,570 children aged 0–12 years in Australia.

During the September quarter 2015, children attended various services providing approved child care, including Long Day Care (676,050 or 53.3 per cent), Outside School Hours Care (398,730 or 31.4 per cent), Family Day Care and In-Home Care (227,990 or 18.0 per cent), and Occasional Care (7,380 or 0.6 per cent).

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

Service type	Sep. 14	Dec. 14	Mar. 15	Jun. 15	Sep. 15
Long Day Care	658,400	664,890	660,760	643,810	676,050
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	203,790	208,380	220,420	220,850	227,990
Occasional Care	7,750	7,630	6,670	7,010	7,380
Outside School Hours Care	369,630	339,260	382,580	391,150	398,730
Total¹	1,201,110	1,184,750	1,211,200	1,224,170	1,269,190
<i>Per cent of Australian population²</i>	<i>30.6%</i>	<i>30.2%</i>	<i>30.8%</i>	<i>30.7%</i>	<i>31.8%</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.

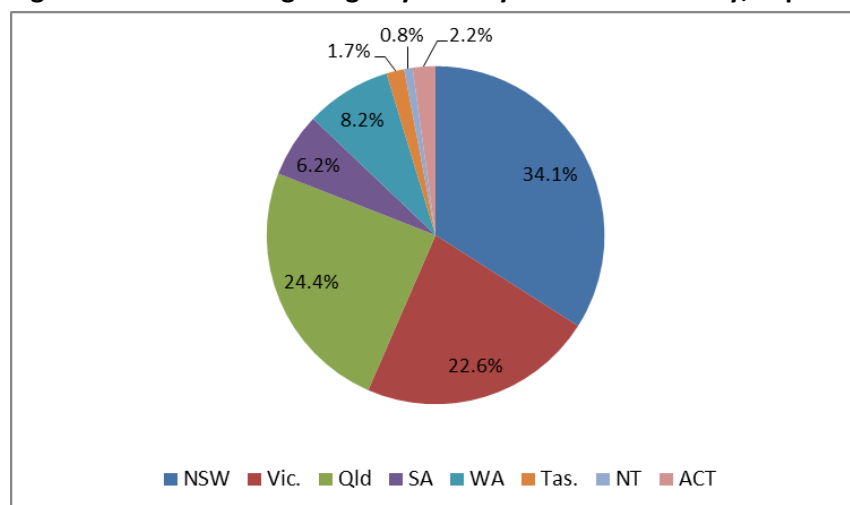
2 Number of children aged 0–12 years using approved child care as a proportion of all Australian children aged 0–12 years.

NOTE: In the Dec. 14 quarter there was one week less of October school holidays than usual in some states recorded, due to the timing of the quarter. Accordingly, the number of children that attended vacation care (and therefore Outside School Hours Care) was lower than recent quarters.

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

In the September quarter 2015, the largest proportion of children attending Long Day Care was in New South Wales (34.1 per cent), followed by Queensland (24.4 per cent) and Victoria (22.6 per cent).

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

Service type	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia ¹
Long Day Care	230,450	152,460	165,220	41,700	55,620	11,610	5,450	14,760	676,050
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	81,950	75,920	38,380	11,810	13,400	4,880	530	3,250	227,990
Occasional Care	2,550	2,790	620	140	970	140	0	160	7,380
Outside School Hours Care	121,750	92,070	93,250	37,600	31,690	8,110	3,820	10,770	398,730
Total¹	423,870	314,580	289,210	88,440	96,500	23,180	9,650	28,170	1,269,190

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 (994,290 children), around one in four (281,430 or 22.2 per cent) children used services located in regional and remote areas.

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

Service type	Major cities of Australia	Regional ¹ and Remote Australia ²	Total ³
Long Day Care	508,600	169,420	676,050
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	185,220	43,770	227,990
Occasional Care	4,430	2,950	7,380
Outside School Hours Care	324,250	75,670	398,730
Total³	994,290	281,430	1,269,190

