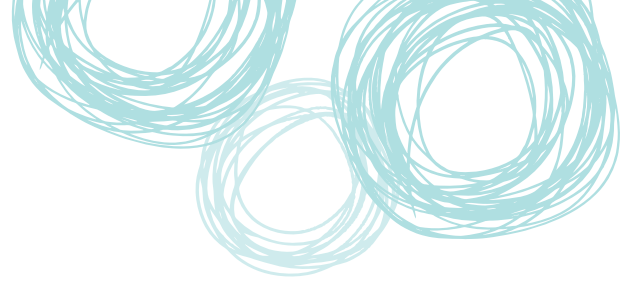




Q2 Smart Early Childhood Education 2011–12

Target Delivery Plan

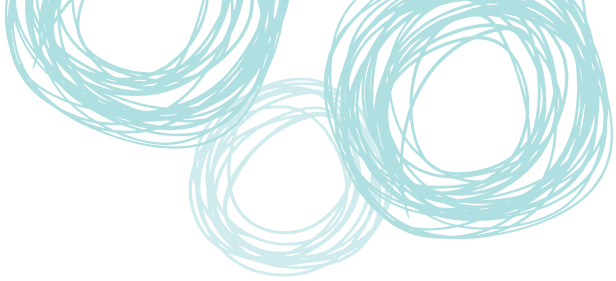


Part 1: Outline of the target

Target: All children will have access to a quality early childhood education so they are ready for school

Definition of target	Reporting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2020, all children in the year before Prep will be able to enrol in an early childhood education program that is delivered by a four-year qualified early childhood teacher or registered teacher with an early childhood qualification, available 15 hours per week, for at least 40 weeks per year. 	<p>The Early Childhood Education and Care Services Census is an annual collection, administered by the Department of Education and Training, to support policy development, planning and reporting for the Queensland Government's investment in early childhood education.</p> <p>The information collected is used to inform:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Toward Q2: Tomorrow's Queensland</i> the Queensland Annual Report Bilateral Agreement on Achieving Universal Access to Early Childhood Education the Report on Government Services published annually by the Productivity Commission Preschool Education, Australia to be published annually by the Australian Bureau of Statistics from 2011.
Measurement	Lead agency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proportion of children who are enrolled in an early childhood education program. Participation of eligible-aged children in a kindergarten program approved by the Office for Early Childhood Education and Care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Education and Training
Baseline	Contributing agency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2008, 29 per cent of Queensland children aged 3½ to 4½ participated in a quality early childhood education program, delivered by a qualified teacher¹. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Communities
Complementary indicators	
<p>1. Consistent with the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education, indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> average number of hours per week of attendance at an early childhood education program proportion of disadvantaged children enrolled in an early childhood education program proportion of Indigenous children enrolled in an early childhood education program distribution of children who attend an early childhood education program by weekly costs per child for parents number of four-year qualified early childhood teachers and registered teachers with an early childhood qualification delivering early childhood education programs. <p>2. Implementation of the 2009 <i>Flying Start</i> election commitment to establish up to 240 extra kindergarten services by 2014.</p>	

¹ Baseline represents best available data at the time of collection. Measure now incorporates all children in the year prior to Prep including delayed entry and delayed exit.



About the target

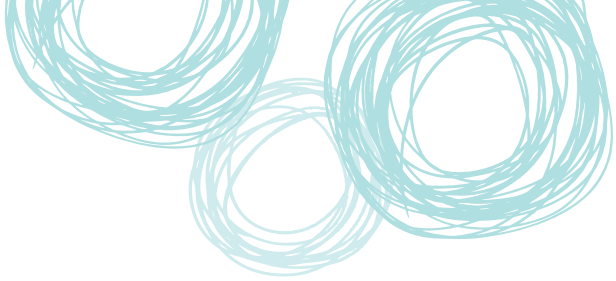
Toward Q2: Tomorrow's Queensland sets out five ambitions for a strong, green, smart, healthy and fair Queensland, and 10 targets to address Queensland's current and future challenges. The Department of Education and Training (DET) has lead responsibility for the Smart ambition — delivering world-class education and training. This includes leading the early childhood education target for 2020 to provide all children with access to a quality early childhood education so they are ready for school.

