



Early Childhood and Child Care in Summary

March quarter 2016

This publication provides information on children in approved child care services across Australia for the March quarter 2016.

Key findings for the March quarter 2016 include:

- 1,242,470 children attended approved child care, up 2.6 per cent since the March quarter 2015.
- 843,000 families had at least one child in approved child care, an increase of 2.6 per cent since the March quarter 2015.
- 17,656 approved child care services operated in Australia, an increase of 4.1 per cent since the March quarter 2015.
- The total estimated Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate entitlement was \$1,646.0 million, up 6.8 per cent since the March quarter 2015.

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 2016, 843,000 families used approved child care services for their 1,242,470 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 2016, there were 17,656 services providing approved child care services across Australia.

Table 1: Child care children, families, services and estimated entitlements by state and territory, March quarter 2016

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	418,940	287,270	6,025	\$272,481	\$310,803	263,390
Vic.	304,900	201,990	4,065	\$245,300	\$216,025	188,360
Qld	282,810	191,070	3,617	\$172,909	\$167,099	177,270
SA	85,070	57,410	1,327	\$40,890	\$42,587	53,860
WA	94,460	66,790	1,676	\$44,695	\$64,463	62,550
Tas.	22,450	15,480	377	\$10,154	\$10,372	14,370
NT	9,400	6,650	193	\$3,413	\$8,688	6,450
ACT	27,780	18,990	376	\$8,638	\$27,449	18,550
Australia	1,242,470	843,000	17,656	\$798,480*	\$847,486*	782,380

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.

*Note: while estimated CCR exceeds estimated CCB, actual CCB would still exceed actual CCR (see technical notes for further details).

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

Child Care Usage

Children

During the March quarter 2016, 1,242,470 children used approved child care in Australia, up by 2.6 per cent since the March quarter 2015. For children aged 0–12 years using approved child care, this represents 31.2 per cent of the 3,911,710 children aged 0–12 years in Australia.

During the March quarter 2016, children attended various services providing approved child care, including Long Day Care (677,380 or 54.5 per cent), Outside School Hours Care (409,370 or 32.9 per cent), Family Day Care and In-Home Care (212,820 or 17.1 per cent), and Occasional Care (5,960 or 0.5 per cent).

Table 2: Number of children using child care by service type, March quarter 2015 to March quarter 2016

Service type	Mar. 15	Jun. 15	Sep. 15	Dec. 15	Mar. 16
Long Day Care	660,760	643,810	676,050	685,760	677,380
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	220,420	220,850	227,990	224,910	212,820
Occasional Care	6,670	7,010	7,380	7,100	5,960
Outside School Hours Care	382,580	391,150	398,730	368,650	409,370
Total¹	1,211,200	1,224,170	1,269,190	1,247,820	1,242,470
<i>Per cent of Australian population²</i>	<i>30.8%</i>	<i>30.7%</i>	<i>31.8%</i>	<i>31.3%</i>	<i>31.2%</i>

