

Child Care Census 2003

Licensed child care services in Queensland

The census

All licensed services providing child care in Queensland were surveyed during the reference week, 25 to 29 August 2003. This report provides a summary of the findings of the census for these services.

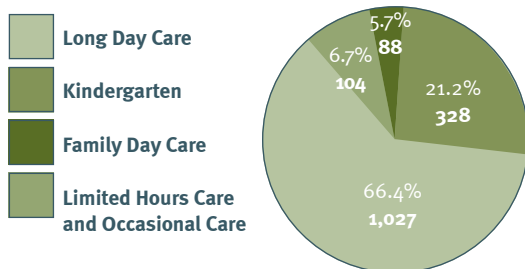
Overview of licensed services

At the time of the 2003 census, the provision of child care in Queensland was regulated by the Child Care Act 1991 and associated regulations. Services providing prescribed types of care were required to be licensed under the provisions of this legislation in order to operate. A new legislative framework was introduced in September 2003.

The number of licensed services in Queensland continues to grow. At the time of the census there were 1,547 licensed services^(a) in Queensland, an increase of 4% since 2002. Licensed services in 2003 were comprised of long day care centres (66.4%), kindergartens (21.2%), family day care schemes (5.7%) and limited hours and occasional care services (6.7%). For the purposes of this report limited hours care services and occasional care services have been combined. At the time of the census there were 92 limited hours care services and 12 occasional care services.

The highest proportion of licensed services operating in census week were located in the Brisbane metropolitan area (44.3%) and the smallest proportion (8.2%) were located in the remote areas of Queensland (see Table 1).

Figure 1 — Types of licensed services



Response rate

Of the 1,547 licensed child care services operating in census week, 1,258 child care services returned valid census forms. The overall service response rate^(b) was 81.3%. The response rate for each service type group was: family day care schemes (96.6%); kindergartens (92.1%); long day care centres (76.7%); and limited hours and occasional care services (79.8%).

Interpretation

The comments, tables and charts in the remainder of this report are based on the data provided by the 1,258 services that responded to Census 2003. Where services did not answer a question, the response has been reported in the tables and charts as “not stated”.

In any interpretation of the data, readers need to be aware of the voluntary nature of the survey, which ultimately influences the response rate, and that the information collected is based upon self-reporting by services. There has not been an attempt made to estimate data from the services that did not respond to the census. As such, the numbers do not represent total child care provision. However, given the relatively high response rate, percentages are indicative of child care provision in Queensland and allow useful comparisons between service types.

Management of child care services

Of the 1,258 licensed child care services that responded to Census 2003, 48.3% indicated they were privately owned, 47.6% indicated they were community managed services and the remaining 4.0% indicated they were a government managed service.

The majority (76.0%) of responding long day care services indicated they were privately owned, whereas the greater proportion of responding kindergartens

Table 1 – Geographic distribution of licensed services

Geographical Distribution	Type of Child Care Services									
	Family Day Care		Kindergarten		Long Day Care		Limited Hours Care & Occasional Care		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Brisbane	30	34.1	135	41.2	493	48.0	27	26.0	685	44.3
Other Metro*	9	10.2	27	8.2	236	23.0	7	6.7	279	18.0
Remote	12	13.6	42	12.8	40	3.9	33	31.7	127	8.2
Rural	37	42.0	124	37.8	258	25.1	37	35.6	456	29.5
Total	88	100.0	328	100.0	1,027	100.0	104	100.0	1,547	100.0

*Other metro includes cities other than Brisbane with population over 100,00. (i.e. Townsville, Cairns and the Gold Coast)

(97.4%) and limited hours and occasional care services (77.1%) were community managed. For family day care schemes, 85.9% were community managed and 14.1% were government managed (see Table 2).

When comparing the geographical distribution of responding child care services, 7.6% of those in remote areas were privately managed while in metropolitan areas other than Brisbane, 70.3% were privately managed (see Table 3).

