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# Implementing child development actions in Australia: Lessons learned

Catherine Watkin Nolan  
Victoria Australia  
Quebec City November 2014

Our Children • Our Communities • Our Future





## General population information

- March 2014 - Australia's population reached 23.4 million
- 40% natural growth
- 60% migration
- Slowing growth around Australia particularly Queensland and Western Australia
- Net overseas migration main contributor to both NSW and Vic pop growth
- 70% of the population live in the big cities

## Population breakdown by state & territory (providence)

- New South Wales – 7.4m (Sydney 5m+)
- Victoria – 5.7m (Melbourne 4m+)
- Queensland – 4.6m (large towns/cattle stations)
- South Australia – 1.6m (wine growing district)
- Western Australia -2.5m (mining boom)
- Tasmania -513,000 (tourism and environment)
- Northern Territory – 240,000 (large remote pop)
- Australian Capital Territory – 381,000 (capital)

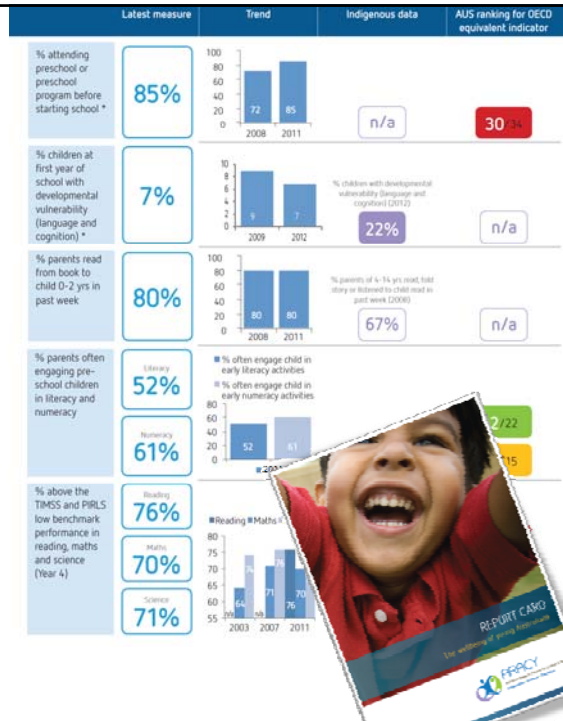
## Australian Early Development Census

- AEDC/EDI = Quebec EQDEM
- Funding provided from Australian Government
- Data collected every 3 years May-July
- 2009, 2012 next collections 2015 & 2018
- Cost for Implementation and dissemination of data \$29m/3year cycle
- EDI critical data collection for the Australian Council of Australian Government (COAG) as a measure of child progress.

Australia is ranked:

- Top third in 12/46
- Middle third in 20/46
- Bottom third in 14/46



**74%** of indicators of child wellbeing are in middle or bottom third of OECD



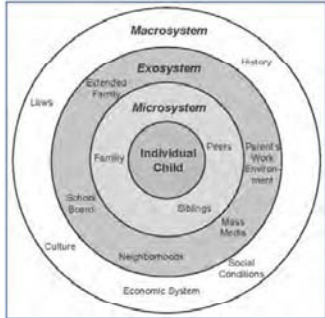
## The Nest action agenda

Improving the wellbeing of Australia's children and youth


<p><b>Vision</b>  <b>All children and youth are loved and safe, have material basics, are healthy, are learning and are participating and have a positive sense of culture and identity.</b></p> <p><i>Measured by Australia being consistently placed in the top third of OECD countries for comparable indicators of child and youth wellbeing, with the target of 50% of indicators in the top third by 2025 (currently 26%)</i></p>				
Loved and safe	Material basics	Healthy	Learning	Participating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive, supportive family environment</li> <li>Positive parenting practices</li> <li>Positive, trusted peer relationships and communication</li> <li>Community safety</li> <li>Children not placed in care</li> <li>Youth not in detention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Material wellbeing</li> <li>Income equality</li> <li>Parental employment</li> <li>Youth in employment/training/education</li> <li>Internet access</li> <li>Educational possessions</li> <li>Housing amenity and stability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Healthy birthweight</li> <li>Immunisation rates</li> <li>Nutrition, activity and healthy weight</li> <li>Healthy physical development</li> <li>Dental health</li> <li>Good mental health</li> <li>Reduced injury deaths</li> <li>Reductions in teenage pregnancies</li> <li>Reduced substance use</li> <li>Reduced youth violence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early childhood education participation</li> <li>Reduced early childhood developmental vulnerability</li> <li>Parental engagement in child learning</li> <li>Performance in English, Maths and Science (at Year 4 and 15 years)</li> <li>School retention rates</li> <li>Youth participation in education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth feeling able to have a say</li> <li>Voting enrolment</li> <li>Use and engagement of technology and social media</li> <li>Involvement in organised activities</li> <li>Membership of social, community, or civic groups</li> </ul>
<p>Positive sense of culture and identity</p>				

