



CHILDREN AND YOUTH NEWS



ISSUE MARCH 2007
cat. no. 4105.0

WELCOME

Release of the Children and Youth Information Development Plan

The information paper *Improving Statistics on Children and Youth: an Information Development Plan* was released on 8 December last year. The full publication is available on the [Children and Youth Releases](#) page on the ABS website. The plan presents the current priority areas for data development in the children and youth field, along with information on policies and data sources relevant to the field. For more information on the plan please contact Shalini Bellas on s.c.bellas@abs.gov.au or (08) 9360 5918.



Update on the National Data Network: Children and Youth Portal

Progress has been made with the development of the Children and Youth Portal located within the [National Data Network](#) (NDN). The NDN team are in the process of developing a prototype portal based on feedback, from node custodians, received on the initial design. The prototype is scheduled to be released for comment around April/May, prior to a release for the NDN pilot phase (scheduled to begin in July 2007).

If you have any queries regarding the Children and Youth Portal please contact the NDN Technical Team on inquiries@nationaldatanetwork.org.

Further updates on the Children and Youth Portal, including information on the release of the prototype portal, will be included in future issues of *Children & Youth News*.

LATEST FINDINGS

Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia, April 2006

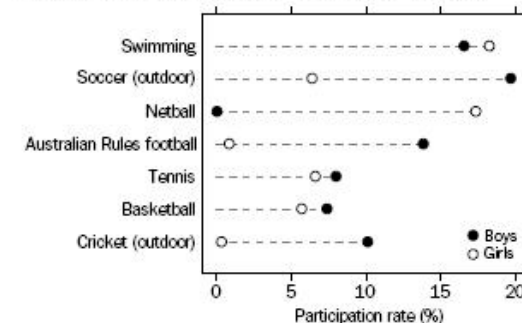
The ABS recently released [Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia, April 2006](#). This survey collects data on the participation of 5 – 14 year olds in sporting, cultural and other leisure activities, including children's use of computers and the Internet.

In the 12 months to April 2006, the majority of Australian children were active with 63% playing organised sport and 71% visiting a cultural venue or event outside of school. Over the same period, 92% of children used a computer and an estimated 65% accessed the Internet.

Organised cultural activities were twice as popular with girls (44%) than boys (22%). Playing a musical instrument was an interest pursued by a slightly higher proportion of girls (22%) than boys (18%). Dancing was also popular among girls (23%).

Boys (69%) were more likely than girls (58%) to participate in

PARTICIPATION IN MOST POPULAR SPORTS



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organised sport. Outdoor soccer, swimming and Australian Rules football were the most popular organised sports for boys, while swimming and netball were most popular with girls.

Children born in non-English speaking countries were less likely to participate in organised sport or cultural activities (56% participated) than Australian-born children (74%). Participation rates were also lower for children in one-parent families (64% participated) than children in couple families (75%). Children whose parents were not employed also had lower participation (51%) than children with at least one employed parent (77%).

RECENT RELEASES

ABS

November

[Deaths, Australia, 2005](#) (cat. no. 3302.0)

December

[Information Paper: Improving Statistics on Children and Youth— an Information Development Plan](#) (cat. no. 4907.0)

[Education and Work, 2006](#) (cat. no. 6227.0)

[Population by Age and Sex, Australian States and Territories, June 2006](#) (cat. no. 3201.0)

[Research Paper: Synthesising Estimates of Indigenous Child Health Based on the W.A. Aboriginal Child Health Survey \(Methodology Advisory Committee\), Jun 2005](#) (cat. no. 1352.0.55.071)

[Physical Activity in Australia: A Snapshot, 2004/05](#) (cat. no. 4835.0.55.001)

[Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia, 2006](#) (cat. no. 4901.0)

AIHW

December

[Adoptions Australia 2005-06](#) (AIHW cat. no. CWS 27)

[Demand for SAAP assistance by homeless people 2004/05](#) (AIHW cat. no. HOU 151)

[Australia's mothers and babies 2004](#) (AIHW cat. no. PER 34)

January

[Hospital separations due to injury and poisoning, Australia 2003/04](#) (AIHW cat. no. INJCAT 88)

UPCOMING RELEASES

ABS

March

[Suicides, Australia 2005](#) (cat. no. 3309.0)

Using data derived from the ABS Causes of Death collection, this electronic publication will provide an update on summary statistics regarding suicides registered in Australia. Data are presented separately by age and sex, by method of suicide and by state or territory of usual residence. Numbers of deaths and standardised death rates for previous years are shown for comparison.

April

[General Social Survey: Summary Results, 2006](#) (cat. no 4159.0)

For the population aged 18 years and over, presents data on a range of social concern areas. Topics include social capital, voluntary work, family and community, health, housing, education, work, income, financial stress, broad assets and liabilities, transport, and crime. State level tables will also be available in late April.