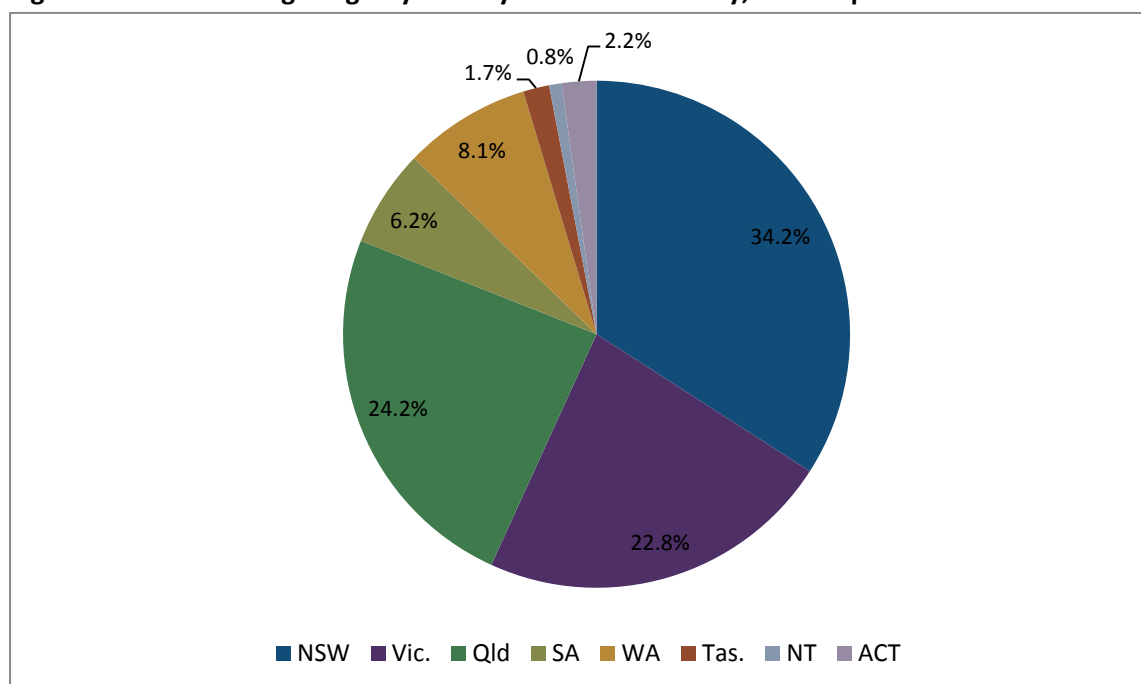
1 As children may use more than one service type in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

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. 2015.

In the March quarter 2016, the largest proportion of children attending Long Day Care was in New South Wales (34.2 per cent), followed by Queensland (24.2 per cent) and Victoria (22.8 per cent).

Figure 1: Children using Long Day Care by state and territory, March quarter 2016



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 2016

Service type	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia ¹
Long Day Care	231,330	154,190	164,130	42,190	55,060	11,310	5,390	14,990	677,380
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	80,070	69,720	34,240	9,330	12,630	4,790	460	2,550	212,820
Occasional Care	2,150	2,220	360	130	840	120	0	150	5,960
Outside School Hours Care	125,240	92,720	98,630	37,540	32,250	8,120	3,890	11,380	409,370
Total¹	418,940	304,900	282,810	85,070	94,460	22,450	9,400	27,780	1,242,470

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 (975,370 children), around one in four (273,850 or 22.0 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 2016

Service type	Major cities of Australia	Regional ¹ and Remote Australia ²	Total ³
Long Day Care	513,070	166,270	677,380
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	171,810	41,810	212,820
Occasional Care	3,490	2,470	5,960
Outside School Hours Care	333,540	76,900	409,370
Total³	975,370	273,850	1,242,470

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 2016, for all types of child care, the average time that a child spent in approved child care was 25.3 hours per week. This compares with children who used Long Day Care who attended for an average of 28.3 hours per week.