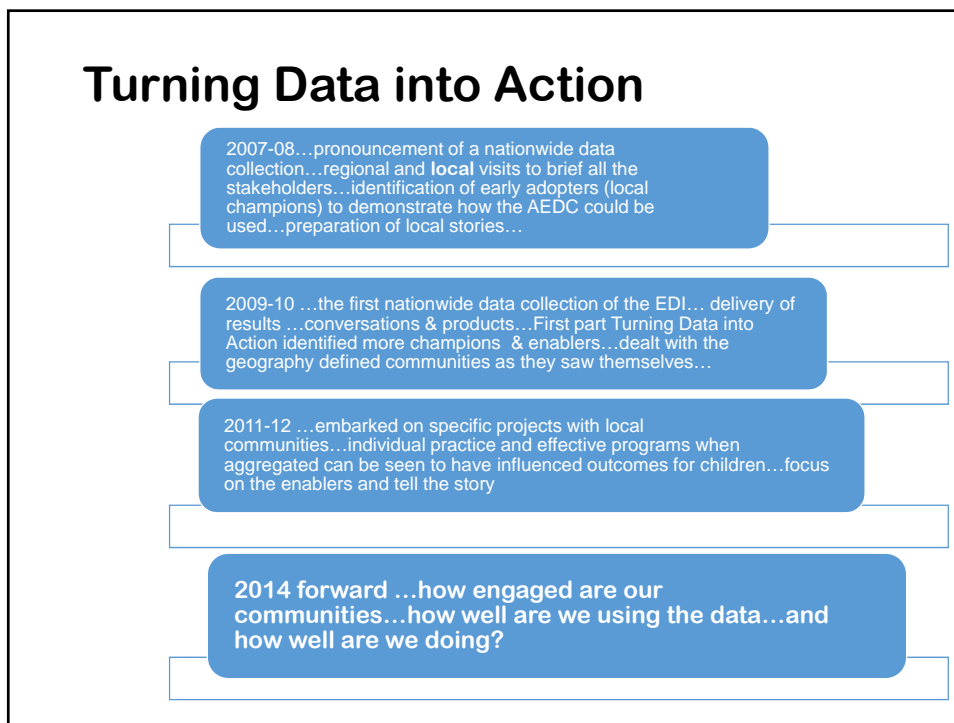
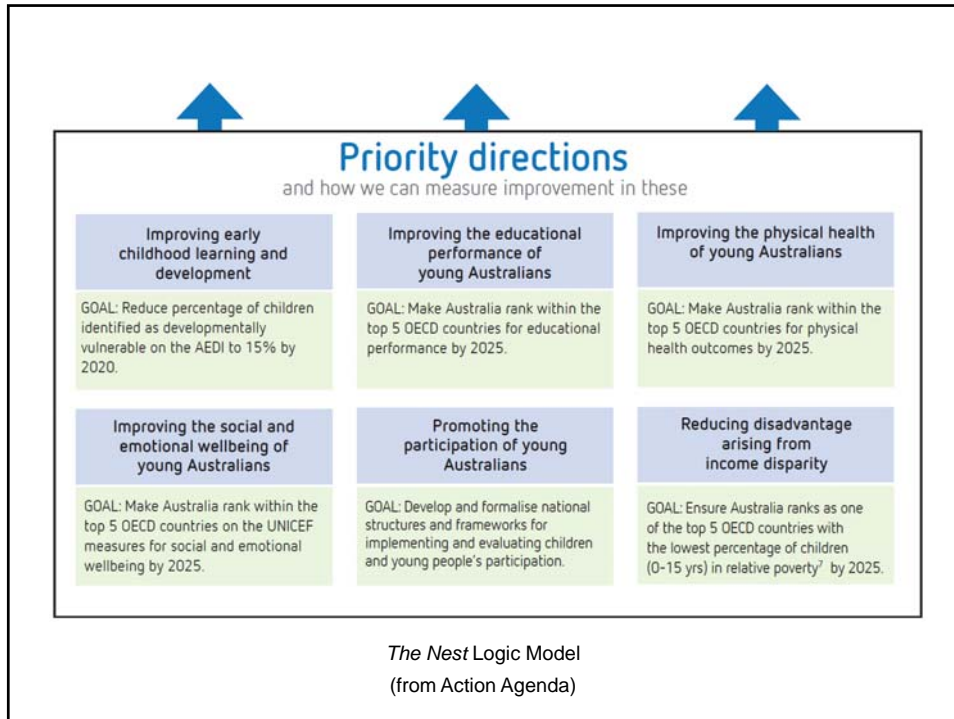



International Institute for Child Rights and Development,  
Victoria University, Canada



Bronfenbrenner, 1979





## AEDC Domains and Sub-Domains

Physical health and wellbeing	Social competence	Emotional maturity	Language and cognitive skills (school-based)	Communication skills and general knowledge
Physical readiness for the day	Overall social competence	Pro-social and helping behaviour	Basic literacy	Communication skills and general knowledge
Physical independence	Responsibility and respect	Anxious and fearful behaviour	Interest in literacy, numeracy and memory	
Gross and fine motor skills	Approaches to learning	Aggressive behaviour	Advanced literacy	
	Readiness to explore new things	Hyperactivity and inattention	Basic numeracy	



## 2009 & 2012 comparative results

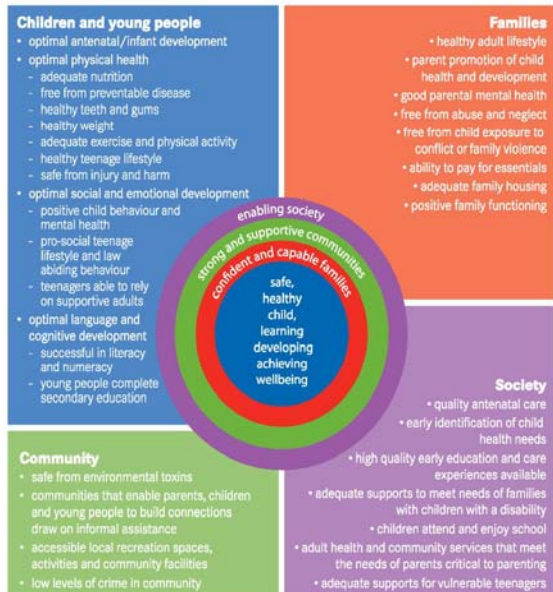
	2009	2012
National developmental vulnerability on one or more domain/s	23.6%	22.0%
Indigenous developmental vulnerability on one or more domain/s	47.4%	43.2%
LBOTE developmental vulnerability on one or more domain/s	32.2%	29.5%
Developmentally vulnerable boys	30.2%	28.2%
Developmentally vulnerable girls	16.8%	15.7%

## Victorian context - *DEECD*

- The Victorian Department of Education and early childhood development came together in 2006-07
- All Early Childhood Education & Care services (ECEC) and Maternal and Child Health services (MCH) (700 nurses by 10 key age & stage visits) plus 250 School health nurses
- AIM: To bring schools and early years together state-wide to improve service delivery & school transition
- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is the custodian of the EDI data for Victoria

- CSCB established a framework to support monitoring and reporting.
- The framework recognises the importance of family and community in relation to child and adolescent health, wellbeing, learning, safety and development.
- Four 'priority' populations agreed by the CSCB where more attention is required:
  - Aboriginal children
  - Children with a disability
  - Children from a recently arrived high needs immigrant or refugee background
  - Children in out-of-home care, child protection or family services

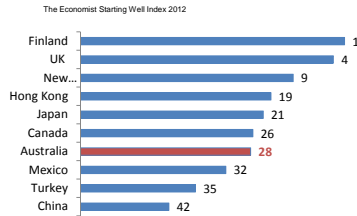
### The Victorian Child and Adolescent Outcomes Framework