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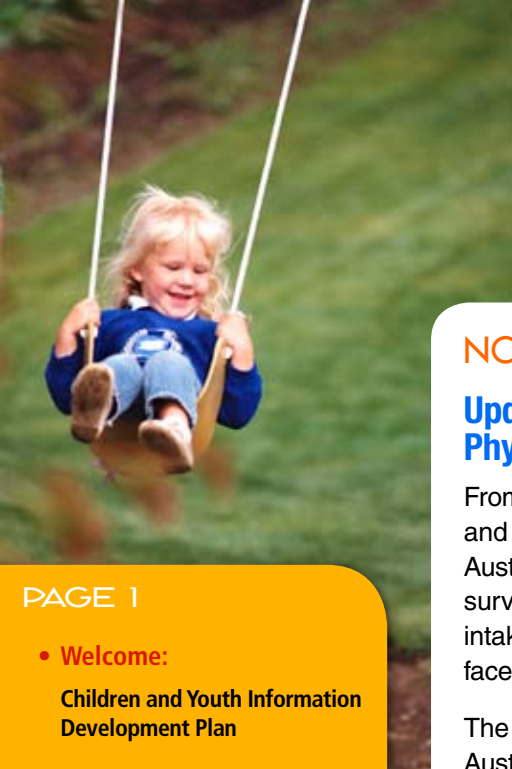
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NON-ABS RESEARCH

Update on National Children's Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey

From February until July 2007, the national children's nutrition and physical activity survey will be conducted throughout Australia, collecting data from 4,000 Australian children. The survey will record the children's physical measurements, food intake and physical activity participation through a series of face-to-face interviews followed by telephone interviews.

The survey is being managed by the University of South Australian and the CSIRO on behalf of the three funding agencies: the Department of Health and Ageing, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Australian Food and Grocery Council.

The survey's results will be used to identify current rates of overweight and obesity among Australian children, and the proportion of Australian children meeting the lifestyle recommendations described in Australia's *Physical Activity Recommendations for Children and Young People* and the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents*. The survey results will also identify sub-populations of children at particular risk of nutritional deficiencies or inadequate physical activity participation. Analysis of the results will inform the development of population health policies, programs and interventions.

Additional information on the survey can be found on the www.kidseatkidsplay.com.au, by contacting Caroline Arthur, Nutrition Section, Department of Health and Ageing on (02) 6289 8954 or by emailing caroline.arthur@health.gov.au.

Update on Footprints in Time: the Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children

Footprints in Time is the name given to a proposed Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children (LSIC) managed by the [Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs](#) (FaCSIA). The study concentrates on babies (0 – 12 months) and 4 – 5 year olds to understand the factors that influence developmental pathways for Indigenous children living in remote, rural, regional and urban centres.

Activities to date have included:

- a national consultation round and a report on the findings;
- trialling of the study in a number of communities, along with independent evaluation of these trials;
- an evidence based literature review;
- survey content development and consultations to ensure policy relevance;
- the development of ethics arrangements;
- the development of a national survey design and sampling methodology (by the ABS);
- the cognitive testing of data items;
- the development of a community engagement strategy;
- the development of a qualitative data collection strategy; and
- the devising of a methodology for finding and maintaining the children and families in the study.

The ABS tested the survey in an initial pilot in 2006 and will be adapting a number of content areas to make the questions more relevant to the communities before testing the survey again in May 2007. Qualitative data collection was conducted in 2006 in all areas where participants agreed to be re-contacted after the quantitative collection.

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FaCSIA has published three occasional papers from the study to date these are:

[OP No 15: The 'growing up' of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children: a literature review, Professor Robyn Penman](#)

[OP No 16: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander views on research in their communities, Professor Robyn Penman](#)

[OP No 17: Growing up in the Torres Strait region: A report from the Footprints in Time trials, CRCAH](#)

For more information on *Footprints in Time* click on the link and visit our web page: [The Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children](#)

Update on the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI)

The Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) is a community-level measure of young children's development based on a teacher-completed checklist. The AEDI consists of over 100

questions measuring five developmental domains: language and cognitive skills; emotional maturity; physical health and wellbeing; communication skills and general knowledge; and social competence.

Between 2004 and 2006 the AEDI was trialled in 54 Australian communities, over six states and territories, on more than 30,000 children. This project was funded as an Australian Government initiative under the National Agenda for Early Childhood, and was also supported by Shell Australia.

[The Centre for Community Child Health](#) (Melbourne) in partnership with the [Telethon Institute for Child Health Research](#) (Perth) is excited to announce that, following its successful trial, the AEDI is now available to all Australian communities (community implementation charges apply).

More information about the 2007 Expression of Interest round, including the Application Form, is available on the AEDI website and can be accessed on the following link:
www.rch.org.au/australianedi/index.cfm?doc_id=10471



CHILDREN AND YOUTH THEME PAGE

The [Children and Youth Statistics Theme Page](#) on the ABS website highlights the type and range of data available for analysis of children and youth issues. This page is updated to advise users of new data releases as they become available.

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CONTACT US

**For information about the full range of ABS data:
National Information and Referral Service**

telephone: 1300 135 070

email: client.services@abs.gov.au fax 1300 135 211

YOUR FEEDBACK

If you have any feedback on Children & Youth News such as any issues or topics relevant to children and youth you would like to see included in the newsletter, please email [Shalini Bellas](mailto:Shalini.Bellas).

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