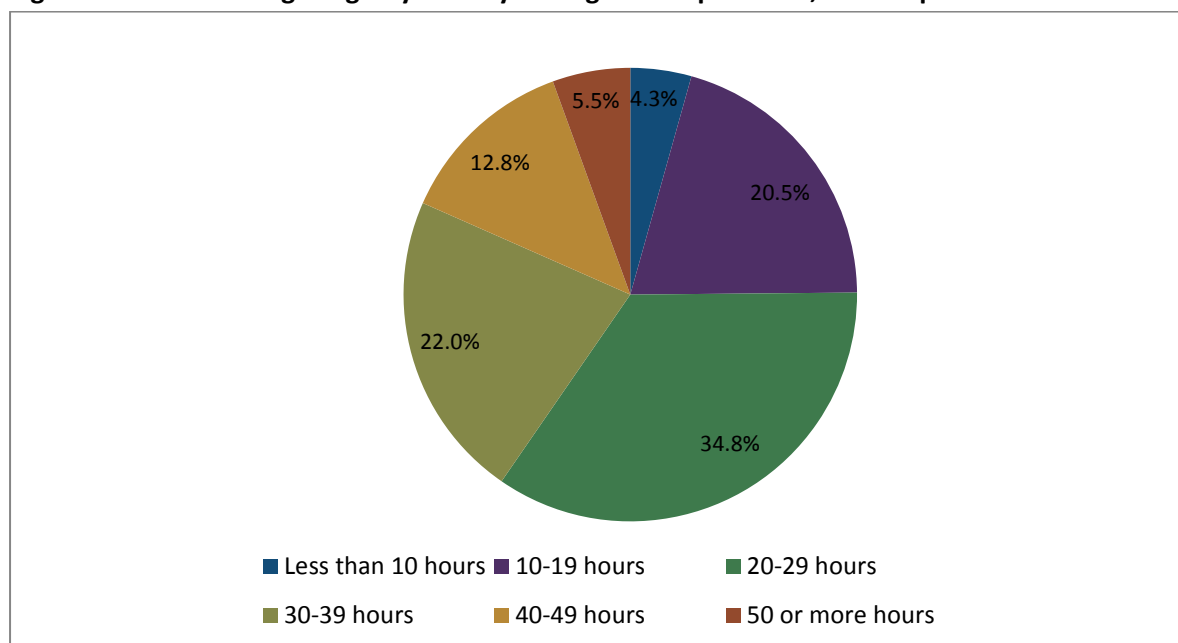
Table 5: Average weekly hours in child care by service type, March quarter 2015 to March quarter 2016

Service type	Mar. 15	Jun. 15	Sep. 15	Dec. 15	Mar. 16
Long Day Care	28.1	27.9	28.4	28.1	28.3
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	32.8	32.4	32.9	31.2	31.8
Occasional Care	12.0	11.8	12.1	11.8	12.2
Outside School Hours Care	11.9	11.1	11.7	10.3	12.1
Total	25.4	25.0	25.7	24.9	25.3

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

For children using Long Day Care, 34.8 per cent used 20-29 hours per week in the March quarter 2016.

Figure 2: Children using Long Day Care by average hours per week, March quarter 2016



Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

Families

During the March quarter 2016, there were 843,000 families using some form of approved child care for their children, an increase of 2.6 per cent since the March quarter 2015. The number of families using Family Day Care and In-Home Care has decreased by 2.1 per cent since the March quarter 2015.

Table 6: Number of families using child care by service type, March quarter 2015 to March quarter 2016

Service type	Mar. 15	Jun. 15	Sep. 15	Dec. 15	Mar. 16
Long Day Care	532,950	528,710	550,640	556,450	546,880
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	123,400	123,910	127,990	126,080	120,770
Occasional Care	5,600	5,900	6,160	5,940	5,000
Outside School Hours Care	269,930	277,910	283,920	263,650	288,310
Total¹	821,880	833,120	859,380	848,200	843,000

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.

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

In the March quarter 2016, 287,270 families (34.1 per cent) had children attending approved child care in New South Wales, followed by 201,990 families (24.0 per cent) in Victoria and 191,070 families (22.7 per cent) in Queensland.

Across Australia, nearly two-thirds (546,880 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 (288,310 or 34.2 per cent).

Table 7: Number of families using child care by service type and state and territory, March quarter 2016

Service type	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia ¹
Long Day Care	189,580	125,660	127,530	34,410	44,900	9,120	4,500	12,240	546,880
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	46,670	35,130	21,130	5,510	7,760	3,310	320	1,480	120,770
Occasional Care	1,820	1,880	300	100	690	90	0	120	5,000
Outside School Hours Care	89,010	66,180	68,330	25,900	22,600	5,650	2,820	8,100	288,310
Total¹	287,270	201,990	191,070	57,410	66,790	15,480	6,650	18,990	843,000

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 March quarter 2016, 30,180 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 4.8 per cent since the March quarter 2015.