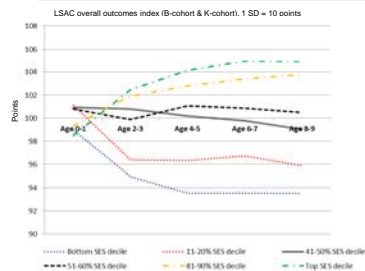


# Victoria – Setting the scene

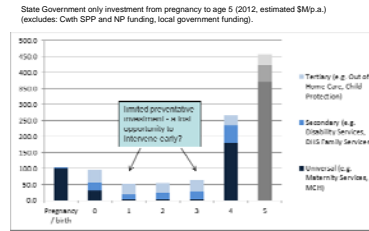
## A) We can better fulfill children's potential



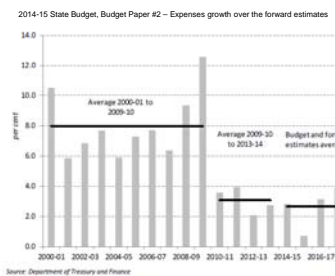
## B) We need to break the cycle of disadvantage



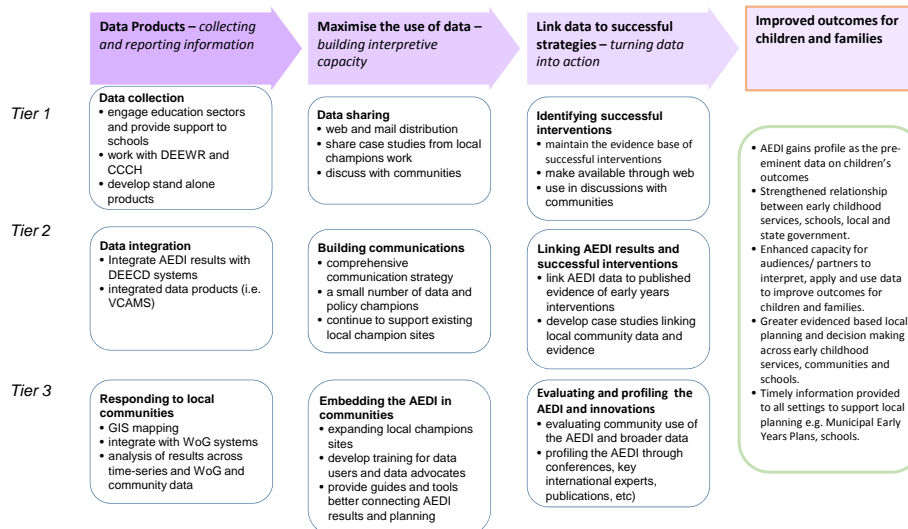
## C) There is a gap in state investment between 1-3 years limiting our capacity to intervene



## D) There is an expectation from government for improved efficiency and program accountability

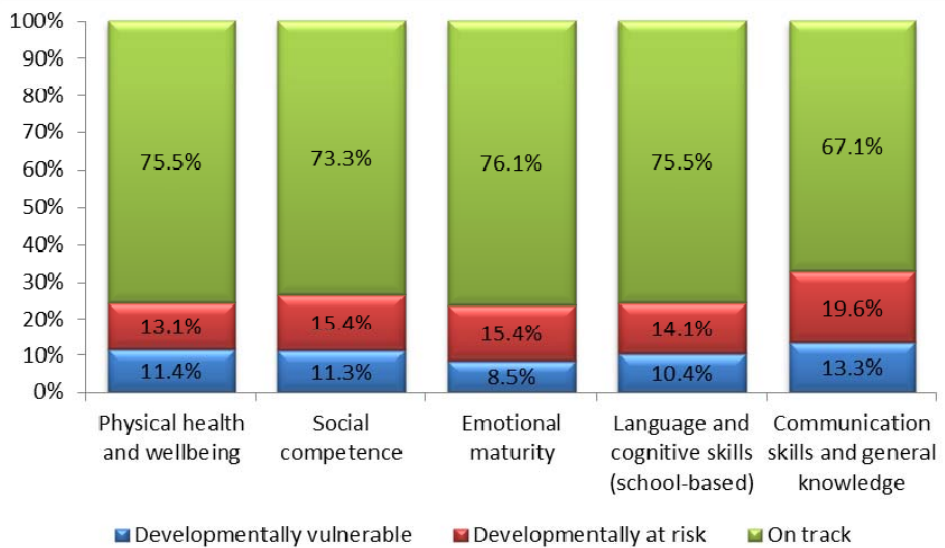


# Victoria has a clear plan to progress the AEDC

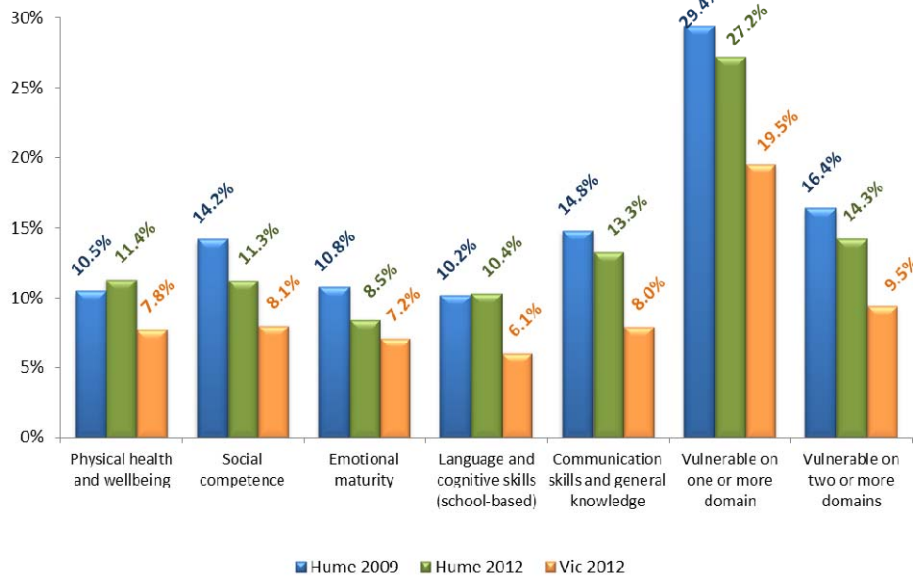


**Partnerships, policies and evidence to improve child health and wellbeing...  
What else?**

**Hume 2012 AEDI Results by Domain**



## Hume AEDI Results: % Developmentally Vulnerable



Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Early Childhood | School | Further Education and Training | About the Department

### Australian Early Development Census (AEDC)

Research > Data Collection and Evaluation > Australian Early Development Census (AEDC)

The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) is a population measure of how young children are developing across Australia, as they begin school. The AEDC was first rolled out in 2009, and again in 2012. Information was collected on nearly 95% of five year olds in Victoria. The AEDC data, together with other data, is a powerful way for communities to plan and improve services to meet the needs of children and families.

