



# **BASELINE Demographic profile**

**Australia, 2001**

Prepared for the National Evaluation of the Stronger Families  
and Communities Strategy (2004-2008)

Social Policy Research Centre  
University of New South Wales  
*June 2006*

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A report prepared about children and families in Australia as part of the National  
Evaluation of the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy 2004-2008

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## **1 About the demographic profile**

This profile provides information about children, families and the general population in Australia. It has been prepared by the Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) as part of the National Evaluation of the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy 2004-2008. All data has been sourced from customised and publicly available information collected in August 2001 as part of the Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing.

The National Evaluation of the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy will use this information to help identify changing conditions in Communities for Children sites compared to national trends. Workers in Communities for Children areas may also find it useful to consider socio-demographic trends affecting children and families nationally, compared to trends in their community.

## 2 About Australia

### 2.1 About 0-5 year olds in Australia

As shown in Table 1, in August 2001 there were approximately 19 million people living in Australia, 1.5 million of whom were children aged between 0 and 5. Children aged 0-5 comprised 8.0% of the population across Australia (including visitors and those in non-private dwellings). Table 1 shows a decline in the numbers of children in Australia aged 0-5 between 1991 and 2001. It also shows that 0-5 year olds comprised a smaller proportion of the population in 2001 than in 1991.

**Table 1 – 0-5 year olds in Australia**

Age in years	Numbers			%		
	1991	1996	2001	1991	1996	2001
	no.	no.	no.			
'0'	256208	239607	233267	1.5	1.3	1.2
'1'	248912	246212	245205	1.5	1.4	1.3
'2'	255916	260680	254504	1.5	1.5	1.4
'3'	248743	258525	254198	1.5	1.5	1.4
'4'	249368	259882	256795	1.5	1.5	1.4
'5'	250028	261609	261634	1.5	1.5	1.4
Total 0-5 years	1509175	1526515	1505603	9.0	8.6	8.0
Total population	16771700	17752829	18769249			

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing: 1991, 1996 and 2001

Note that this table includes overseas visitors

### Indigenous 0-5 year olds

As shown in Table 2, there were 64 220 Indigenous 0-5 year olds in Australia in 2001. 0-5 year olds made up 15.7% of all Indigenous people and 8.0 % of all children aged 0-5.

**Table 2 – Indigenous 0-5 year olds**

	Indigenous Australia	Non-Indigenous Australia	Not Stated	Total Australia
Number of 0-5 year olds	64220	1362590	78793	1505603
Total population	410003	17591489	767757	18769249
% of population aged 0-5	15.7	7.7	10.3	8.0

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing: 2001

Note that this table includes overseas visitors

## 2.2 About families in Australia

Table 3 shows that there were over 1 million families with children aged 0-5 years in Australia. Of these families, 161 210 families (15.7%) were lone parent families. A higher proportion of ATSI families with children 0-5 were lone parent families (29.3 %). Families with a multi-family structure comprised 3.6% of all families with children aged 0-5 and 13.5% of ATSI families with children aged 0 to 5.

**Table 3 – Families with a child aged 0-5 by family type, 2001**

	Australia			%		
	ATSI	Other	Total	ATSI	Other	Total
Couple family	21991	806779	828770	57.3	81.6	80.7
Lone parent	11231	149979	161210	29.3	15.2	15.7
Multi family	5173	31521	36694	13.5	3.2	3.6
Total	38395	988279	1026674			

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing: 2001

Note: This table counts families at home with children aged 0-5 (and not visitors). Families with at least one Indigenous parent were defined as ATSI families.

**Table 4 – Children aged 0-5 by family type, 2001**

	Australia			%		
	ATSI	Other	Total	ATSI	Other	Total
Couple family	33086	1133505	1166591	58.2	83.1	82.1
Lone parent	16356	191437	207793	28.8	14.0	14.6
Multi family	7382	39665	47047	13.0	2.9	3.3
Total	56824	1364607	1421431	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing: 2001

Note: This table counts children aged 0-5 counted in families at home (not visitors). Families with at least one Indigenous parent were defined as ATSI families.

Table 4 (above) shows that 82.1% of children aged 0-5 lived in couple families (excluding visitors). 14.6% of children lived in lone parent families, although the proportion was higher for Indigenous children (28.8% of whom lived in lone parent families).

### 2.3 Socioeconomic Indicators

Socioeconomic disadvantage heightens the risk of poor health, poor education and poor developmental outcomes for children. As a result, socioeconomic indicators like education and income levels can assist in planning and the provision of early intervention and prevention services.