Table 8: Number of Indigenous children using child care by service type, March quarter 2015 to March quarter 2016

Service type	Mar. 15	Jun. 15	Sep. 15	Dec. 15	Mar. 16
Long Day Care	18,340	18,110	19,120	19,130	19,150
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	4,600	4,570	4,590	4,620	4,640
Occasional Care	190	190	210	190	170
Outside School Hours Care	6,900	7,020	7,220	6,620	7,500
Total¹	28,800	29,000	30,210	29,710	30,180

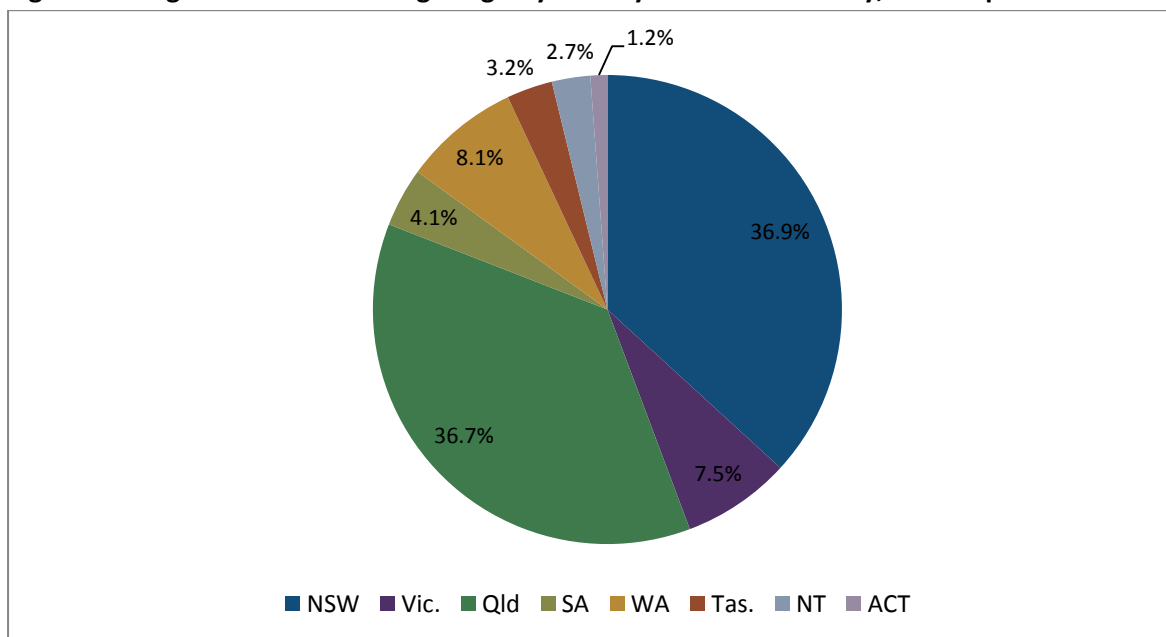
¹ As children may use more than one service type in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

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 (36.9 per cent) and Queensland (36.7 per cent).

Figure 3: Indigenous children using Long Day Care by state and territory, March quarter 2016



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 31.2 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 2016

Service type	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia ¹
Long Day Care	7,070	1,440	7,030	780	1,540	610	510	220	19,150
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	1,900	530	1,440	150	210	350	30	40	4,640
Occasional Care	120	20	10	<10	10	10	0	10	170
Outside School Hours Care	2,290	680	2,520	560	570	370	400	120	7,500
Total Indigenous children using approved child care¹	10,910	2,590	10,580	1,430	2,230	1,230	930	370	30,180
<i>Per cent of Indigenous population²</i>	16.0%	16.3%	16.1%	11.9%	8.2%	15.7%	4.7%	20.1%	13.8%

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 (14,910 children or 49.4 per cent).

Table 10: Number of Indigenous children using child care by service type and region, March quarter 2016

Service type	Major cities of Australia	Regional ¹ and Remote Australia ²	Total ³
Long Day Care	9,290	9,960	19,150
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	2,580	2,070	4,640
Occasional Care	80	100	170
Outside School Hours Care	4,240	3,290	7,500
Total³	15,510	14,910	30,180

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 2016, 20,690 Indigenous families used approved child care, an increase of 4.2 per cent since the March quarter 2015.