- Victorian AEDC Results and Resources
- Enabling Community Action: the Victorian Local Champions project
- News! AEDC Symposium from Knowledge to Action
- Summary Links

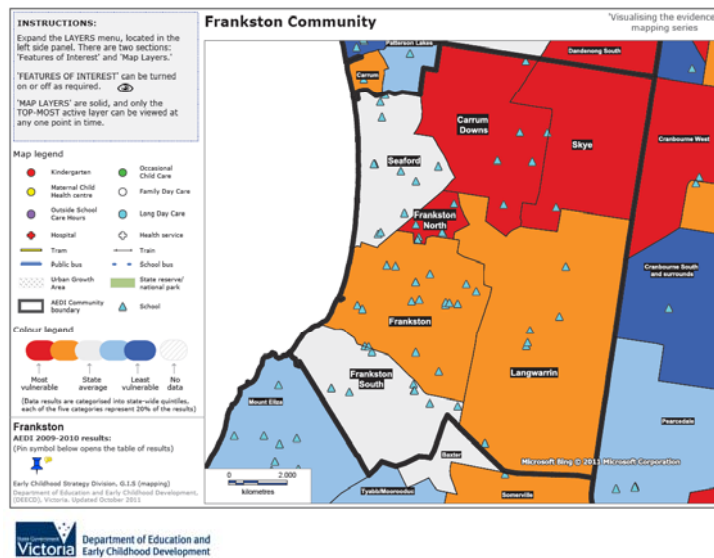
#### Victorian AEDC Results and Resources

##### Visualising the Evidence mapping series

Maps are a powerful way to understand the AEDC results.

## How are we helping communities engage?

- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (State Government of Victoria)'s "Visualising the Evidence" mapping series



## 2013 Visualising the Evidence mapping series

Available May 2013 on the DEECD website

2009 results are at... <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/research/Pages/aedireresults2009.aspx>

### Features of Interest on the 2013 maps will include:

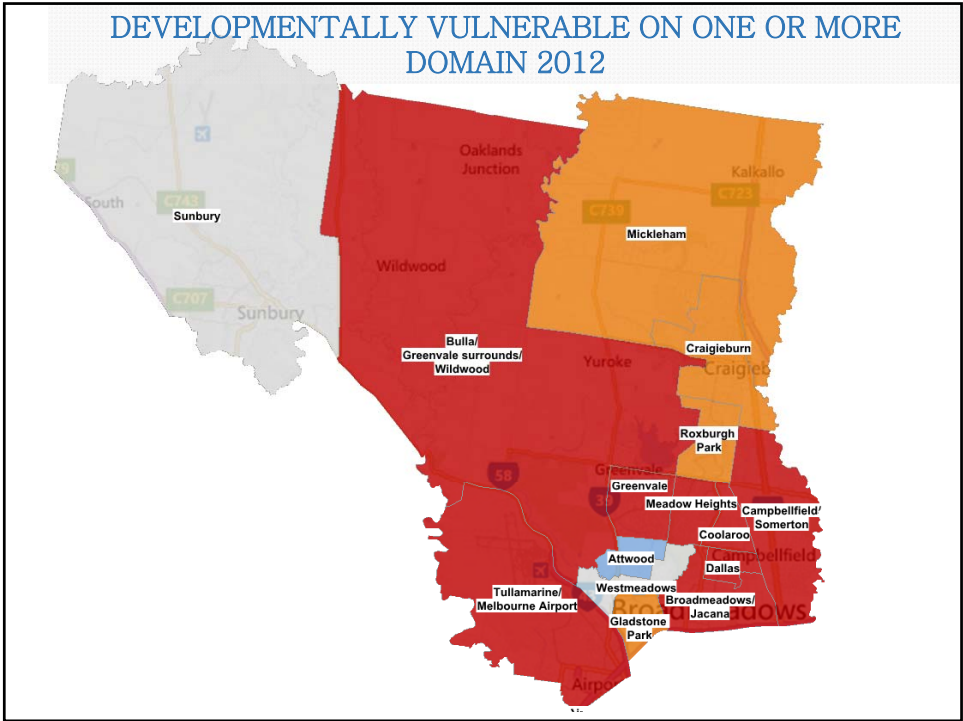
- Early Childhood Services (Long Day Care, Family Day Care, Occasional Child Care, Outside School Hours Care)
- 30 minute drive time catchments from early childhood services
- 10 minute walk time catchments from early childhood services
- School locations
- Hospitals and Health Services
- Maternal and Child Health Services
- Kindergartens
- Public transport routes
- Reserves and parks
- Urban Growth Areas

