The AEDI Indigenous adaptation study

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What is the AEDI?

• The Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) is a community measure of young children’s development.

• The AEDI Checklist consists of around 100 questions completed by the child’s teacher based on their knowledge of the child.

• It is designed for use with whole populations of children (based on geographical or administrative boundaries).

• The checklist was originally designed in Canada to measure child development between 4 and 6 years of age.
69% of NT Indigenous children score below national minimum standard.
Four converging strands of research...

Brain development
  – Extreme sensitivity of developing brain to effects of caretaking environment

Life course
  – What happens in early years impacts on outcomes later in life

Ecology of early childhood
  – Families and environments matter

Benefits of early childhood programs
  – The best investment any society can make
Developmental health - opportunity

- Ideal child-development trajectory
- Current practice
- At-risk child-development trajectory without intervention

Age
Developmental health - opportunity

AEDI
Developmental readiness for school learning

YR3
NAPLAN Literacy & numeracy

YR5
NAPLAN Literacy & numeracy

Age
5 8 10

Silburn

Opportunity

Current practice
2009 snapshot of Australia’s children: a developmental census of five year-olds

Total = 261,203 children (97.5% of estimated population)
Reporting the AEDI results

- **National results:**
  A Snapshot of Early Childhood Development in Australia (Dec 2009)

- **Community results:**
  AEDI Community Maps (Dec 2009)
  AEDI Community Profiles (May 2010)

- **School results:**
  AEDI School Profiles (Dec 2009)
Supporting the AEDI Implementation and community use of local results

Welcome to the AEDI Results Guide. The Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) is a population measure of children’s development. The three parts of the AEDI Results Guide will explain how to understand and then use the AEDI results in your community. Click the circle ‘1: Understanding’ to learn about the AEDI and how to understand your community’s results.

1. Understanding
   - About the AEDI
   - What influences children’s development
   - How to understand the AEDI results

2. Engaging
   - Engaging your community

3. Planning
   - Planning actions in your community

Coming in March 2010

START
Changing the social discourse on early childhood development
Today’s Presentation

• Share the work undertaken in the Aboriginal Adaptation Study of the AEDI

• Communication Approach

• Resources under development
Culture is the lens people use and see their children through. Communication around what influences development is a key starting point.

- Communities are overwhelmed by more negative news, they want to know what is and can be done to give children the ‘best start’.
The AEDI Measures

- PHYSICAL KID
- SOCIAL KID
- FEELING KID
- TALKING & THINKING KID
- CULTURAL KID
Resources under development

• ‘Cultural Eye’ communication resource and activities

We need to develop a clear strong story about AEDI and what stories it has to share (western child development story about domains and benefits of building babies brains, ecological model, investment in the early years) Main aim is to improve community and of what Aboriginal children and young people need to develop in healthy ways.
**DVD**

Production of a DVD discussion resource a longer story (evidence based) and community workshop which outline what “prompts, facilitates & constrains” child development

**TV Community Service Announcements**

Key message *It’s just so important*

Early Years, nutrition and breastfeeding, building brains & bodies, growing in strong caring relationships, early language and connections
Why these resources?

• Encourage dialogue around awareness and education for the early years
• Provide mentoring opportunities about ‘evidence based brain development’
• Emphasise what parents/communities ‘can do’
• Protect against toxic / harmful environment
Children’s Indigenous status by State & Territory (AEDI national sample - mean age 5 yr 7 mo)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>% Indigenous</th>
<th>% LBOTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIC</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QLD</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAS</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
<td>77.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Languages spoken by the 22.3% of Indigenous children who speak languages other than English at home

Other Indigenous languages (15%)
- Walmajarri (0.8%)
- Wik Mungkan (1.0%)
- Luritja (1.1%)
- Nyungar (1.6%)
- Martu Wangka (1.6%)
- Kalaw Kawaw (1.7%)
- Alyawarr (2.1%)
- Djamarrpuynghu (2.6%)
- Yolngu Matha (2.6%)
- Pitantjatjara (2.7%)
- Walpiri (2.7%)
- Arrernte (2.8%)
- Torres Strait Creole (3.6%)

Aboriginal English (35%)
Kriol/Creole (24%)
### Key Findings

Percentage of children developmentally vulnerable (DV) across Australia by jurisdiction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DV on one or more domains (%)</th>
<th>DV on two or more domains (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Australia</strong></td>
<td><strong>23.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>11.7</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Territory</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Capital Territory</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Results: subpopulations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subpopulation</th>
<th>Vulnerable on $\geq 2$ domains (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Australia</strong></td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>29.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBOTE</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof in English</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not prof in English</td>
<td>58.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English only</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof in English</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not prof in English</td>
<td>74.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Social gradients in the developmental status of Australian children on entry to primary school

Blue = Vulnerable on one or more AEDI domains, Purple = ‘On Track’ - no vulnerability on any AEDI domain
Mapping community resources for child development

Rate the following resources for children in your community (1=very poor, 2=poor, 3=adequate, 4=good & 5=excellent )

1. **Parents' education:**
   Parental health, health literacy, aspirations for their children

2. **Maternal & child health care**
   Reproductive health, ante-natal care, maternal & children’s services

3. **Healthy nutrition:**
   pre-conceptually, during pregnancy, infancy, childhood & through adolescence

4. **Responsive families & parenting:**
   Secure attachment, interactive care; safety and monitoring, stimulation of language, cognitive & social skills

5. **Early childhood care & family support:**
   Access to good quality day-care, play-based pre-literacy activities & learning, family & parenting support

6. **Parents involvement with school & child’s learning:**
   Aspirations & encouragement; school of attendance and participation

7. **Responsive schools**
   i.e. High expectations, engaging curriculum, opportunities for skill development & responsibility, acknowledgement of achievements, provide for students with special needs

8. **Community environment supportive of child-rearing**
   Absence of poverty & violence, availability of affordable & nutritious food; commitment to family & child well-being

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**Healthy pregnancy**
Nutrition, avoidance of smoking, alcohol & drugs, social support, & use of antenatal health care

**Quality of experience-based early brain development**

**Readiness for school learning**
Physical health, Social & emotional development, language & other pre-literacy skill development

**School engagement, academic & life skills**
Sense of belonging; Problem solving skills; Social competence; Reflective awareness; Autonomy & self-efficacy; Sense of purpose

**Health & participation**
Health; Positive socialisation; Adaptive coping skills; Meaningful participation (social, civic & economic)
Outcomes

• High level of Indigenous participation in 2009 national AEDI census
• National & State Indigenous Education Councils make ECD a priority policy issue for the advancement of Indigenous education
• $10.5 M corporate sponsorship from BHP-Billiton for an Indigenous ECD community development program (2009 Martu Pathways Project)
• NT Government invests $250,000 for AEDI communication strategy to cater for the information needs of remote & very remote Indigenous communities

Thank you

For more information visit www.australianedi.org.au