Table 11: Number of Indigenous families using child care by service type, March quarter 2015 to March quarter 2016

Service type	Mar. 15	Jun. 15	Sep. 15	Dec. 15	Mar. 16
Long Day Care	14,290	14,280	14,890	14,830	14,850
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	2,790	2,790	2,800	2,790	2,820
Occasional Care	160	160	170	160	140
Outside School Hours Care	4,680	4,810	4,960	4,560	5,040
Total¹	19,850	20,120	20,770	20,410	20,690

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 37.3 per cent) of Indigenous families had children in approved child care located in New South Wales; another third (7,100 or 34.3 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 2016

Service type	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia ¹
Long Day Care	5,600	1,150	5,270	620	1,170	470	430	180	14,850
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	1,220	270	830	90	130	240	20	30	2,820
Occasional Care	90	20	10	<10	10	10	0	10	140
Outside School Hours Care	1,560	470	1,670	360	370	250	290	90	5,040
Total¹	7,710	1,740	7,100	960	1,520	820	660	260	20,690

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 March quarter 2016, 17,656 approved child care services operated in Australia, an increase of 4.1 per cent (690 services) since the March quarter 2015. There were 9,825 Outside School Hours Care services which accounted for 55.6 per cent of all services and 6,862 Long Day Care services which accounted for 38.9 per cent of all services.

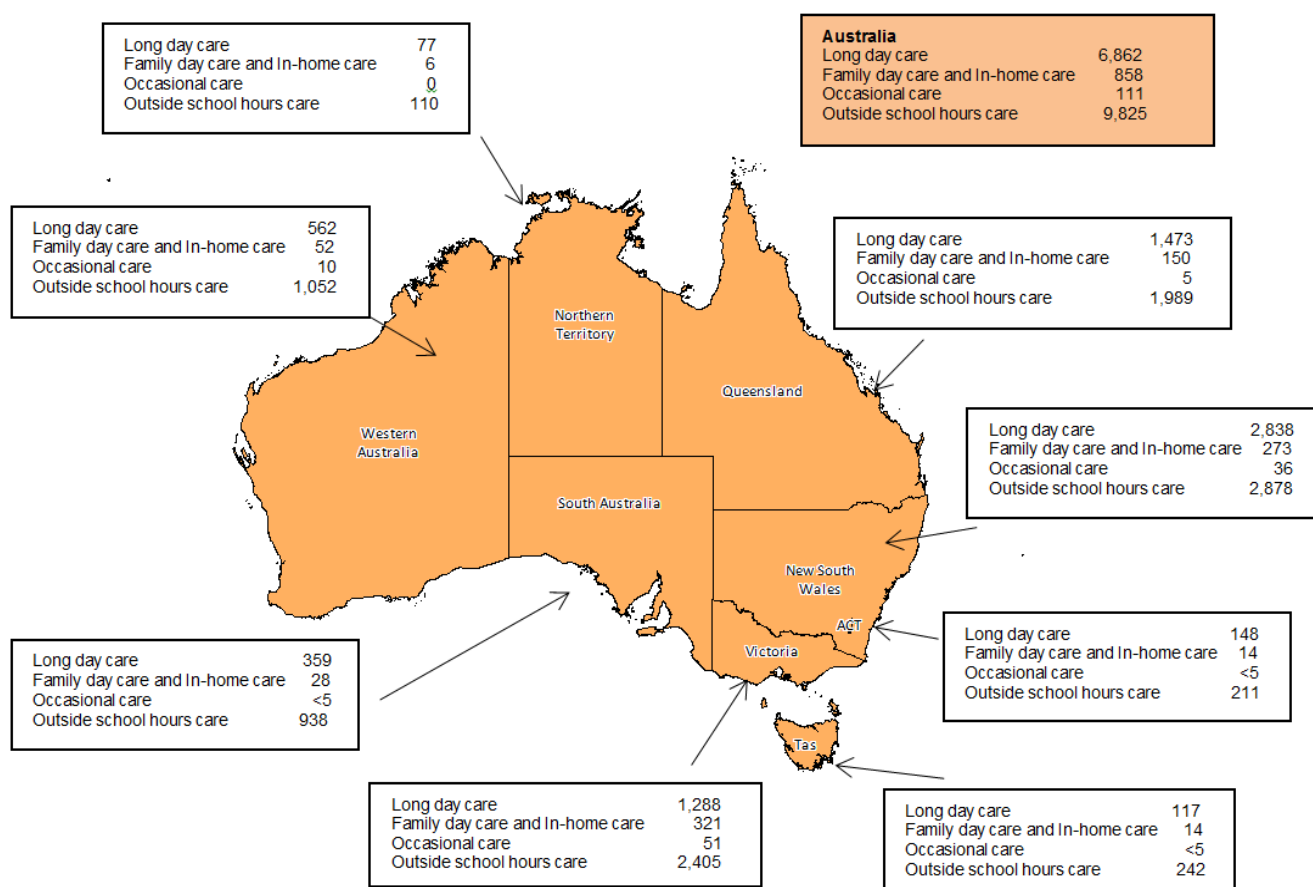
Table 13: Number of child care services by service type, March quarter 2015 to March quarter 2016