### Mapped data layers will include:

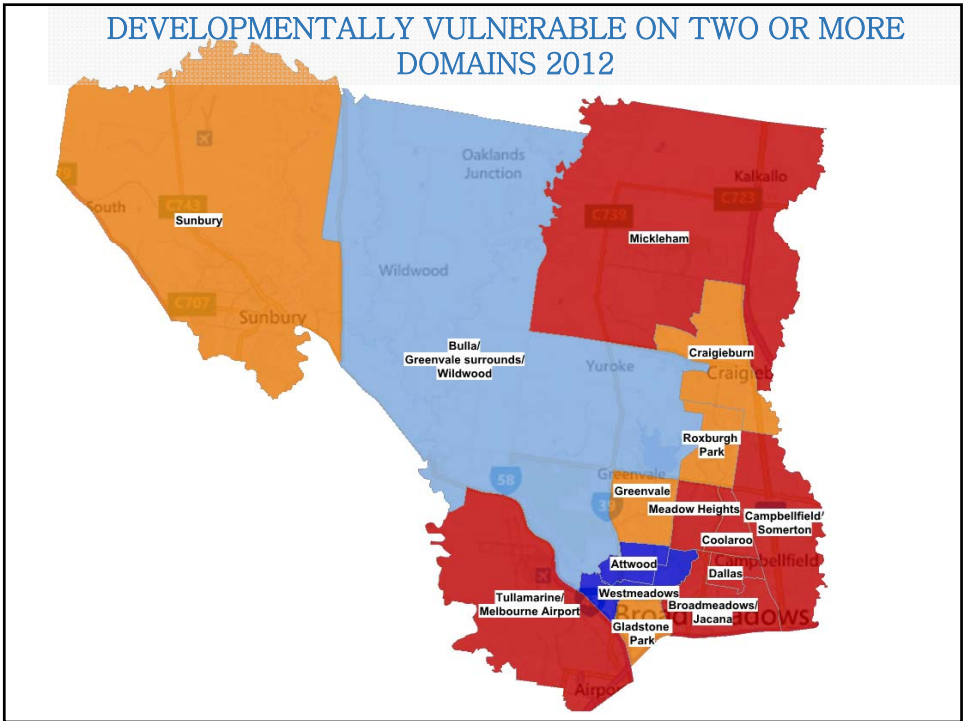
- AEDI 2009+2012 results, plus change data
- ABS census 2011 demographics, including:
  - \_ Population 0-8 by one year age groups
  - \_ Children living in welfare dependant families
  - \_ Sole parents
  - \_ LBOTE + migration data
  - \_ Median household income
  - \_ Preschool attendance
  - \_ Secondary school attendance
  - \_ Tertiary education
  - \_ % unemployment
  - \_ Indigenous variables of all of the above
  - \_ SEIFA 2011 (due March 28 2013)
- Health variables from DOH, including:
  - Obesity, Death by suicide, etc
- Reported incidents of family violence
- MCH attendance rates & breastfeeding data
- Kindergarten attendance rates
- Immunisation rates for children
- Low birth weight babies
- other data...

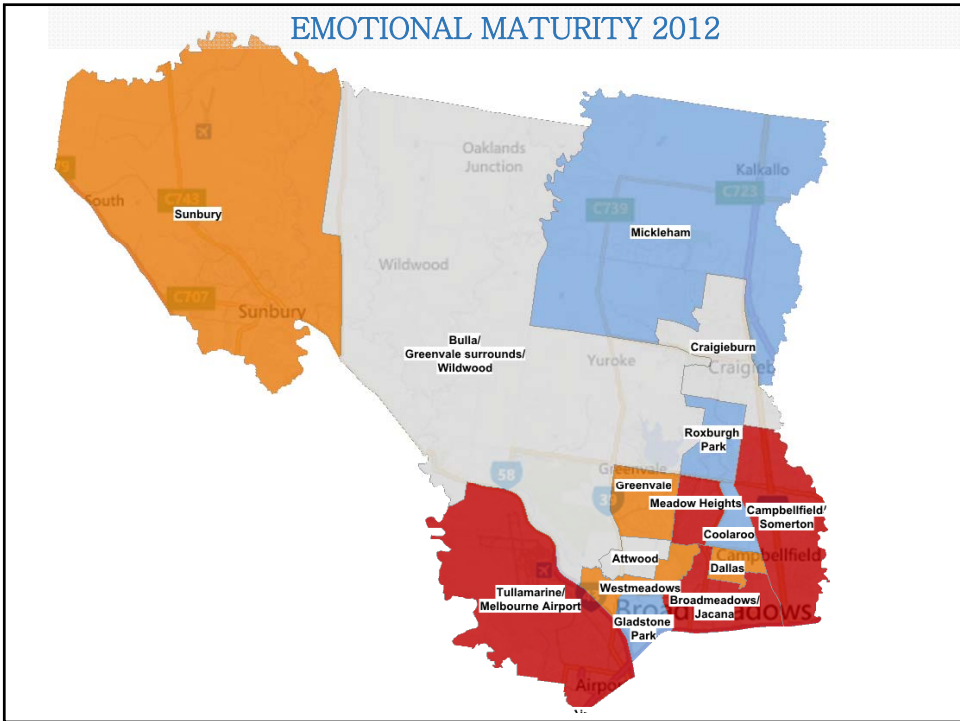
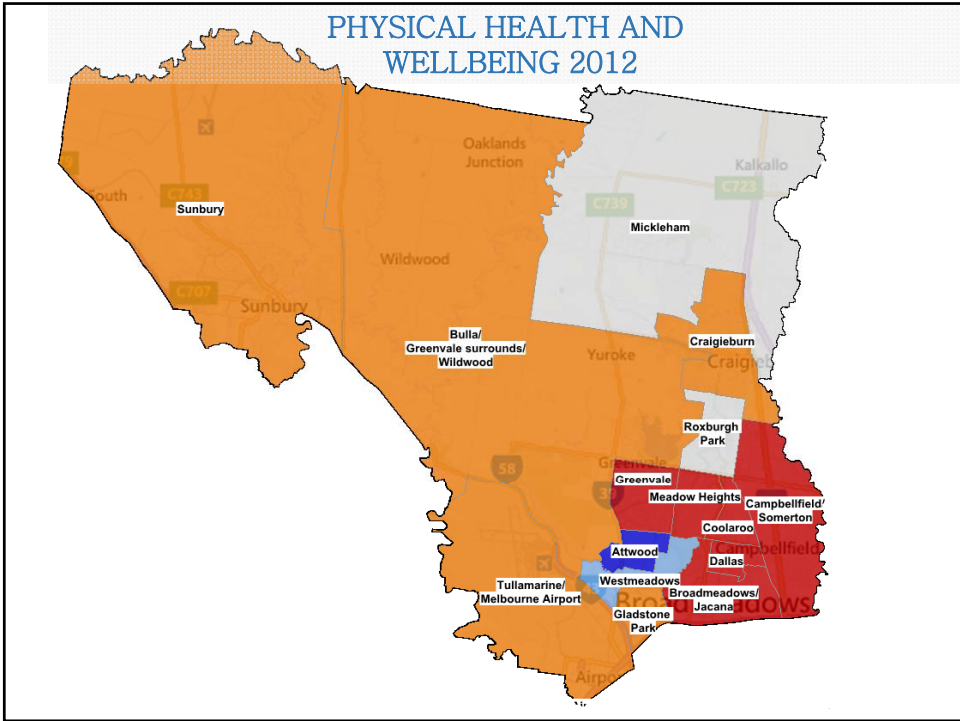