All children need positive early learning experiences to foster their intellectual, social and emotional development and lay the foundation for later school success. Children's very early learning experiences begin at home, gained through their interaction with parents and families, providing the foundation for further learning. A child's participation in a quality early childhood education program lays the foundation for their future success in learning and life, including improved literacy and numeracy, increased school readiness, higher school achievement, employment, life-long earnings and social functioning.

In 2008, only 29 per cent of Queensland children in the year prior to Prep were enrolled in a high quality early childhood education, the lowest in comparison to any state or territory in Australia.

Because of this Queensland, in partnership with the Australian Government, has committed almost \$900 million to increase the participation rate of children in early childhood education to 95 per cent by mid-2013. To provide this flying start to learning Queensland is working with the early childhood sector on:

- increasing access (supply) to quality early childhood education by building additional infrastructure, strengthening program quality and consistency, building workforce capacity and implementing innovative delivery models to meet the needs of all families
- increasing participation (demand) in quality early childhood education by improving awareness of the benefits of early education programs, ensuring that cost is not a barrier to participation, increasing the flexibility of program delivery (i.e. long day care and kindergarten services) and providing support to children with diverse needs including socio-economically disadvantaged children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children with a disability.

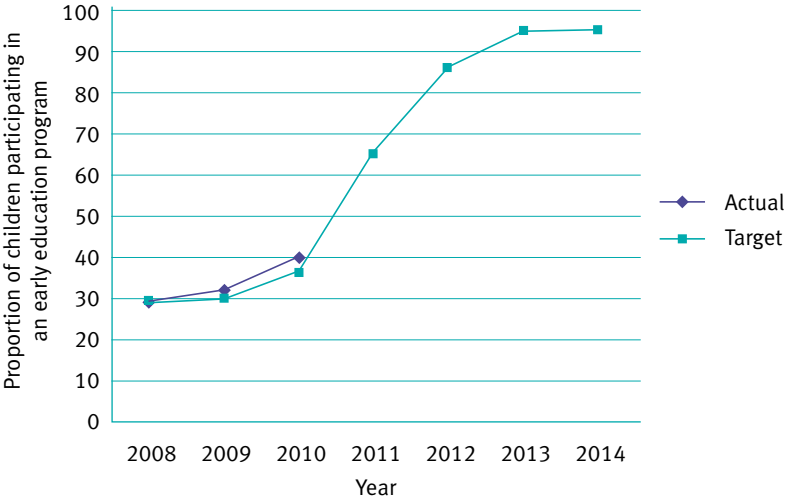


Progress

Queensland is making progress towards this ambitious agenda. In 2010, 40 per cent of children were enrolled in an early childhood education program. This represents two years of strong performance, increasing the proportion of children enrolled from 29 per cent in 2008 and 32 per cent in 2009 respectively (see table 1). In 2010–11 our highlights have included:

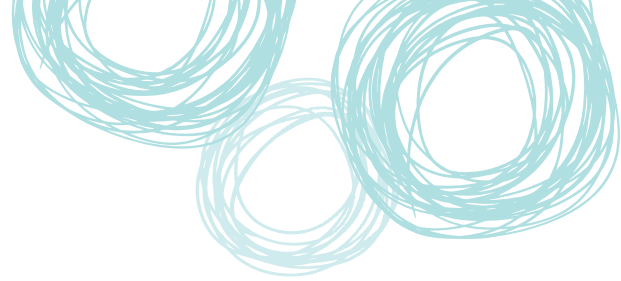
1. construction and opening of 22 extra kindergarten services as part of a total of 108 extra kindergarten services to be opened by the end of 2012 (for locations please visit www.deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/)
2. introduction of the new Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme, including 265 long day care services funded to provide a program delivered by a qualified early childhood education teacher, creating an additional 7420 places²
3. finalisation of the Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline, release of professional development materials and delivery of workshops to support teachers to deliver quality and comparable early education programs across the state
4. offering 108 scholarships for studies commencing in 2010 and 2011 to staff currently working in early childhood education and care services, to support degree qualified staff to upgrade their qualifications to teach early childhood education programs
5. implementation of a state-wide communication campaign to increase community awareness of the benefits of early childhood education and establishing a Kindy Hotline to provide a direct enquiry point for parents and service providers
6. provision of funding to Queensland’s Early Years Centres³ to trial strategies to increase the participation of children with diverse needs in local early childhood education programs
7. establishing five central governing bodies to support more than 350 community-based kindergarten services in Queensland.