Children attending child care services

The majority (90.1%) of children receiving child care at licensed services during the census week were below school age (0 to 5 years inclusive).

As found in Child Care Census 2001 and 2002, the age distribution of children cared for in home based settings

(family day care) differs from that of children cared for in centre-based settings. For example in Census 2003, most children attending long day care services were aged 2 to 5 years inclusive (78.7%), with smaller proportions of children less than 2 years (12.7%) and children 6 years or older (8.5%) attending. Within family day care schemes, however, 54.3% of the children attending were aged 2 to 5 years and there was a higher proportion of children less than 2 years (21.0%) and children 6 years or older (24.6%) attending. Long day care services indicated 16.1% of the children who attended day care in the census week attended 5 full-time days.

Several concurrent child care options are available for preschool aged children (4 to 5 years) with some children of this age attending part-time at long day care centres and/or kindergarten and/or preschool. As the figures in Table 4 represent actual numbers of children

Table 2 – Management type of licensed services

Management Type	Type of Child Care Services									
	Family Day Care		Kindergarten		Long Day Care		Limited Hours Care & Occasional Care		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Privately owned	0	0.0	6	2.0	599	76.0	3	3.6	608	48.3
Community managed	73	85.9	294	97.4	168	21.3	64	77.1	599	47.6
Government managed	12	14.1	2	0.7	21	2.7	15	18.1	50	4.0
Not stated	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.2	1	0.1
Total	85	100.0	302	100.0	788	100.0	83	100.0	1,258	100.0

Table 3 – Management type by geographic distribution

Management Type	Geographical Distribution									
	Brisbane		Other Metro*		Remote		Rural		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Privately owned	288	52.7	156	70.3	8	7.6	156	40.6	608	48.3
Community managed	250	45.7	65	29.3	78	74.3	206	53.6	599	47.6
Government managed	9	1.6	1	0.5	19	18.1	21	5.5	50	4.0
Not stated	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
Total	547	100.0	222	100.0	105	100.0	384	100.0	1,258	100.0

*Other metro includes cities other than Brisbane with population over 100,00. (i.e. Townsville, Cairns and the Gold Coast)

attending each service, double-counting is potentially substantial.

More children attended privately owned (73,167) than community managed (47,666) and government managed (4,470) licensed child care services. Of the estimated 125,303 children attending child care services during census week, responding services indicated that 2.9% (3,621) had an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background and 1.3% (1,586) had a diagnosed disability (See Figure 2).

Information technology

As evident in Census 2001 and 2002, computer technology has been widely embraced by child care services. In 2003, the proportion of services that reported using computer facilities continued to grow. In 2000, 85% of all responding services had at least one computer while in 2003 the proportion was 94.7%. In 2000, 38% of responding services had internet access, whereas in 2003, 69.2% of the responding services had access to the internet (see Figure 3).

Table 4 – Age of children attending licensed services

Age of child	Type of Child Care Services									
	Family Day Care		Kindergarten		Long Day Care		Limited Hours Care & Occasional Care		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 1 year	1,070	5.5	1	0.0	2,628	2.9	90	2.9	3,789	3.0
1 year	3,007	15.5	8	0.1	8,764	9.8	359	11.8	12,138	9.7
2 years	3,524	18.2	17	0.1	16,968	19.0	641	21.0	21,150	16.9
3 years	3,088	15.9	3,678	26.7	21,647	24.3	939	30.7	29,352	23.4
4 years	2,265	11.7	7,790	56.6	20,784	23.3	824	27.0	31,663	25.3
5 years	1,655	8.5	2,197	16.0	10,746	12.1	171	5.6	14,769	11.8
6 years and older	4,779	24.6	62	0.5	7,571	8.5	30	1.0	12,442	9.9
Total**	19,388	100.0	13,753	100.0	89,108	100.0	3,054	100.0	125,303	100.0

