

# AEDI Snapshot

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**The Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) was adapted for Australian use from the Canadian Early Development Index (EDI).**

The EDI was originally trialled in Perth in 2002 and, following its success, the Australian Government funded a project to adapt the Index for Australian use, through studies, trials and evaluations.

The first national rollout of the AEDI occurred in 2009, and has been completed for the second time in 2012. The Australian Government has committed to collecting this data every three years, with the next round to be completed in 2015.

AEDI data was collected in schools – teachers completed the AEDI Checklists based on their knowledge and observation of children in their class, for children in their first year of formal full-time school.

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These observations were supported by demographic information collected during school enrolment processes. The checklist is composed of about 100 questions and the answers for each domain are added up to create a score, from which children are classed as ‘on track’, ‘at risk’, or ‘vulnerable’.

In South Australia, 17,355 five year olds were surveyed. That is equal to 96.8 per cent of children who were registered to start school in 2012, and is a nine per cent increase on the numbers who were surveyed in 2009. All state government schools participated.

During the survey, information is gathered on five areas of early childhood development – these are called ‘developmental domains’. The five areas are;

- Physical health and wellbeing
- Social competence
- Emotional maturity
- Language and cognitive skills
- Communication and general knowledge.

In South Australia, 23.7 per cent of children are considered vulnerable on one or more developmental domains. Nationally, the figure is 22 per cent. South Australia is the only state which recorded a significant increase in the number of children who classify as vulnerable in one or more of the five domains.

On a national scale, Indigenous children are more than twice as likely to be developmentally vulnerable as non-Indigenous children. Females are less likely to be developmentally vulnerable than males, but males showed greater change from the 2009 results. ■

**Table 3.1 - Proportion of South Australian children developmentally vulnerable by AEDI domain (2009 & 2012)**

	Physical health & wellbeing %		Social competence %		Emotional maturity %		Language & cognitive skills %		Communication & general knowledge	
	2009	2012	2009	2012	2009	2012	2009	2012	2009	2012
Australia	9.3	9.3	9.5	9.3	8.9	7.6	8.9	6.8	9.2	9.0
South Australia	10.0	10.2	10.1	11.3	10.3	9.3	6.1	6.8	8.0	8.9

(Table 3.1, Proportion of children developmentally vulnerably by AEDI domain and state/territory, 2009 and 2012, page 26, A snapshot of Early Childhood Development in Australia 2012, Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) National Report)