Figure 1: Proportion of Queensland children participating in an early education program



² As at 30 June 2011

³ Early Years Centres are ‘one-stop-shops’ where children and their families can access integrated early childhood education and care and parenting and family support services in one convenient location. The centres provide a range of services for children, from pre-birth to eight years, and their families to give all Queensland children the flying start they deserve. See: www.deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/families/early-years-centres.html



Strategies

In 2011–12, Queensland will continue its focus on increasing access for all Queensland children to a quality early childhood education program. This includes four key challenges:

1. Improving the quality and consistency of early childhood education programs.
2. Building kindergarten infrastructure in areas of unmet demand.
3. Supporting the development of a skilled early childhood education workforce.
4. Increasing access and participation for children across Queensland and ensuring cost is not a barrier.

The Queensland Government's partnership with the early childhood education and care sector is critical to our continuing success and DET is committed to strong and on-going engagement through the Kindergarten Implementation Reference Group and the Early Childhood Development Forum, and with parents including those in rural and remote communities.

1. Quality and consistency

Improving the quality and consistency of early childhood education programs is vital to improving the wellbeing of children throughout their lives and to lift the productivity of our nation as a whole. The drive for change is based on clear evidence that the early years of a child's life are important for their present and future health, development and wellbeing.

In 2011–12 we will focus on:

- introducing the National Quality Framework
- providing a comprehensive suite of professional development resources about the Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline for teachers through online resources and face to face workshops.

2. Infrastructure

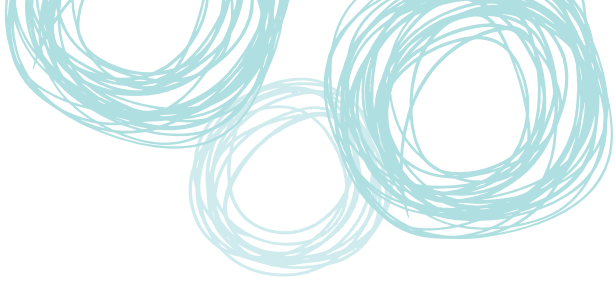
In 2010 there were approximately 59 500 eligible-aged children in Queensland.

Of the 40 per cent enrolled in early childhood education programs, approximately 58 per cent were enrolled in a kindergarten service, 40 per cent were enrolled in long day care and 2 per cent were enrolled in Bound for Success pre-Prep programs available in 35 Indigenous communities.

In 2011–12 we will focus on:

- establishing 85 extra kindergarten services by the end of 2012 in areas of unmet demand
- continuing to encourage participation in the Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme by long day care services
- establishing Children and Family Centres⁴ to provide integrated early childhood education and care.

⁴ Children and family centres focus on providing integrated services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families with children from birth to eight years of age. See: www.deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/pdfs/family-centre-fact-sheet.pdf



3. Workforce

Queensland early childhood services are currently experiencing difficulty in attracting, retaining and upskilling a suitably qualified early childhood education and care workforce, particularly in rural and remote locations.

The National Partnership Agreement on the Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care and the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education are driving increased demand for qualified teachers to deliver early childhood education programs and to take on educational leadership roles within centres.

In 2011–12 we will focus on implementing the Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Action Plan 2011–2014 which includes:

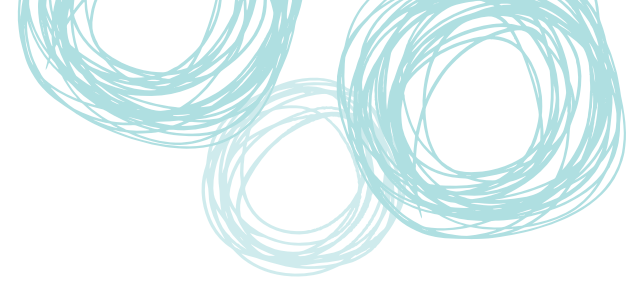
- attracting, retaining and up-skilling existing early childhood staff
- supporting a pathway for existing Advanced Diploma qualified staff to attain teaching qualifications
- providing incentive schemes to attract qualified teachers to regional and remote areas.

4. Access and participation

For many families and their children there is no level playing field when it comes to accessing and participating in a quality early childhood education. All families are different and face different barriers to participation. These barriers are often unique and specific to the individual child, their family, the community they live in, their financial circumstances and the support network that surrounds them.