1 Includes Inner and Outer Regional

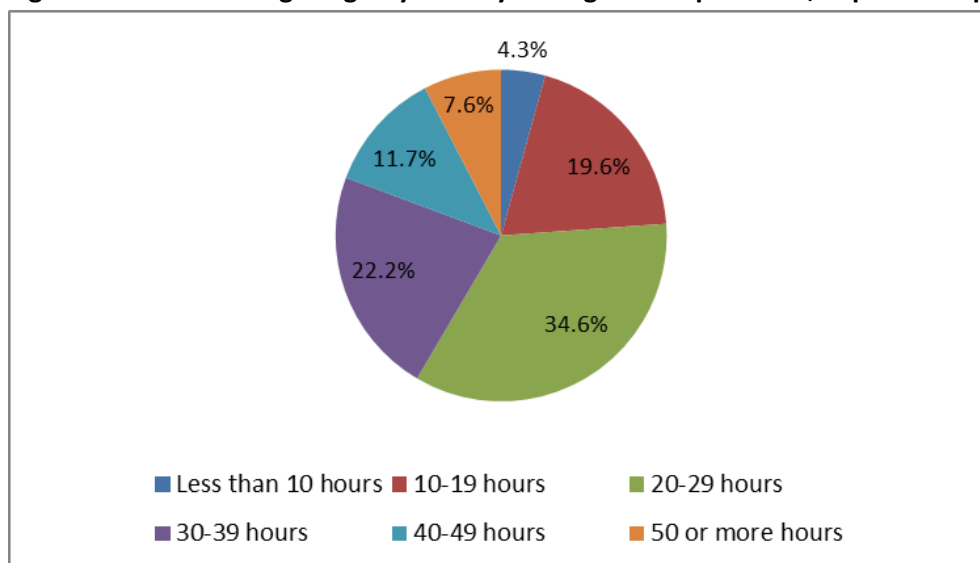
2 Includes Remote and Very Remote

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 September quarter 2015, for all types of child care, the average time that a child spent in approved child care was 25.7 hours per week. This compares with children who used Long Day Care who attended for an average of 28.4 hours per week.

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



Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

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

Service type	Sep. 14	Dec. 14	Mar. 15	Jun. 15	Sep. 15
Long Day Care	28.0	27.7	28.1	27.9	28.4
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	31.6	32.2	32.8	32.4	32.9
Occasional Care	11.8	11.5	12.0	11.8	12.1
Outside School Hours Care	11.7	10.1	11.9	11.1	11.7
Total	25.3	25.0	25.4	25.0	25.7

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

Families

During the September quarter 2015, there were 859,380 families using some form of approved child care for their children, an increase of 4.8 per cent since the September quarter 2014. The number of families using Family Day Care and In-Home Care has increased by 10.1 per cent since the September quarter 2014.

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

Service type	Sep. 14	Dec. 14	Mar. 15	Jun. 15	Sep. 15
Long Day Care	535,930	539,630	532,950	528,710	550,640
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	116,190	117,790	123,400	123,910	127,990
Occasional Care	6,390	6,310	5,600	5,900	6,160
Outside School Hours Care	263,200	243,200	269,930	277,910	283,920
Total¹	819,970	811,310	821,880	833,120	859,380

¹ 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 Dec. 14 quarter there was one week less of October school holidays than usual in some states recorded, due to the timing of the quarter. Accordingly, the number of children that attended vacation care (and therefore Outside School Hours Care) was lower than recent quarters.

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

In the September quarter 2015, 290,880 families (33.8 per cent) had children attending approved child care in New South Wales, followed by 207,370 families (24.1 per cent) in Victoria and 195,340 families (22.7 per cent) in Queensland.

Across Australia, nearly two-thirds (550,640 or 64.1 per cent) of all families had children in Long Day Care and around one-third of families had children in Outside School Hours Care (283,920 or 33.0 per cent).

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

Service type	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia ¹
Long Day Care	190,410	125,440	129,700	34,410	45,590	9,390	4,570	12,170	550,640
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	47,990	38,180	22,930	6,510	8,060	3,400	370	1,850	127,990
Occasional Care	2,140	2,320	520	120	810	120	0	140	6,160
Outside School Hours Care	87,610	66,190	65,650	26,030	22,340	5,700	2,810	7,850	283,920
Total¹	290,880	207,370	195,340	58,970	68,130	15,950	6,830	19,300	859,380

¹ 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 September quarter 2015, 30,210 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 8.3 per cent since the September quarter 2014.