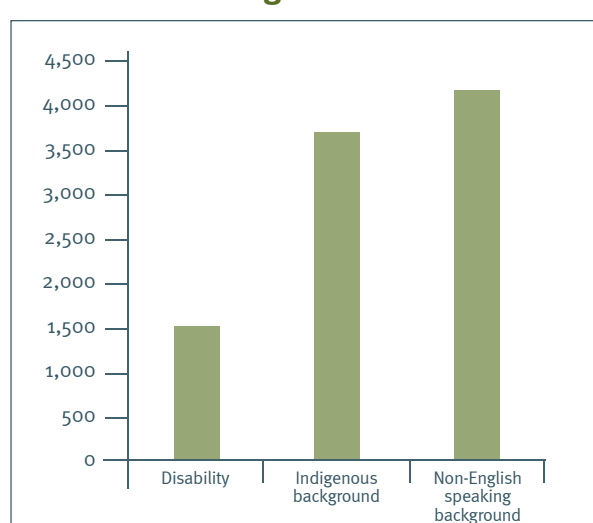
**Note: Excludes 84 children where services did not identify the age category for the child.

Table 5 – Age of children attending by management type of licensed services

Age of child	Management Type							
	Private		Community		Government		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 1 year	1,961	2.7	1,614	3.4	214	4.8	3,789	3.0
1 year	6,761	9.2	4,762	10.0	615	13.8	12,138	9.7
2 years	13,537	18.5	6,755	14.2	858	19.2	21,150	16.9
3 years	17,579	24.0	10,912	22.9	861	19.3	29,352	23.4
4 years	17,038	23.3	13,840	29.0	785	17.6	31,663	25.3
5 years	9,104	12.4	5,222	1.0	443	9.9	14,769	11.8
6 yrs and older	7,187	9.8	4,561	9.6	694	15.5	12,442	9.9
Total**	73,167	100.0	47,666	100.0	4,470	100.0	125,303	100.0

**Note: Excludes 84 children where services did not identify the age category for the child.

Figure 2 – Selected characteristics of children attending licensed services



The increase in computer usage and internet access occurred for all service types and across all geographical regions. For Census 2003, each of the geographical regions had similar proportions of services with computers. The same was true across geographical regions for the proportion of services that had internet access (see Figure 4).

All family day care schemes (100.0%) and nearly all long day care centres (98.0%) responding to Census 2003 indicated that they had a computer (see Figure 5).

Staff

The 1,258 licensed services that responded to Census 2003 indicated that 10,379 child care staff^(c) worked in these services during census week. Of these staff, 1,431 (13.8%) were directors/co-ordinators, 460 (4.4%) were assistant directors, 3,191 (30.7%) were group leaders or kindergarten or preschool teachers and 5,293 (51.0%) were child care assistants (see Table 7).

At the time of the census, approved qualifications for directors/co-ordinators, assistant directors and group leaders were set down in regulations pertaining to the *Child Care Act 1991*.

Overall, licensed child care services responding to Census 2003 indicated that 80% of directors/co-ordinators, assistant directors and group leaders/teachers working during census week held the qualifications required for their position by legislation^(d) (see Figure 6). This figure is similar to that found in 2002.

There has been an appreciable increase in the proportion of staff undertaking relevant study. Of the 1,018 directors/co-ordinators, assistant directors and group leaders/teachers that services indicated did not hold the approved qualifications, 93.2% were studying towards relevant qualifications compared to 88.3% in 2002.

The proportion of child care assistants with qualifications has also increased considerably. At the time of the census, child care assistants were not required by legislation to hold any approved qualifications. However, child care services responding to Census 2003 indicated that 46.7% of child care assistants in centre based services held a Certificate III of Community Services (Children's Services), equivalent or higher qualification, compared to 41.6% in 2002 and 39% in 2001.