#### Education

Education impacts on outcomes for children. Table 5 (below) shows that in August 2001, 277 845 people in Australia were attending preschool, and almost 1.8 million were participating in infants and primary schools.

**Table 5 – Type of educational institution attended, 2001**

	Australia	%
PreSchool*	277845	1.5
Infants/Primary	1771411	9.4
Secondary	1267103	6.8
Technical/Further	493924	2.6
Uni or other tertiary	722125	3.8
Other	144549	0.8
Not attending	13191621	70.3
Not stated	900671	4.8
Total	18769249	

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing: 2001

Note: that Census data does not capture numbers of children participating in early education programs outside preschool settings (eg long day care).

Table 6 (below) shows that 5.6 million people in Australia (not including overseas visitors), or 37.7% of people aged 15 years or over had achieved Year 12 or equivalent as their highest level of schooling.

**Table 6 – Highest levels of schooling attained, persons aged 15 years and over**

	Australia	%
Year 8 or below	1389173	9.4
Year 9 or equivalent	1113547	7.5
Year 10 or equivalent	3529096	23.8
Year 11 or equivalent	1421933	9.6
Year 12 or equivalent	5608153	37.7
Still at school	503157	3.4
Did not go to school	148721	1.0
Not Stated	1142994	7.7
Total	14856774	100.0

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing: 2001

## Language and birthplace

Table 7 shows the birthplaces of people in Australia. After Australia, the UK and New Zealand, the most common places of birth were Italy, Vietnam, China, Greece and Germany.

**Table 7 – Birthplace**

	Australia	%
Australia	13629685	72.6
United Kingdom	1036245	5.5
New Zealand	355765	1.9
Italy	218718	1.2
Viet Nam	154830	0.8
China, exclud. SARs Taiwan Prov	142781	0.8
Greece	116430	0.6
Germany	108220	0.6
Philippines	103942	0.6
India	95455	0.5
Netherlands	83325	0.4
South Africa	79422	0.4
Malaysia	78858	0.4
Lebanon	71349	0.4
Hong Kong, SAR of China	67121	0.4
Poland	58107	0.3
Federal Rep of Yugoslavia	55365	0.3
United States of America	53694	0.3
Sri Lanka	53460	0.3
Croatia	51909	0.3
Ireland	50233	0.3
Indonesia	47159	0.3
Malta	46998	0.3
Fiji	44261	0.2
Macedonia FYROM	43527	0.2
Rep. of South Korea	38899	0.2
Singapore	33485	0.2
Egypt	33432	0.2
Turkey	29825	0.2
Canada	27289	0.1
France	17268	0.1
Born Elsewhere Overseas	708069	3.8
Not Stated	1034123	5.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>18769249</b>	

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing: 2001. Note that this table includes overseas visitors.

Table 8 shows that English was the main language spoken by mothers of children 0-5 years (80.4%). Children aged 0-5 whose mothers spoke other languages most commonly spoke Arabic (including Lebanese), Italian, Vietnamese, Greek, Cantonese, Mandarin and Tagalog (Filipino).

**Table 8 – Number of children 0-5 years by languages spoken by mother**

	Australia	%
English	1142192	80.4
Arabic (incl. Lebanese)	27093	1.9
Italian	21164	1.5
Vietnamese	19226	1.4
Greek	18680	1.3
Cantonese	17406	1.2
Mandarin	11986	0.8
Tagalog (Filipino)	10759	0.8
Spanish	7335	0.5
Turkish	5519	0.4
Hindi	5074	0.4
Macedonian	4777	0.3
Croatian	4239	0.3
Samoan	3989	0.3
German	3881	0.3
Serbian	3460	0.2
Indonesian	3358	0.2
Japanese	3039	0.2
Korean	2998	0.2
French	2955	0.2
Other Chinese languages	2895	0.2
Khmer	2602	0.2
Sinhalese	2558	0.2
Tamil	2360	0.2
Persian	2182	0.2
Polish	2125	0.1
Russian	2104	0.1
Netherlandic	1931	0.1
Maltese	1690	0.1
Portuguese	1690	0.1
Hungarian	931	0.1
South Slavic, nfd	766	0.1
All other languages	41396	2.9
Language not Stated	14495	1.0
Mother not present	22233	1.6
Total	1421431	100.0

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing: 2001. This table includes only children counted at home in families (not overseas visitors or those in non-private dwellings)

Table 9 (below) shows that in 2001, 4752 children aged 0-5 years (0.3%) had mothers identified to speak English “not at all”. There were 35767 children identified as having mothers who spoke English “not well” (2.5% of children 0-5).