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

Service type	Sep. 14	Dec. 14	Mar. 15	Jun. 15	Sep. 15
Long Day Care	17,240	16,950	18,340	18,110	19,120
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	4,030	4,030	4,600	4,570	4,590
Occasional Care	180	190	190	190	210
Outside School Hours Care	7,340	6,020	6,900	7,020	7,220
Total¹	27,910	26,420	28,800	29,000	30,210

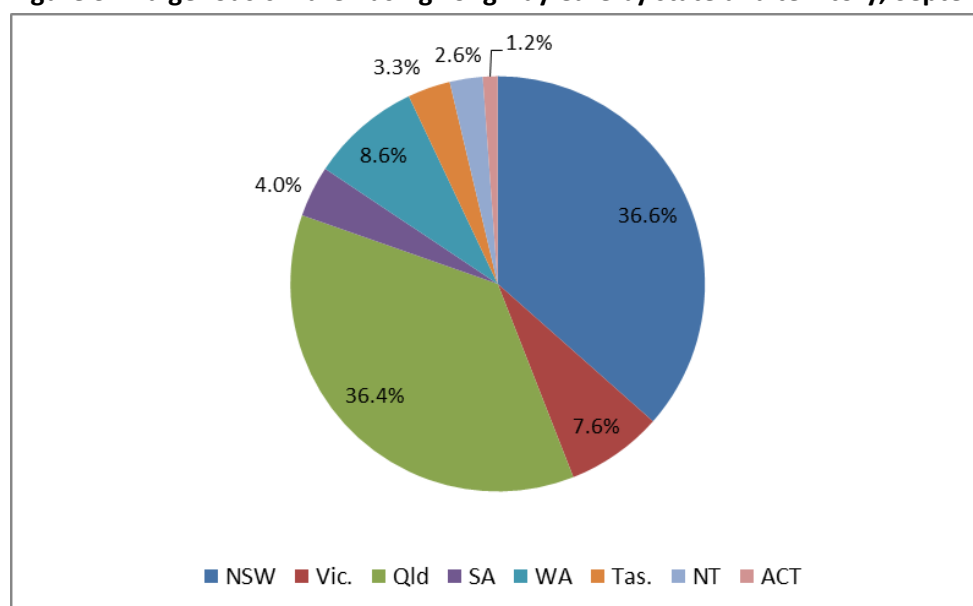
¹ As children may use more than one service type in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

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 New South Wales (36.6 per cent) and Queensland (36.4 per cent).

Figure 3: Indigenous children using Long Day Care by state and territory, September 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 (13.8 per cent of Indigenous children aged 0–12 years, and 31.8 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, September quarter 2015

Service type	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia ¹
Long Day Care	7,000	1,440	6,960	760	1,650	640	490	220	19,120
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	1,870	550	1,430	160	200	360	40	40	4,590
Occasional Care	120	40	20	<10	20	10	0	10	210
Outside School Hours Care	2,150	620	2,390	550	630	380	400	120	7,220
Total Indigenous children using approved child care¹	10,820	2,580	10,560	1,440	2,380	1,290	920	380	30,210
<i>Per cent of Indigenous population²</i>	<i>15.9%</i>	<i>16.3%</i>	<i>16.0%</i>	<i>12.0%</i>	<i>8.7%</i>	<i>16.5%</i>	<i>4.7%</i>	<i>20.5%</i>	<i>13.8%</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 (15,020 children or 49.7 per cent).

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

Service type	Major cities of Australia	Regional ¹ and Remote Australia ²	Total ³
Long Day Care	9,200	10,010	19,120
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	2,520	2,090	4,590
Occasional Care	90	120	210
Outside School Hours Care	4,020	3,220	7,220
Total³	15,420	15,020	30,210

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 September quarter 2015, 20,770 Indigenous families used approved child care, an increase of 13.6 per cent since the September quarter 2014.

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

Service type	Sep. 14	Dec. 14	Mar. 15	Jun. 15	Sep. 15
Long Day Care	12,980	13,180	14,290	14,280	14,890
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	2,380	2,440	2,790	2,790	2,800
Occasional Care	140	150	160	160	170
Outside School Hours Care	4,890	4,120	4,680	4,810	4,960
Total¹	18,280	18,190	19,850	20,120	20,770

¹ 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 (7,710 or 37.1 per cent) of Indigenous families had children in approved child care located in New South Wales; another third (7,090 or 34.1 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, September quarter 2015

Service type	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia ¹
Long Day Care	5,620	1,150	5,240	610	1,230	490	410	180	14,890
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	1,210	280	820	90	120	250	30	30	2,800
Occasional Care	100	30	20	<10	20	10	0	<10	170
Outside School Hours Care	1,490	450	1,620	370	410	260	290	90	4,960
Total¹	7,710	1,740	7,090	980	1,600	850	650	260	20,770

¹ 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 September quarter 2015, 17,801 approved child care services operated in Australia, an increase of 6.5 per cent (1,084 services) since the September quarter 2014. There were 10,080 Outside School Hours Care services which accounted for 56.6 per cent of all services and 6,755 Long Day Care services which accounted for 37.9 per cent of all services.