Figure 3 – Computer usage for 2000 to 2003

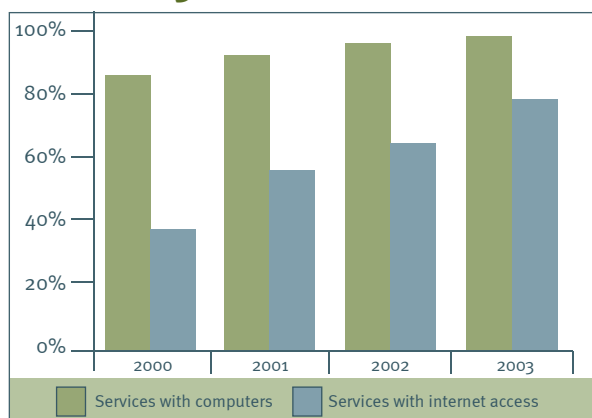


Figure 4 – Computer usage by geographical distribution, 2003

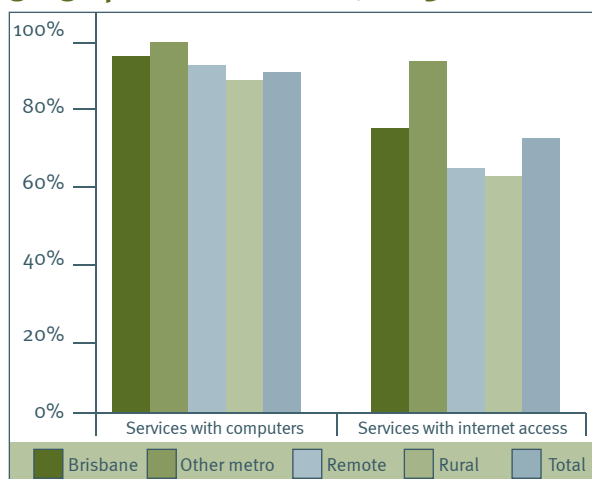
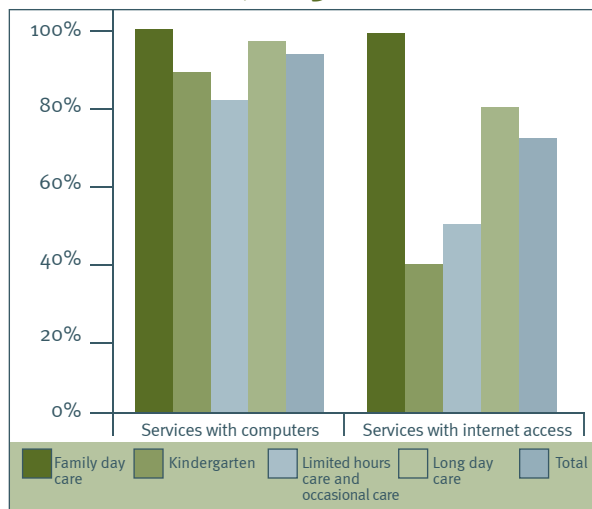
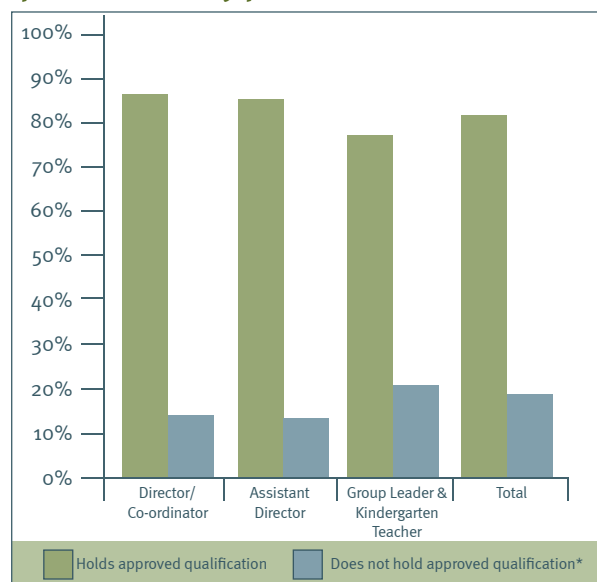


Figure 5 – Computer usage by licensed services, 2003



There were 56.7% of child care staff that had 3 or more years experience in the child care industry. For directors or co-ordinators of child care services this proportion was higher, with 89.6% having worked in the industry for 3 years or more. Similarly, a large proportion of assistant directors (83.0%) and group leaders/teachers (68.0%) had 3 or more years experience (see Table 8).

