

The Australian Early Development Index.

The Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) is a population measure of children's development as they enter school. A nationwide program, the primary aim is to provide data to help communities develop and reorientate services, supports, systems and infrastructure enabling the communities to improve the health and wellbeing of young children and ensure that they get the best possible start in life.

The program, an initiative of the Australian Government, is conducted by the Centre for Community Child Health (at the Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne and a key research centre at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute), in partnership with the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research in Perth.

The AEDI is an adapted version of the Canadian Early Development Instrument. It has been piloted in 62 Australian communities on over 56,000 children from 2004 to 2008. It has also been adapted for indigenous children and for children from language backgrounds other than English. The AEDI Checklist looks at five areas of child development:

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

The child's prep teacher will complete checklists through a secure, web-based program developed by the Australian Council for Educational Research, based on their knowledge and observation of the above areas. The checklists will be completed in both government and non-government schools between 1 May and 31 July. Children will not be taken out of class and do not need to be present when the teacher completes the checklist.

The online program protects the privacy of all personal information, which means that no one will be able to identify individual children. All data will be reported at the suburb or postcode level. The aims of collecting the information are to:

- help communities understand how their children are developing by the time they reach school age, and therefore plan for the best school transition into early primary school
- help schools, local agencies and early childhood professionals to explore new ways of working together to improve the outcomes for all children in the community.

Participation is not compulsory but schools will assume that parents are happy for information to be collected on a child unless they are told otherwise. Parents who do not want a checklist completed on their child should let the school know directly.

For further information, visit:

Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne – [AEDI Parent Information](#)

Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne – [AEDI Checklist](#)