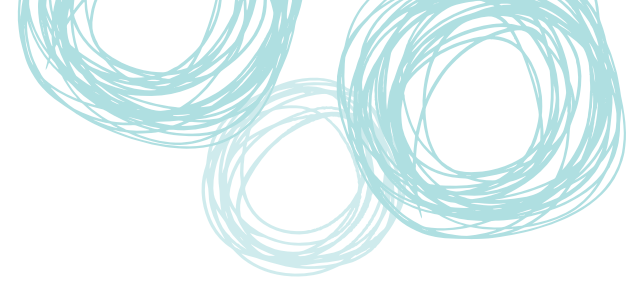
In 2011–12 we will focus on:

- establishing Children and Family Centres to increase access to integrated early childhood education and care, family support and health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- promoting the value of early childhood education via public awareness campaigns
- improving the participation of children with diverse needs
- providing flexible options for families in regional and remote areas.

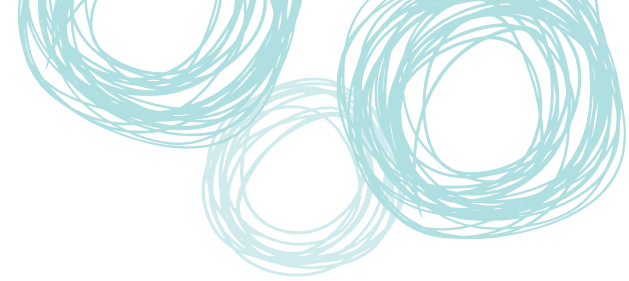


Part 2: Annual Action Plan for 2011–12

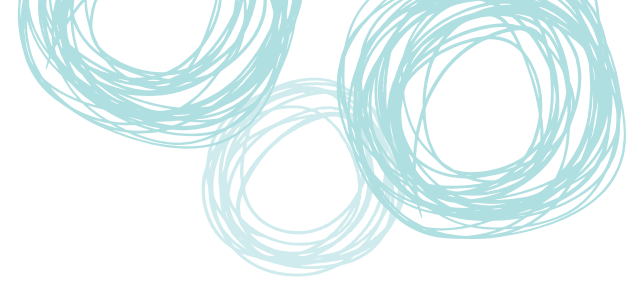
Action	Agency responsible	Why	Impact
1. Quality and consistency			
<p>1.1 National Quality Agenda</p> <p>Queensland will adopt the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 and commence regulating and rating services against the new National Quality Framework (NQF) as part of the reform agenda nationally. The NQF will commence in 2012. This will impact on long day care services, family day care services, kindergarten services and outside school hours care services.</p> <p>For more information: www.deewr.gov.au/earlychildhood/policy_agenda/quality/pages/home.aspx</p>	<p>Department of Education and Training</p> <p>Related services or objectives: Service Delivery Statement (SDS) page 3-62</p>	<p>The NQF will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deliver a unified national system with a focus on outcomes for children • streamline regulatory arrangements for early childhood services • improve public awareness of early childhood education and care quality. 	<p>Annual report to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). Progress report every six months to the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood.</p> <p>The implementation of the National Quality Standard will improve quality through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved staff to child ratios to ensure each child gets more individual care and attention • new staff qualification requirements to ensure staff have the skills to help children learn and develop • a new quality rating system to ensure Australian families have access to transparent information about the quality of early childhood education and care services • the establishment of a new national body to ensure early childhood education and care is of a high quality. <p>The new NQF will apply to long day care, family day care, outside school hours care and preschools.</p>
<p>1.2 Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline</p> <p>Online professional development modules have been developed for early childhood teachers to help them implement the Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline (QKLG). Additional on-line and face-to-face professional development will be delivered throughout 2011 and 2012.</p> <p>For more information: www.qsa.qld.edu.au/10192.html</p>	<p>Department of Education and Training</p> <p>Related services or objectives: SDS page 3-62</p>	<p>Professional development will assist educators to understand the intent of the QKLG, promote quality improvement processes, and build local consistency.</p>	<p>This action will be measured by the number of four-year qualified early childhood teachers or registered teachers with early childhood qualifications delivering early childhood education programs in the sector.</p> <p>It will be reported in the Early Childhood Education National Partnership Annual Report. (NP ECE Annual Report).</p> <p>Baseline: (2008) 600 Target: (2011) between 1120 and 1450</p>