Figure 6 – Staff with approved qualifications by position



*Includes a small portion of staff where question was not answered.

(a) These licensed services were provided from 1,547 service outlets as 8 service outlets held one licence to provide two licensed services (e.g. kindergarten and limited hours care).

(b) Response rate based on the number of valid census forms returned as a proportion of the number of licensed child care services operating at the time Census 2003 was conducted.

(c) Does not include administrative or ancillary staff.

(d) For Census 2002 and 2003, services were asked whether each staff member held the qualifications required for their position. In Census 2000 and 2001, services were asked which qualifications, if any, were held by each staff member. The number of staff with approved qualifications was derived from this data.

Table 7 – Position of child care staff by service type

	Position											
	Director/ Co-ordinator		Assistant Director		Group Leader/ Teacher		Assistant		Position Not Stated		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Family Day Care	261	18.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	261	2.5
Kindergarten	309	21.6	10	2.2	148	4.6	547	10.3	0	0.0	1,014	9.8
Limited hours & occasional care	73	5.1	13	2.8	52	1.6	166	3.1	0	0.0	304	2.9
Long day care	788	55.1	437	95.0	2,991	93.7	4,580	86.5	4	100.0	8,800	84.8
Total	1,431	100.0	460	100.0	3,191	100.0	5,293	100.0	4	100.0	10,379	100.0

Table 8 – Experience in the child care industry by staff position

Experience in industry	Position of staff									
	Director/ Co-ordinator		Assistant Director		Group Leader/ Teacher		Assistant		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 12 months	31	2.2	10	2.2	196	6.1	1,238	23.4	1,475	14.2
1 year to 2 years	45	3.1	20	4.3	318	10.0	1,085	20.5	1,468	14.1
2 years to 3 years	46	3.2	40	8.7	424	13.3	781	14.8	1,291	12.4
3 years or more	1,282	89.6	382	83.0	2,169	68.0	2,045	38.6	5,878	56.7
Not Stated	27	1.9	8	1.7	84	2.6	144	2.7	263	2.5
Total	1,431	100	460	100	3,191	100	5,293	100	10,375	100

Glossary

Licensed child care services at the time of the census, family day schemes, kindergartens and long day care, limited hours care and occasional care centres in Queensland were licensed under the provisions of the *Child Care Act 1991*.

Family day care schemes organise, coordinate and monitor the provision of family day care provided by carers in their homes.

Kindergartens provide care for children aged from three years up to compulsory school age and operate for not more than 6 hours on a school day.

Limited hours care services provide care for up to 21 children at any one time for not more than 20 hours in a week. Limited hours care services do not provide care to any one child for more than 12 hours in the week.

Occasional care services provide care to children on an occasional basis and provide care for more than 21 children at any time or operate for more than 20 hours in a week.

Long day care centres provide care for more than 21 children at any one time or operate for more than 20 hours in a week. Generally these centres operate for more than eight hours per day and for more than 48 weeks per year.

Metropolitan consists of Brisbane Statistical Division. Other metropolitan consists of one or more statistical subdivisions which have an urban centre of population 100,000 or more in size.

Further information

Enquiries relating to statistics in this publication can be made by contacting the Child Care Unit, Department of Communities on (07) 3224 4225 or fax (07) 3224 4755. Selected tables of statistics are published on the Departmental website at <http://communities.qld.gov.au/childcare>.