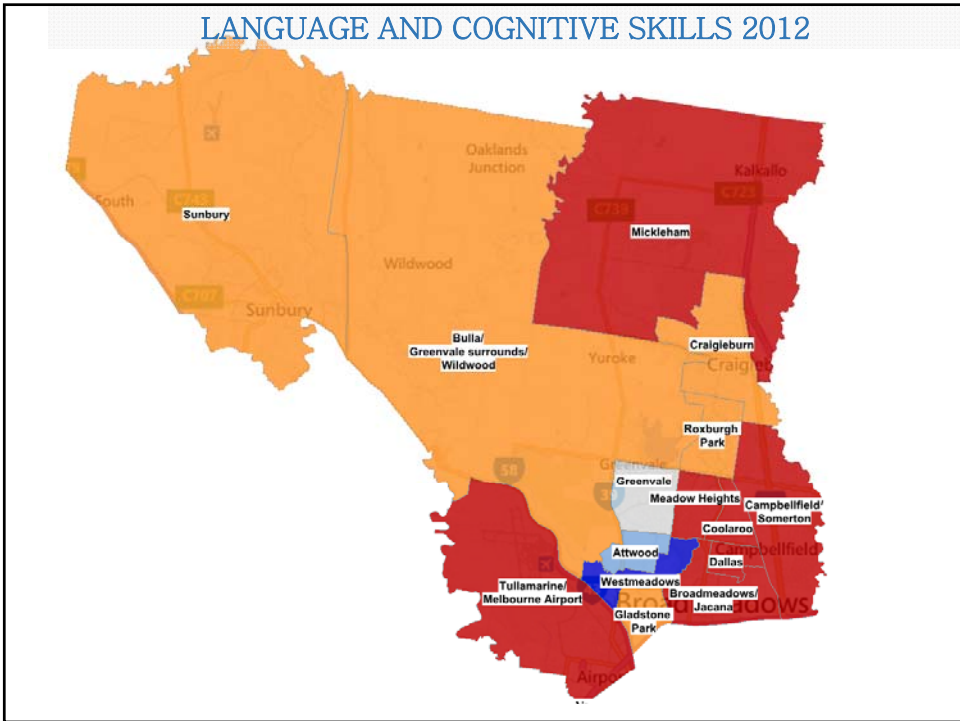
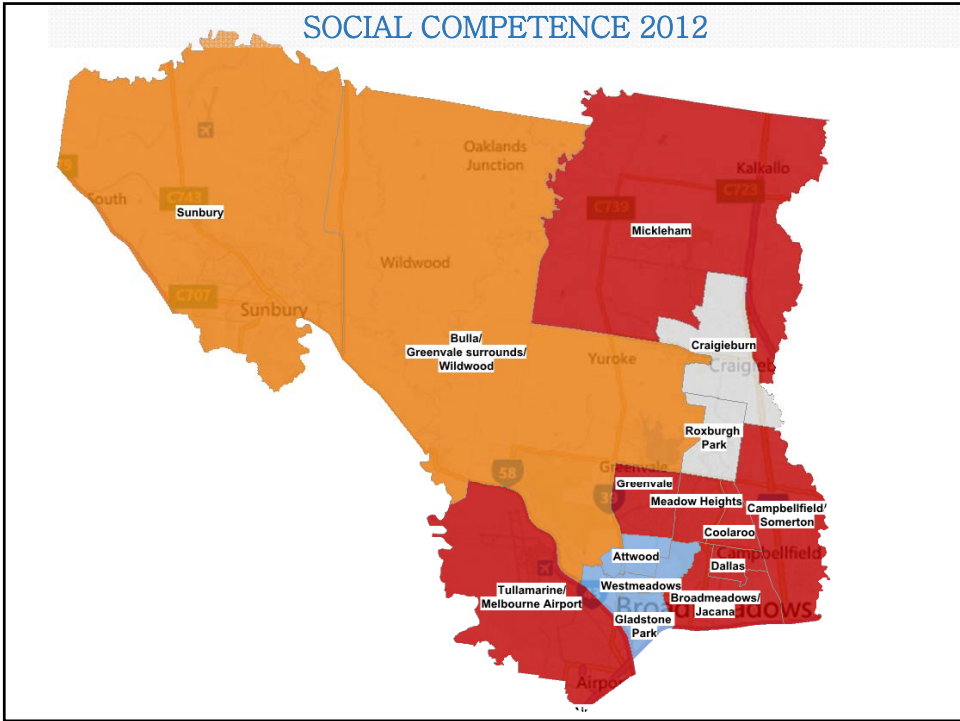
DEVELOPMENTALLY VULNERABLE ON ONE OR MORE DOMAIN 2012