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

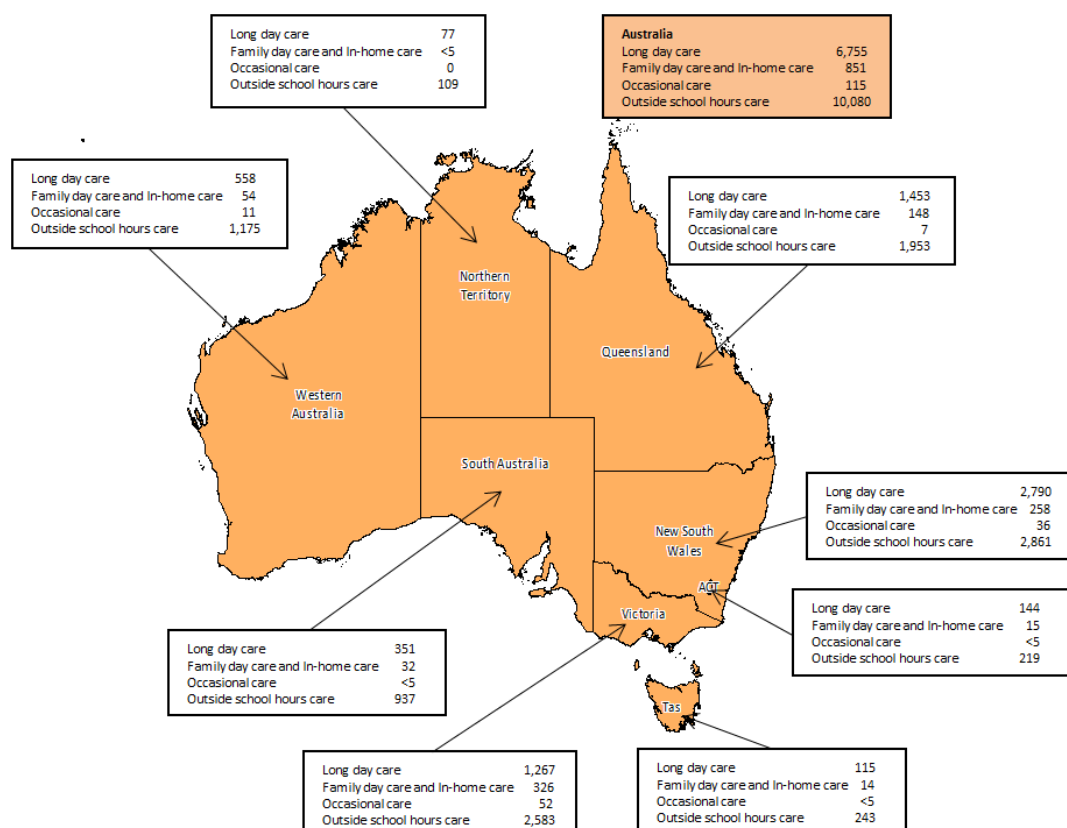
Service type	Sep. 14	Dec. 14	Mar. 15	Jun. 15	Sep. 15
Long Day Care	6,601	6,623	6,656	6,723	6,755
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	829	840	838	843	851
Occasional Care	115	116	116	116	115
Outside School Hours Care	9,172	8,605	9,356	9,520	10,080
Total	16,717	16,184	16,966	17,202	17,801

NOTE: In the Dec. 14 quarter there was one week less of October school holidays than usual in some states recorded, due to the timing of the quarter. Accordingly, the number of children that attended vacation care (and therefore Outside School Hours Care) was lower than recent quarters.

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

In the September quarter 2015, around one third of services were located in New South Wales (33.4 per cent), with 23.8 per cent in Victoria and 20.0 per cent in Queensland.

Figure 4: Number of approved services by service type and state and territory, September 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 September quarter 2015 was \$8.25, an increase of 5.2 per cent since the September quarter 2014. Fees varied across service types from a high of \$9.70 per hour for Occasional Care services to a low of \$6.60 per hour for Outside School Hours Care services.