Service type	Mar. 15	Jun. 15	Sep. 15	Dec. 15	Mar. 16
Long Day Care	6,656	6,723	6,755	6,804	6,862
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	838	843	851	860	858
Occasional Care	116	116	115	115	111
Outside School Hours Care	9,356	9,520	10,080	9,120	9,825
Total	16,966	17,202	17,801	16,899	17,656

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

In the March quarter 2016, around one third of services were located in New South Wales (34.1 per cent), with 23.0 per cent in Victoria and 20.5 per cent in Queensland.

Figure 4: Number of approved services by service type and state and territory, March quarter 2016



Affordability

Costs of care before Australian Government fee assistance

The average hourly child care fee for all service types in the March quarter 2016 was \$8.50, an increase of 6.8 per cent since the March quarter 2015. Fees varied across service types from a high of \$9.80 per hour for Occasional Care services to a low of \$6.70 per hour for Outside School Hours Care services.

Table 14: Average hourly fee by service type, March quarter 2015 to March quarter 2016

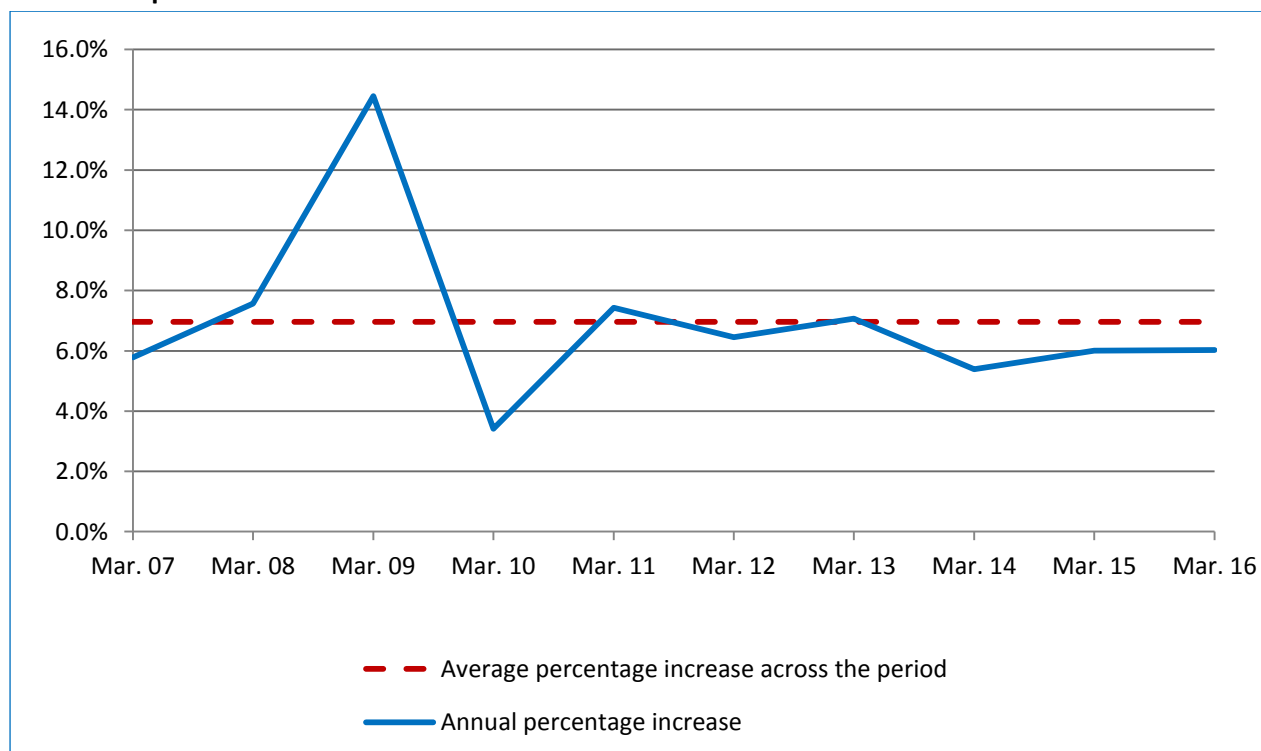
Service type	Mar. 15	Jun. 15	Sep. 15	Dec. 15	Mar. 16
Long Day Care	\$8.30	\$8.35	\$8.50	\$8.50	\$8.80
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	\$7.85	\$7.85	\$8.25	\$8.55	\$8.65
Occasional Care	\$9.50	\$9.50	\$9.70	\$9.65	\$9.80
Outside School Hours Care	\$6.45	\$6.60	\$6.60	\$6.80	\$6.70
Total¹	\$8.00	\$8.05	\$8.25	\$8.35	\$8.50