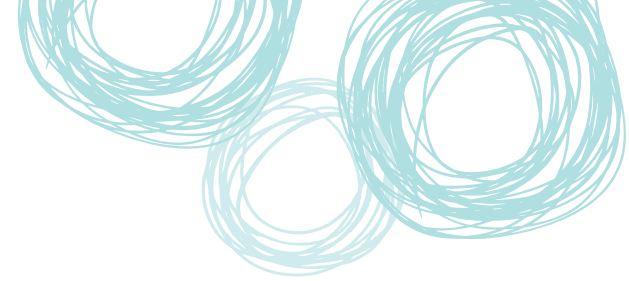
Action	Agency responsible	Why	Impact
2. Infrastructure			
<p>2.1 Establishing kindergarten services in areas of unmet demand</p> <p>The Queensland Government aims to ensure every child can access an early childhood education program by delivering up to 240 extra kindergarten services by 2014, with 108 of the extra services to open by the end of 2012.</p> <p>By the end of 2012, 85 new services will open. This will provide an additional 3740 places in an approved early childhood education program.</p> <p>For more information: www.deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/families/loc-extra-services.html</p>	<p>Department of Education and Training</p> <p>Related services or objectives: SDS page 3-62</p>	<p>A child's participation in quality early childhood education lays the foundation for their future success in learning and life.</p> <p>Additional kindergarten services will provide places for some 10 500 children and cater mainly for those children not accessing any centre based early education or care services in Queensland.</p>	<p>This will be measured by the number of extra kindergarten services opened in the 2011–12 financial year.</p> <p>This action will also contribute to the overall measurement of the proportion of children who are enrolled in an Early Childhood Education Program, reported in the NP ECE Annual Report.</p> <p>Commitment: establish up to 240 extra kindergarten services by the end of 2012</p> <p>Target: (services open by the end of 2012) 85</p>
<p>2.2 Kindergarten disaster recovery</p> <p>The Queensland Government is supporting services to continue to provide early childhood education and care in their local community during the rebuild, ensuring that the health, safety and wellbeing of children are not compromised.</p> <p>To assist those services affected by natural disasters to continue to provide early childhood education and care, the Temporary Guideline – Temporary Alternative Premises have been applied to affected services.</p> <p>Amendments were made to the Child Care Regulation 2003 on 31 March 2011 to allow for the waiver or refund of fees for (a) licence renewals or (b) replacement licences for eligible childcare services impacted by natural disasters. Approximately 87 services were damaged by the cyclone or floods between December 2010 and February 2011.</p>	<p>Department of Education and Training</p> <p>Related services or objectives: SDS page 3-58</p>	<p>This guideline will assist flood affected families and children to return to long day care and kindergarten as soon as possible. The guideline will also reduce costs to services wherever possible. This is especially important in order to continue our progress toward universal access to quality early childhood education for Queensland's children.</p>	<p>The success of this initiative will be measured by the number of services able to remain available for children to attend.</p> <p>To date, 17 flood affected and one cyclone affected service have utilised the temporary guidelines to remain open or reopen during the rebuild.</p> <p>It is expected all services will return to normal by the end of the 2011–12 financial year.</p>