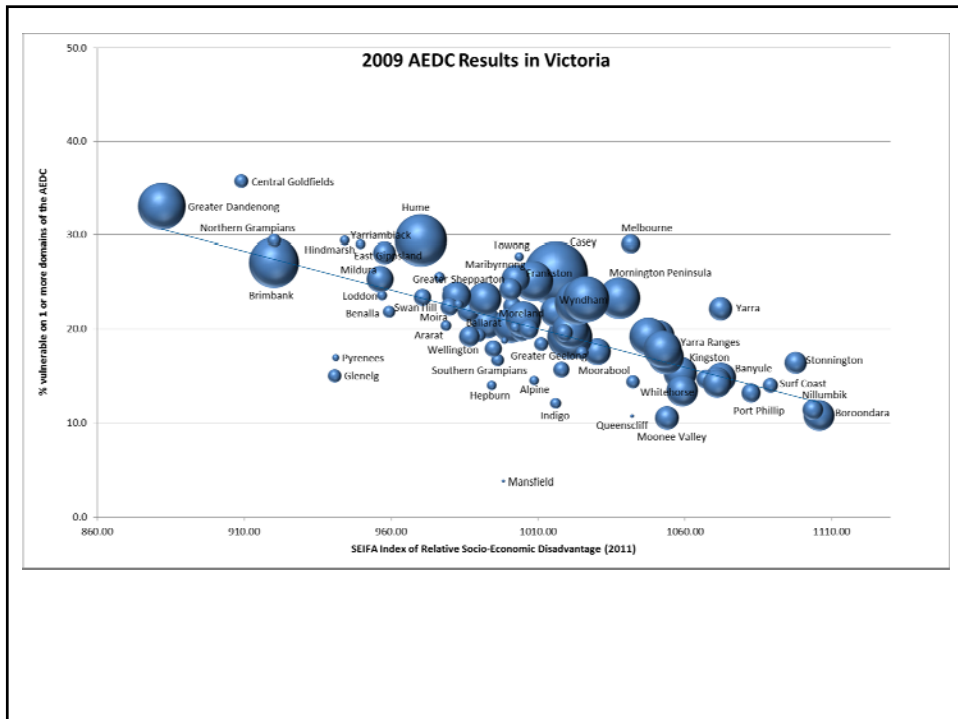
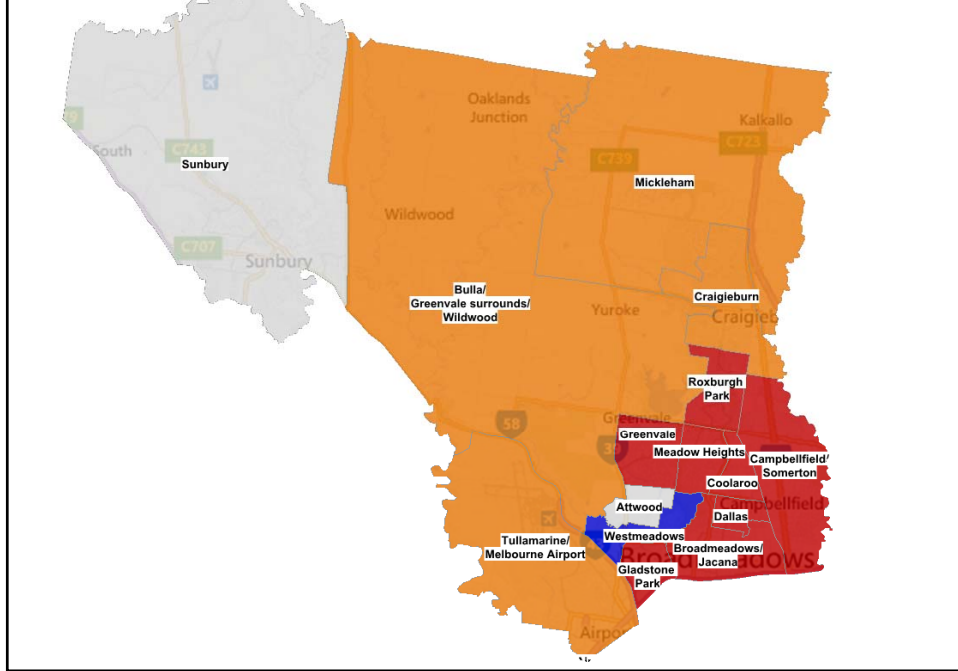
DEVELOPMENTALLY VULNERABLE ON TWO OR MORE DOMAINS 2012







## COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND GENERAL KNOWLEDGE 2012

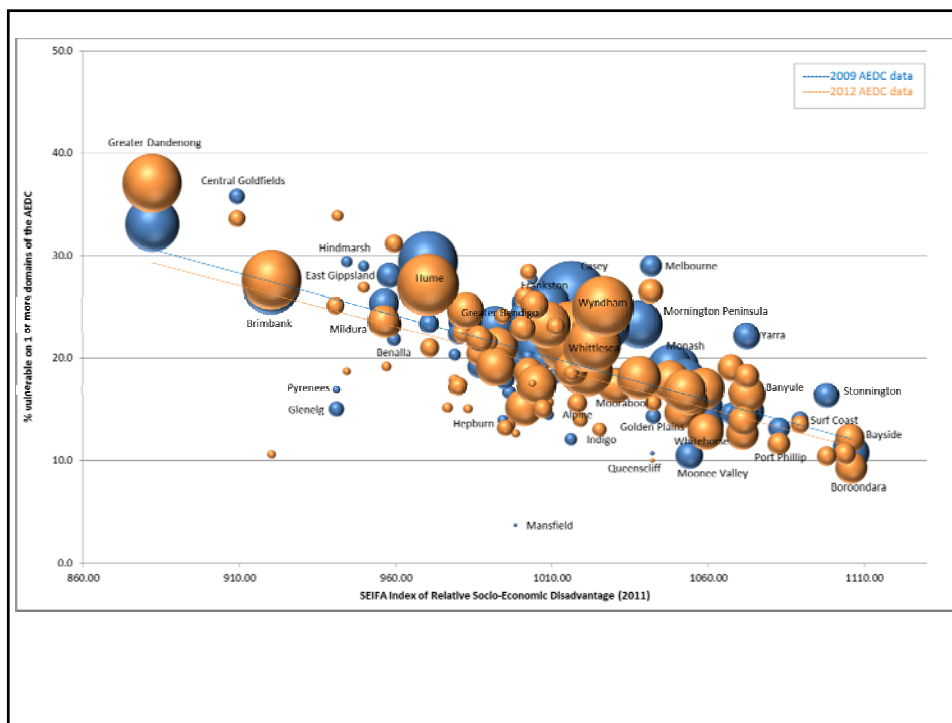




## Understanding the bubble plots

**The size of the bubble** shows the number of children who are developmentally vulnerable on 1 or more domains of the AEDC in each community

- Communities with large bubbles have lots of children who are developmental vulnerability on the AEDC.
- Communities with small bubbles have less of children who are developmental vulnerability on the AEDC.



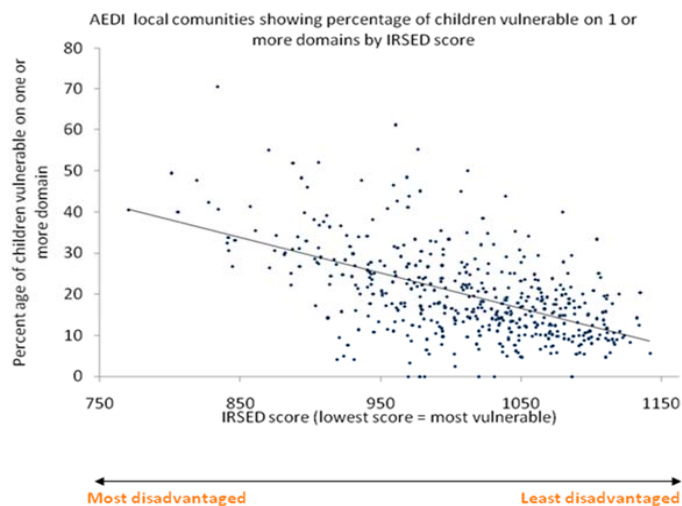
## Key message

- Both the percentage *and* number of children developmentally vulnerable is important
  - Many people in government and not-for-profit organisations look for the most vulnerable communities (highest percent vulnerable) and target services, funding and supports to these communities
  - It is also important to be aware of the number of children who are vulnerable because “most” of the vulnerable children (big bubbles) are generally not in communities with the highest percent of developmentally vulnerable children.
  - When allocating services and programs on a geographical basis we need to think about where there are large number of children who are developmentally vulnerable.