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 6.0 per cent from the March quarter 2015 to the March quarter 2016. This increase compares with the average annual percentage increase of 7.0 per cent for the period from the March quarter 2007 to the March quarter 2016.

Figure 5: Average and annual percentage change to Long Day Care hourly fees, March quarter 2007 to the March quarter 2016



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 2016, the total estimated expenditure on Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate was \$1,646.0 million. The majority (\$1,046.0 million or 63.6 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 2016

Service type	Child Care Benefit ('000)	Child Care Rebate ('000)	Total ('000)
Long Day Care	\$405,889	\$640,154	\$1,046,043
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	\$332,423	\$115,905	\$448,328
Occasional Care	\$1,167	\$1,761	\$2,928
Outside School Hours Care	\$59,001	\$89,666	\$148,667
Total	\$798,480	\$847,486	\$1,645,966

Note: while estimated CCR exceeds estimated CCB for the first time, actual CCB would still exceed actual CCR (see technical notes for further details).

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

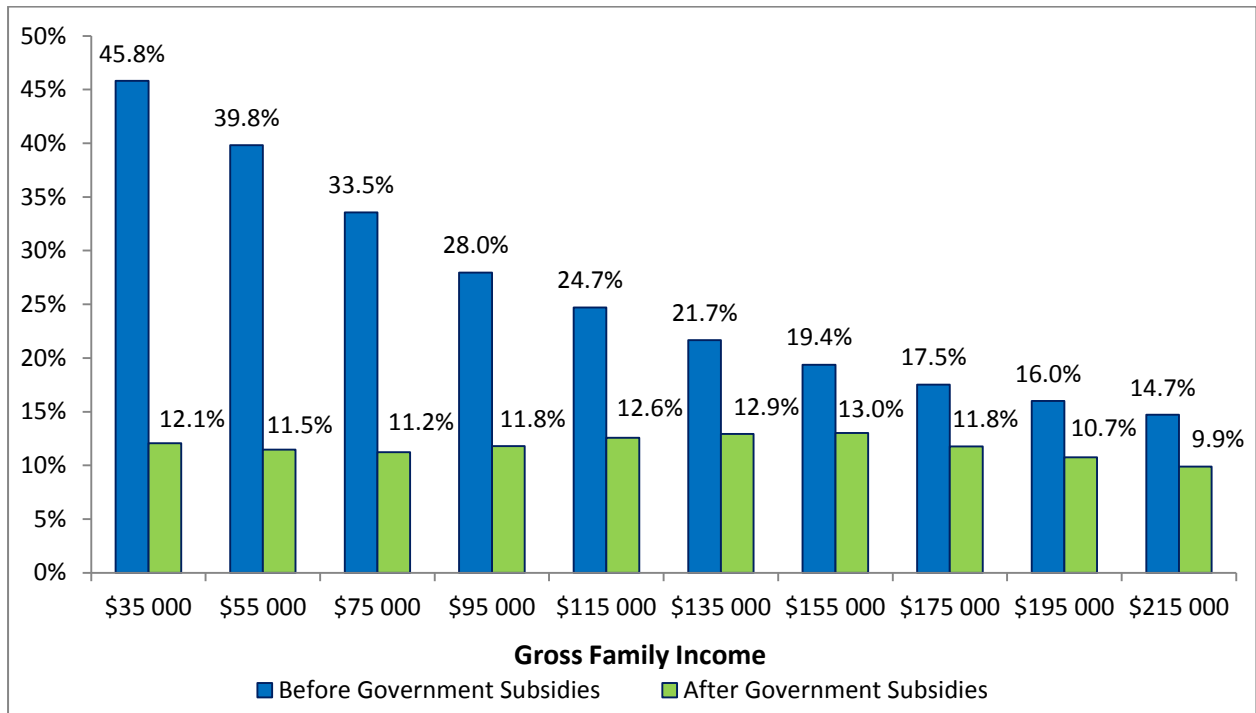
Costs of care after Australian Government fee assistance