**Table 9 – Number of children 0-5 years by English language proficiency of mother**

	Australia	%
Mother Speaks English Very Well/Well	202380	14.2
Mother Speaks English not Well	35767	2.5
Mother Speaks English not at all	4752	0.3
Mother Proficiency/Language not Stated	14107	1.0
Mother Speaks English Only	1142192	80.4
Mother not present	22233	1.6
Total	1421431	100.0

Note: This table counts children at home in families (not overseas visitors or those in non-private dwellings)

### Income

Income also indicates disadvantage. Table 10 shows the numbers of children aged 0-5 years in families where the gross weekly income was less than \$500 (“low income”) in 2001.

In 2001 there were 260 038 children aged 0-5 living in families with gross incomes of \$500 or less. This represents 18.3 %of children 0-5 in Australia. The Table also shows the number of families with children 0-5 in lower income ranges. Importantly, the data shows that 14 844 children aged 0-5 (1.0%) lived in families earning less than \$160 per week.

**Table 10 – Number of children 0-5 years by weekly gross family income**

	Australia			%		
	ATSI	Other	Total	ATSI	Other	Total
Less than \$160	964	13880	14844	1.7	1.0	1.0
\$160-199	1445	8997	10442	2.5	0.7	0.7
\$200-\$299	3190	30459	33649	5.6	2.2	2.4
\$300-\$399	8567	96831	105398	15.1	7.1	7.4
\$400-\$499	6279	89426	95705	11.0	6.6	6.7
Total \$500 or less	20445	239593	260038	36.0	17.6	18.3
Over \$500	29595	1012476	1042071	52.1	74.2	73.3
Income not stated	6784	112538	119322	11.9	8.2	8.4
Total	56824	1364607	1421431	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: This table counts children at home in families (not overseas visitors or those in non-private dwellings)

## Labour Force Status

In addition to family income, parents' labour force status shapes children's economic well-being. Table 11 shows that in 2001, 5.6% of couple families and 1.5% of lone parent families with a child aged 0-5 had a parent who was unemployed. 92.8% of families with a child aged 0-5 did not have a parent who was unemployed.

**Table 11 – Families with at least 1 child aged 0-5 by parental unemployment**

	Australia			%		
	ATSI	Other	Total	ATSI	Other	Total
Couple Families	3691	54217	57908	9.6	5.5	5.6
Both Parents unemployed	534	5900	6434	1.4	0.6	0.6
One Parent unemployed	3157	48317	51474	8.2	4.9	5.0
Lone parent families						
Unemployed	1233	14504	15737	3.2	1.5	1.5
Other families	33471	919558	953029	87.2	93.0	92.8
Total	38395	988279	1026674	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing: 2001

Note: This table counts families at home with children aged 0-5 (and not visitors or those in non-private dwellings).

As Table 12 (below) shows, there were 81883 children aged 0-5 in couple families and 19424 children in lone parent families with a parent unemployed. 92.9% of children lived in families without an unemployed parent.

**Table 12 – Children aged 0-5 by parental unemployment and family type**

	Australia			%		
	ATSI	Other	Total	ATSI	Other	Total
Couple Families	5839	76044	81883	10.3	5.6	5.8
Both Parents unemployed	842	8118	8960	1.5	0.6	0.6
One Parent unemployed	4997	67926	72923	8.8	5.0	5.1
Lone parent families						
Unemployed	1658	17766	19424	2.9	1.3	1.4
Other families	49327	1270797	1320124	86.8	93.1	92.9
Total	56824	1364607	1421431			

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing: 2001

Note: This table counts children aged 0-5 at home in families (and not visitors or those in non-private dwellings)

## Transport

Accessibility and the availability of transport are important for social and community involvement, and can influence participation in education and work. As shown in Table 13, in 2001, approximately 708 073 occupied private dwellings (10.0%) had no vehicle.

**Table 13 – Vehicle Ownership**

Number of households with no motor vehicles or no motor bike/scooters	
	Australia
Number of households with no vehicles	708073
Total dwellings	7072201
Percent	10.0

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing: 2001.

Note that this includes all occupied private dwellings (not just those with a child aged 0-5).