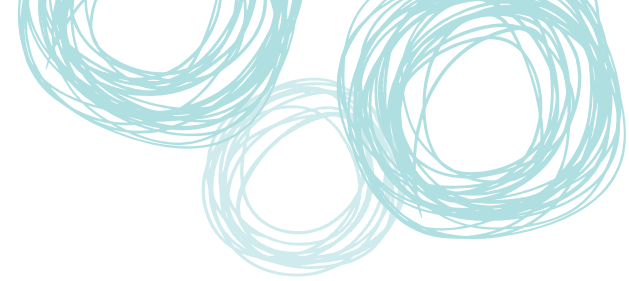
Action	Agency responsible	Why	Impact
3. Workforce			
<p>3.1 Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Action Plan 2011–2014</p> <p>The Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Workforce Action Plan represents an estimated \$76 million Queensland Government investment in preparing the state’s ECEC workforce to provide universal access to early childhood education programs and meet the quality improvements of the National Quality Framework (NQF) for the ECEC sector by 2014.</p> <p>The Workforce Action Plan is underpinned by a number of initiatives aiming to support the ECEC sector to attract, retain and upskill a qualified workforce. In 2011–12, some of the key activities will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Round 5 of the Early Childhood Teacher Scholarships for those who hold three-year qualifications • commencement of the Early Childhood Teacher Scholarship for Advanced Diploma holders. <p>For more information: www.deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/workforce/</p>	<p>Department of Education and Training</p> <p>Related services or objectives: SDS page 3-62</p>	<p>The ECEC Workforce Action Plan will meet the requirements of the most significant state and national reforms in the history of the sector, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implementation of the NQF with its enhanced educator qualification requirements from 2014 and improved educator-to-child ratios from 2016 • provision of universal access to kindergarten programs for all Queensland children by mid-2013. <p>The NQF will be enforced by law in 2012 and the universal access to kindergarten commitment will be enforced via the National Partnership Agreement for Early Childhood Education.</p>	<p>By the end of 2014, the Queensland Government will review its performance against this plan and the following key performance indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased number of educators working in early childhood education and care services • increased number of early childhood teachers working in early childhood education and care services • increased number of educators holding or working towards a relevant qualification • increased number of family day care educators participating in vocational education and training.



Action	Agency responsible	Why	Impact
4. Access and Participation			
<p>4.1 Early Years Centres</p> <p>Early Years Centres (EYCs) operate as “one-stop-shops” providing a range of integrated programs for children (pre-birth to eight years) and their families, with some targeted services delivered and/or brokered for vulnerable children and families. These initiatives are targeted at engaging hard to reach families. New initiatives provided through EYC in Browns Plains, Caboolture, North Gold Coast and Cairns aim to increase the access and participation of vulnerable children in early childhood education programs in their local areas. Specific initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mobile playgroups in locations accessible to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally and linguistically diverse families that aim to improve parenting skills and confidence • a sessional pre-kindergarten and families program of three hours per week for vulnerable children and their families • support to teachers and staff in kindergarten services to assist children with a disability to settle into and participate in early childhood education programs • a community champions program to engage leaders and elders in promoting the value of early childhood education in their communities. <p>For more information: www.deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/families/early-years-centres.html</p>	<p>Department of Education and Training</p> <p>Related services or objectives: SDS page 3-62</p>	<p>The benefits of early childhood education and care are most significant for disadvantaged children and are a valuable opportunity to influence a positive pathway for life and learning.</p> <p>Participation in EYC programs is anticipated to support participation in early childhood education programs.</p>	<p>Success will be measured by the number of disadvantaged children enrolled in an Early Childhood Education Program.</p> <p>Baseline: (2008) 38 per cent Target: (2011) 65 per cent</p>
<p>4.2 Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme</p> <p>The Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme provides funding for the delivery of an early childhood education program in long day care centres and kindergarten services to ensure there are more flexible options for families balancing work, study and other commitments.</p> <p>A key feature of the scheme is that approved kindergarten program providers receive a standard subsidy per eligible enrolled child with further subsidies available for services in remote and lower socio-economic areas to help attract and retain teachers and to ensure that cost is not a barrier to families accessing the program.</p> <p>For more information: www.deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/service/access-kindy/kindy-fund-scheme.html</p>	<p>Department of Education and Training</p> <p>Related services or objectives: SDS page 3-62</p>	<p>This supports increasing the proportion of children who are enrolled in (and attending) an early childhood education program.</p> <p>The delivery of approved kindergarten programs in long day care centres provides flexible options to families whose children may not otherwise be able to participate in an early childhood education program.</p>	<p>This will be measured by the proportion of children who are enrolled in an Early Childhood Education Program.</p> <p>It will be reported in the NP ECE Annual Report.</p> <p>To achieve this 65 per cent participation, 21 370 places in an early childhood education program in a long day care centre will be required. This will be measured in July/August 2011 and reported in March 2012.</p> <p>Baseline: (2008) 29 per cent Target: (2011) 65 per cent</p>