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

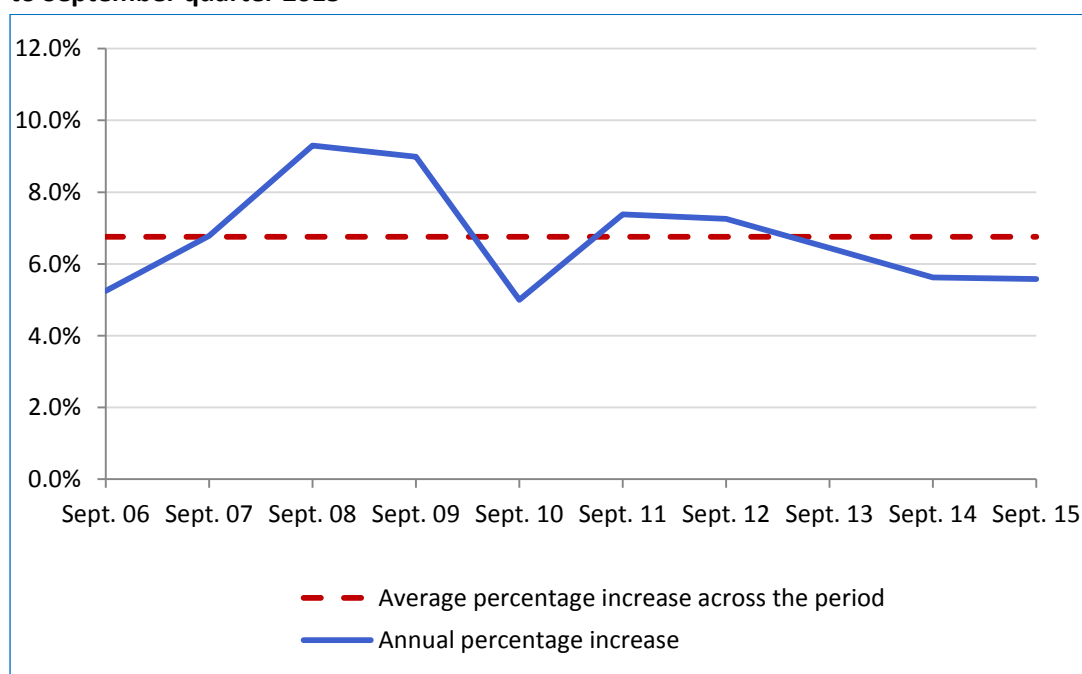
Service type	Sep. 14	Dec. 14	Mar. 15	Jun. 15	Sep. 15
Long Day Care	\$8.05	\$8.05	\$8.30	\$8.35	\$8.50
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	\$7.90	\$7.90	\$7.85	\$7.85	\$8.25
Occasional Care	\$9.35	\$9.40	\$9.50	\$9.50	\$9.70
Outside School Hours Care	\$6.30	\$6.55	\$6.45	\$6.60	\$6.60
Total¹	\$7.85	\$7.85	\$8.00	\$8.05	\$8.25

¹ 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 5.6 per cent from the September quarter 2014 to the September quarter 2015. This increase compares with the average annual percentage increase of 6.8 per cent for the period from the September quarter 2006 to the September quarter 2015.

Figure 5: Average and annual percentage change to Long Day Care hourly fees, September quarter 2006 to September 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 September quarter 2015, the total estimated expenditure on Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate was \$1,848.5 million. The majority (\$1,171.9 million or 63.4 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, September quarter 2015

Service type	Child Care Benefit ('000)	Child Care Rebate ('000)	Total ('000)
Long Day Care	\$479,105	\$692,818	\$1,171,923
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	\$390,248	\$130,971	\$521,219
Occasional Care	\$1,751	\$2,479	\$4,230
Outside School Hours Care	\$60,308	\$90,869	\$151,177
Total	\$931,412	\$917,137	\$1,848,549

