

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO
2012-13 Additional Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 7

Question No: 155

Topic: Childhood education

Hansard Page: 15/02/2013 CA14

Senator Scullion asked:

What are the plans given some of the answers in regard to attendance and some of the comments from the coordinator general about 'It's less than perfect' and 'It's a complex situation'? Do you have any other ways of finding out not only attendance but whether people are actually getting better as a result of the programs .Are you planning to change the way you collect data? Are you planning, for example, to publish some of the attendance rates every parliamentary year? Are there any other measures that you are putting in place within this measure, so that we can see how effective it is?

Answer:

The key data source of the access to early childhood education target is the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection compiled by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (Catalogue Number 4240 and related sub-categories). Through this Collection data on both enrolment and attendance is collected on an annual basis. The amount of data collected on attendance will gradually increase over time as the data across States and Territories becomes more consistent.

The latest data on this target for 2011 has been summarised in the 2013 *Report on Government Services* (Chapter 3, page 3.24) which can be accessed at:

<http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp/rogs/2013>

It will be possible to assess the impact of increased preschool attendance by Indigenous children in remote locations on their future schooling and learning outcomes. Some possible indirect measures of this effect may be seen in the results from the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) and the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). By comparing results for children who did and who did not attend preschool and controlling for other factors, it would be possible to assess the impact of attendance at preschool on both AEDI scores and subsequent NAPLAN results.

The AEDI measures early childhood development and is expected to be collected every three years on children in their first year of full-time school. The AEDI was first collected in 2009, and the results of the 2012 AEDI are scheduled for release in March 2013.

Details about the 2009 AEDI data collection and summary results presented through the AEDI Community Profiles can be accessed via the following links:

http://ww2.rch.org.au/aedi/index.cfm?doc_id=13051 and
<http://maps.aedi.org.au/> (for the Community Profiles).