Action	Agency responsible	Why	Impact
<p>4.3 Participation of children with disabilities</p> <p>The Department of Communities provides and funds the following early intervention services to children with a disability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family and Early Childhood Services (FECS) • Early Intervention Initiative for Children with Autism (EICA) • Early Intervention Initiative for Children with Physical Disabilities (EICPD). <p>It is anticipated that the FECS, EICA and EICPD will assist families to enrol their child with a disability in an early childhood education program and support the family and the child through the transition into kindergarten phase. The early intervention services will also be able to assist the kindergarten staff to identify any assistance or support the child with a disability may need to maximise their inclusion in a kindergarten program.</p> <p>Building Bright Futures: An action plan for children with a disability 0–8 years 2010–2013 includes an action to promote the inclusion of children with a disability in early childhood education and care services.</p> <p>For more information: www.communities.qld.gov.au/disability/key-projects</p>	<p>Department of Communities</p> <p>Related services or objectives: SDS page 3-8</p>	<p>Children with a disability require additional assistance to access and participate in early childhood education and care programs.</p> <p>A key role of early intervention services is to support families to access universal services such as child care and kindergarten programs.</p>	<p>This will be measured by the number of children receiving services from Department of Communities’ FECS, EICA and EICPD who are participating in an early childhood education and care program, as a proportion of the total number of children participating in these programs.</p> <p>Data is collected by the Disability and Community Care Services, Department of Communities and reported quarterly and annually.</p>
<p>4.4 Children and Family Centres</p> <p>Children and Family Centres (CFCs) are to be delivering services in early 2012.</p> <p>It is anticipated that all 10 CFCs will be providing integrated early childhood education and care, parenting and family support and child and maternal health services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their parents and/or primary caregiver from permanent premises in 2012.</p> <p>For more information: www.deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/office/indigenous/index.html</p>	<p>Department of Education and Training</p> <p>Related services or objectives: SDS page 3-62</p>	<p>A key objective of the CFCs is to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families’ use of early childhood services to optimise developmental outcomes for their children. This includes establishing partnerships and linkages in the community with other service providers, for example, to support access and participation in kindergarten programs, and providing fee relief for early childhood education and care programs.</p>	<p>Increase in the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in an early childhood program.</p> <p>It will be reported in the NP ECE and NP IECD Annual Report</p> <p>Ten CFCs to be open by end 2011–12 financial year.</p> <p>Baseline: (2009) 29 per cent Target: (2011) 47 per cent</p>



Action	Agency responsible	Why	Impact
<p>4.5 Kindergarten community awareness campaign</p> <p>The third phase of the state-wide kindergarten communications campaign will build public awareness and maximise enrolments in kindergarten programs. It will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> inform parents of the Queensland Government’s plan to increase kindergarten services by up to 240 across the state promote the long lasting benefits of participation in kindergarten programs encourage enrolment in early childhood education programs create awareness of kindergarten age eligibility – that children need to be at least 4-years-old by June 30 in the year they attend kindergarten (i.e. in the year prior to Prep) introduce the ‘Kindy Tick’ which will allow parents to identify programs that are government approved. Promotional material will be distributed to approved services to market their programs to their community and to attract qualified and appropriately skilled teachers to the sector. <p>For more information: www.deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/families/experts-tomorrow-kindy.html</p>	<p>Department of Education and Training</p> <p>Related services or objectives: SDS page 3-58</p>	<p>The advertising campaign aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide families with information about programs provide information to the kindergarten sector about national reforms increase kindergarten participation rates. 	<p>This will be measured by the proportion of children who are enrolled in an early childhood education program.</p> <p>It will be reported in the NP ECE Annual Report.</p> <p>Baseline: (2008) 29 per cent</p> <p>Target: (2011) 65 per cent</p>
<p>4.6 Australian Early Development Index</p> <p>The Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) is a population measure of children’s development in communities across Australia and provides a national picture of children’s health and development. Local AEDI Champions in Mackay, Cairns and Townsville will continue to engage with communities to strengthen early childhood development supports, services and resources.</p> <p>For more information: www.aedi.org.au</p>	<p>Department of Education and Training</p> <p>Related services or objectives: SDS page 3-58</p>	<p>The purpose of these roles is to strengthen early childhood development supports, services and resources. This aligns with the COAG aim to use AEDI in local planning and program development.</p>	<p>The use of AEDI data to inform local planning and program development is a Council of Australian Governments initiative. This information will help to inform local programs in order to provide the best outcomes and long-term effects for children.</p> <p>The next collection is scheduled to take place in 2012.</p>