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

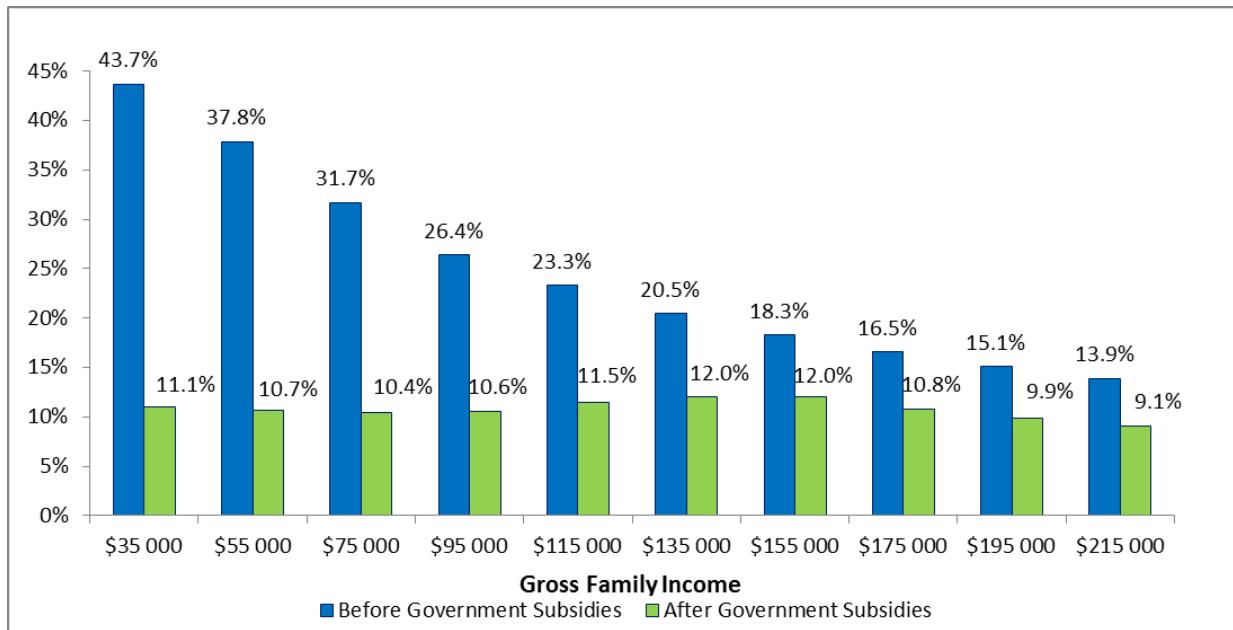
Costs of care after Australian Government fee assistance

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 costs¹ 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 September quarter 2013 to the September quarter 2015 by service type.

Table 16: Child care vacancies by service type, September quarter 2013 to September quarter 2015¹

Service type	Sep-13	Dec-13	Mar-14	Jun-14*	Sep-14	Dec-14	Mar-15	Jun-15	Sep. 15
Long Day Care									
Total number of services	6,360	6,471	6,443	6,606	6,601	6,623	6,656	6,723	6,755
Per cent services reporting	91%	90%	93%	90%	91%	90%	91%	91%	91%
Proportion with vacancies	86%	86%	90%	88%	87%	87%	91%	90%	89%
Average vacancies	68,490	66,410	92,340	83,740	75,230	70,160	98,510	94,000	86,700
Family Day Care									
Total number of services	560	605	642	714	761	772	771	778	786
Per cent services reporting	47%	46%	40%	38%	36%	36%	34%	34%	32%
Proportion with vacancies	80%	85%	85%	87%	87%	85%	91%	89%	87%
Average vacancies	7,130	7,500	8,610	8,690	8,070	8,400	8,120	8,510	8,410
Occasional Care									
Total number of services	119	119	119	117	115	116	116	116	115
Per cent services reporting	63%	66%	61%	59%	60%	68%	65%	59%	63%
Proportion with vacancies	52%	53%	55%	54%	51%	47%	55%	51%	55%
Average vacancies	310	300	330	320	280	310	450	460	390
Before and After School Hours Care									
Total number of services	6,314	6,306	6,514	6,633	6,589	6,628	6,841	6,911	7,348
Per cent services reporting	66%	66%	65%	63%	63%	62%	55%	58%	51%
Proportion with vacancies	88%	89%	89%	90%	91%	91%	90%	91%	90%
Average vacancies	96,160	100,410	101,880	103,570	107,900	109,790	92,350	102,770	100,080
Vacation Care									
Total number of services	2,482	2,467	2,403	2544	2,583	1,977	2,515	2,609	2,732
Per cent services reporting	60%	56%	60%	58%	59%	75%	58%	55%	55%
Proportion with vacancies	72%	71%	73%	69%	73%	71%	73%	72%	73%
Average vacancies	29,480	26,200	29,130	28,280	33,370	32,280	32,020	30,510	34,000

¹ 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.

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 September 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 20 July to 26 July 2015. Vacancies for Vacation Care are reported for the week 6 July to 12 July 2015.

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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