## The spread of vulnerability

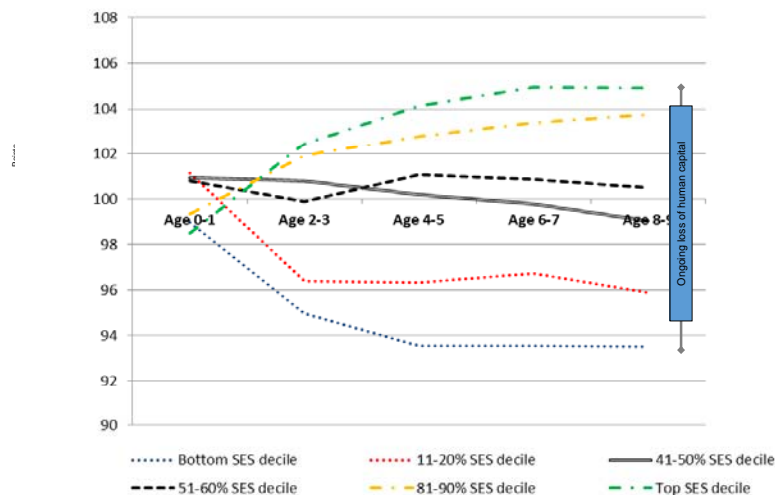
Disadvantage isn't particular to a few locations but widely spread



# Key message

- The concept of progressive universalism
  - The aim is to provide a continuum of support across the socio-economic spectrum that intensifies progressively depending on need
- Consider and improve the barriers to accessing services (i.e. poorer families are less likely to take up universally offered services due to lack of transport, lack of awareness etc.). It's not just about providing a service, it's also about thinking how to improve access, especially for the poor and culturally diverse families

LSAC overall outcomes index (B-cohort & K-cohort), 1 SD = 10 points

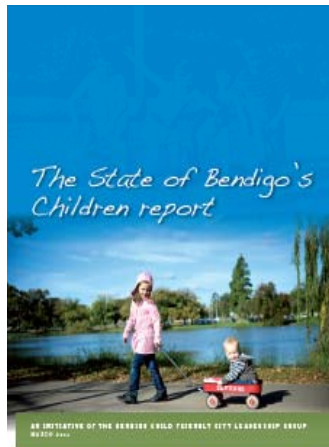




## Understanding the scaffolding

*"It is our responsibility to ensure bright futures for today's children so that tomorrow's society will benefit." Dan Offord*

## Case Study: State of Bendigo's Children's Report



- Bendigo was named a UNICEF Child Friendly City in 2007
- To acknowledge the good work being done, the Child Friendly City Leadership Group (led by St Luke's Anglicare) released *The State of Bendigo's Children Report*
- *The Report* documents children's outcomes across 20 indicators
- The 2009 AEDI findings provided the basis for discussion in the community for choosing the most relevant indicators
- Decision makers included local government, NGOs, schools, early childhood sector, urban planners, health and welfare services, and human geographers
- The Leadership Group is committed to releasing the report every 2 years to remain publically accountable and to track child outcomes

## Local champions Turning the AEDI into action

### 10 Children and young people are achieving at school

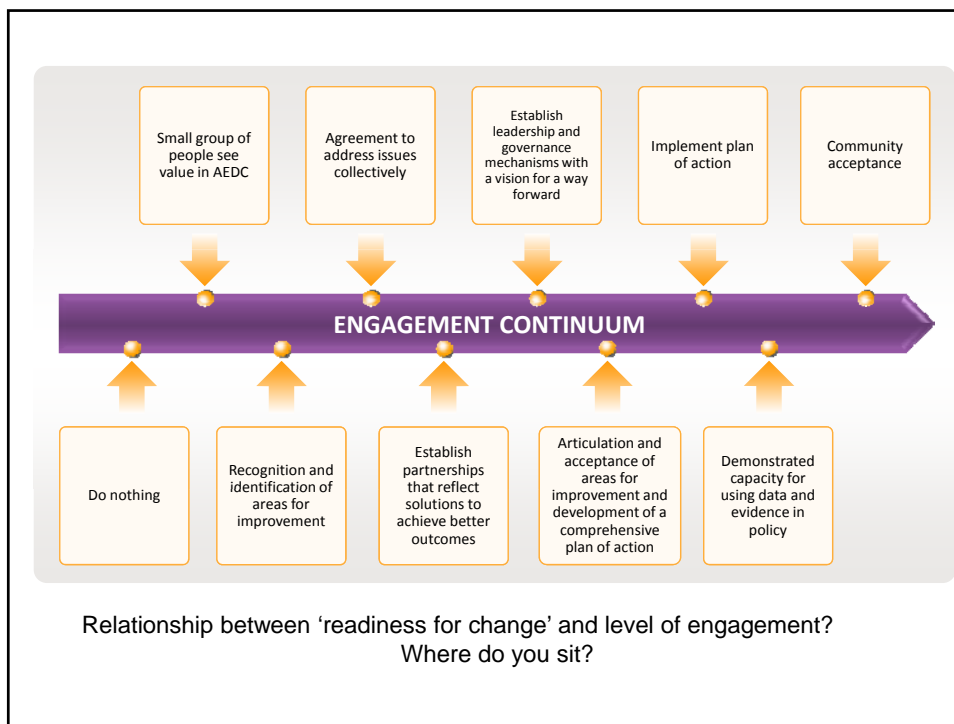
Formal education helps people develop a sense of themselves and others, and fosters a creative and innovative culture. Success at school is also associated with economic and social success, and offers a route out of disadvantage through better jobs, higher incomes and enhanced social welfare.



- The AEDI is used by communities to improve outcomes at the local level through the development of local strategies and activities
- The aim of the Local Champions Project was to consider the enablers that made it possible for local communities to use the AEDI findings to improve outcomes for children
- State of Bendigo's Children's Report

## Data + knowledge to action

- The data – build the evidence base
- Local knowledge – understand the context
- Dissemination and distribution – do it together
- Partnerships – build on interim success
- Governance – authority and accountability
- Framework – establish and agree
- Implementation – role definition
- Evaluation - essential



## Early childhood knowledge exchange The ECKX Team

**Cathie Nolan (talker)**

**Megan Harper (mapper)**

**Joyce Cleary (analytics)**

**Lauren Barber (implementation)**