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 45.8 per cent of weekly disposable income for families earning a gross income of \$35,000 per year, to 14.7 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 12.1 per cent for families earning a gross income of \$35,000 per year, to 9.9 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 2016



¹ 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 50 hours of care per week. This takes into account the CCR cap (of \$7,500).

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

Vacancies

Table 16 details the national trend in child care vacancies from the March quarter 2014 to the March quarter 2016 by service type.

Table 16: Child care vacancies by service type, March quarter 2014 to March quarter 2016¹

Service type	Mar-14	Jun-14*	Sep-14	Dec-14	Mar-15	Jun-15	Sep. 15	Dec. 15	Mar. 16
Long Day Care									
Total number of services	6,443	6,606	6,601	6,623	6,656	6,723	6,755	6,804	6,862
Per cent services reporting	93%	90%	91%	90%	91%	91%	91%	91%	92%
Proportion with vacancies	90%	88%	87%	87%	91%	90%	89%	88%	91%
Average vacancies	92,340	83,740	75,230	70,160	98,510	94,000	86,700	77,440	110,510
Family Day Care									
Total number of services	642	714	761	772	771	778	786	792	794
Per cent services reporting	40%	38%	36%	36%	34%	34%	32%	32%	30%
Proportion with vacancies	85%	87%	87%	85%	91%	89%	87%	90%	89%
Average vacancies	8,610	8,690	8,070	8,400	8,120	8,510	8,410	7,520	7,180
Occasional Care									
Total number of services	119	117	115	116	116	116	115	115	111
Per cent services reporting	61%	59%	60%	68%	65%	59%	63%	64%	59%
Proportion with vacancies	55%	54%	51%	47%	55%	51%	55%	54%	60%
Average vacancies	330	320	280	310	450	460	390	420	510
Before and After School Hours Care									
Total number of services	6,514	6,633	6,589	6,628	6,841	6,911	7,348	6,981	7,177
Per cent services reporting	65%	63%	63%	62%	55%	58%	51%	60%	58%
Proportion with vacancies	89%	90%	91%	91%	90%	91%	90%	92%	91%
Average vacancies	101,880	103,570	107,900	109,790	92,350	102,770	100,080	119,040	105,750
Vacation Care									
Total number of services	2,403	2544	2,583	1,977	2,515	2,609	2,732	2,139	2,648
Per cent services reporting	60%	58%	59%	75%	58%	55%	55%	57%	55%
Proportion with vacancies	73%	69%	73%	71%	73%	72%	73%	64%	75%
Average vacancies	29,130	28,280	33,370	32,280	32,020	30,510	34,000	34,100	33,410

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.

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 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 March quarter

2016, vacancies for Long Day Care, Before and After School Hours Care, Occasional Care and Family Day Care and are reported for the week ending 20 March 2016. Vacancies for Vacation Care are reported for the week ending 24 January 2016.

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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